

Section 5.—Merchandising and Service Establishments*

A comprehensive census of business carried on by trading and service establishments was undertaken for the first time in 1931 in connection with the Seventh Decennial Census; it covered not only the operations of retail and wholesale merchandising establishments in 1930 but also those of service establishments, including hotels. In addition, information was collected to show the initial channels (manufacturers' wholesale branches, other wholesalers, retailers, industrial consumers, export sales, etc.) through which goods manufactured in Canada were distributed and the proportion of the total value of production sold through each channel. The results have been published in several series of reports and in Volumes X and XI of the Census of 1931. A partial survey of trading establishments had been made in 1924, but the results of this initial survey, while indicative of the extent of domestic trade, suffered from the incompleteness of the canvass made.

Annual Statistics.—An outgrowth of the Census of Merchandising and Service Establishments, 1931, has been an annual survey of wholesale and retail trade based on reports from large concerns in the respective fields. In the case of wholesale trade, the annual survey is confined to wholesalers proper and reports are secured from firms that had a volume of sales of \$100,000 or more in 1930 together with firms of a similar size that have commenced business since 1930. The survey of retail trade is based on the reports of chain stores and of independent stores with a turnover of \$20,000 or more in 1930. Reports are also secured from newly established independent stores. While the annual figures for merchandising are not based on such a comprehensive survey as that made in connection with the decennial census, they provide the most reliable indicators available for recent trends in merchandise trade as they cover more than two-thirds of the dollar volume of business.

Monthly Statistics.—Monthly indexes of retail sales, based on returns from department stores, chain stores, and a representative sample of independent firms, are now available for the period commencing January, 1929. A description of these indexes is given in Subsection 2 of this Section. Monthly indexes of wholesale trade are also available, although for the shorter period beginning January, 1935.

Subsection 1.—Wholesale Merchandising

Under this heading there is shown at pp. 670-672 of the 1934-35 Year Book a summary of trade in the wholesale field, as derived from the Census of Merchandising and Service Establishments, and tables showing, for 1930, bulk merchandising statistics by provinces, and by type of distributor. This is the latest material available on that basis.

Wholesale Trade by Provinces, 1930.—Included in the figures for all wholesale establishments, shown by provinces in Table 20, are data for regular wholesale houses and also for agents, brokers, manufacturers' sales branches, and other specialized wholesale agencies. Wholesalers proper embrace only regular wholesale houses such as wholesale merchants, importers, and exporters. Approximately one-third of the annual business of all wholesale establishments in Canada is transacted by wholesalers proper. The proportion for Manitoba is much below the Dominion average. Concentration of the grain trade in the city of Winnipeg results in an exceptionally high figure for agents and brokers in that Province.

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