

Annual Wholesale Statistics.—In constructing an annual index of wholesale sales, the chief objective has been to obtain the most representative measure of wholesale trade and particularly of the pre-retail business. This annual index is confined to wholesalers proper, who are for the most part wholesale merchants, importers, exporters and supply and machinery distributors—distributors such as agents and brokers, manufacturers' sales branches and other specialized types are excluded. Annual indexes of sales, by provinces and for selected kinds of business, together with estimated dollar sales for 1933, 1938 and 1939, are given at p. 501 of the 1941 Year Book. Figures for 1940 are not available at the time of going to press.

Monthly Indexes of Wholesale Sales.*—Since January, 1935, the Dominion Bureau of Statistics has published monthly indexes of wholesale sales for nine different lines of business. They are based on returns submitted by a representative number of firms. Approximately 300 different wholesale companies now report to this service. The base used in computing these index numbers was formerly the average monthly sales in 1930, but, in order to conform with other series, the indexes have recently been recomputed using as a base the average monthly sales during the five-year period from 1935 to 1939. Since the monthly indexes are based upon a smaller coverage of sales than that used for the annual census, these results cannot be expected to have the accuracy of the latter. The monthly indexes do, however, give a fair indication of the current trend in wholesale trade.

The dollar volume of wholesale trading, as measured by the composite index of sales for the nine lines of business for which figures are available, was maintained at a high level in 1941, sales for each month of the year registering higher than during the corresponding period of 1940, while the annual total was up by 18 p.c. Increases over 1940 were outstanding during the summer months, ranging as high as 30 p.c. in the July comparison. A narrowing of the spread characterized the autumn months and December sales averaged only 10 p.c. higher than December, 1940. The relative reduction in December was general for most trades and for all regions and may be attributed at least in part to the stabilization of prices by Government measures and the consequent cessation of inventory buying in anticipation of price increases on the part of the retail trades.

All trades shared in the gain in dollar volume of business in 1941 compared with the previous year. The wholesale hardware trade stood first in point of view of increased business with a gain of 25 p.c. and was followed by the wholesale dry-goods trade with a 22 p.c. increase. Gains ranging from 13 to 18 p.c. were recorded for other lines of business.

Subsection 2.—Retail Trade and Service Establishments†

CENSUS STATISTICS

Retail Merchandise Trade by Provinces.—As complete a review of the retail merchandising and service statistics as will appear in the Year Book from the Census of Merchandising and Service Establishments, 1931, is given at pp. 673-690, inclusive, of the 1934-35 Year Book. That review gives detailed analyses of such trade—net sales, employees, salaries and wages, etc.—by provinces, cities,

* See "Monthly Indexes of Wholesale Sales" published at the end of each month and obtainable on application to the Dominion Statistician, price \$1 per year or 10 cts. per copy.

† A review of retail trade for the period 1923-30 is given at pp. 637-639 of the 1936 Year Book. This is summarized from a special study report, "A Decade of Retail Trade", published in bulletin form in 1935 by the Internal Trade Branch of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics.