

Chain Stores.—During the past decade the chain store has come to occupy an important place in the field of distribution. The Dominion Bureau of Statistics classifies as chains all retail organizations (with the exception of departmental concerns) operating four or more branches. The number of chains reported in any year thus depends not only on the appearance or disappearance of firms but also on the number of units operated. As a minimum of four stores is required before a firm is classified as a chain, the reduction in branches below this number automatically removes a firm from the chain-store group.

There were 451 chain-store companies in Canada in 1940; these operated 7,522 stores and had sales totalling \$508,553,900, an amount that formed 18.6 p.c. of the total retail trade of all stores including both chains and independents. The ratio of chain to total sales has varied but little during recent years; in 1939 it was 17.7 p.c., in 1933 18.4 p.c. and in 1930 17.7 p.c.

The proportion of the total business transacted by chains varies greatly for different trades. The variety store of to-day is a typical chain-store development, approximately 90 p.c. of all variety-store sales being made by chains. Chains also play an important part in the retail distribution of groceries, meats, shoes and drugs.

22.—Sales of Retail Chains for Selected Kinds of Business Compared with Total Sales, 1930, 1933, 1939 and 1940

Kind of Business	1930	1933	1939	1940
All Stores—				
Chains.....No.	518	461	446	451
Stores ¹“	8,504	8,230	7,595	7,522
Chain sales.....\$	487,336,000	328,902,600	432,026,100	508,553,900
Total sales (all stores).....\$	2,755,569,900	1,735,768,000	2,447,658,000	2,736,868,000
P.C. of Chain Sales to Total.....	17.7	18.4	17.7	18.6
Grocery and Combination Stores—				
Chains.....No.	66	75	73	66
Stores ¹“	2,127	2,221	1,887	1,650
Chain sales.....\$	119,498,600	98,862,100	123,826,200	140,805,700
Total sales (all stores).....\$	405,403,400	297,307,000	351,410,000	384,093,000
P.C. of chain sales to total.....	29.5	33.3	35.2	36.7
Variety Stores—				
Chains.....No.	15	14	16	16
Stores ¹“	327	356	489	504
Chain sales.....\$	39,383,600	33,348,600	51,416,000	60,718,600
Total sales (all stores).....\$	44,212,200	37,256,000	57,027,000	66,780,000
P.C. of chain sales to total.....	89.1	89.5	90.2	90.9
Men's and Boys' Clothing and Furnishings Stores (including custom tailors)—				
Chains.....No.	22	14	14	13
Stores ¹“	191	135	138	129
Chain sales.....\$	9,866,800	5,405,200	6,364,600	7,106,700
Total sales (all stores).....\$	72,110,500	44,435,000	58,058,000	64,848,000
P.C. of chain sales to total.....	13.7	12.2	11.0	11.0
Women's Apparel and Accessory Stores—				
Chains.....No.	28	15	19	24
Stores ¹“	203	148	215	248
Chain sales.....\$	8,584,800	4,029,400	6,037,400	8,265,600
Total sales (all stores).....\$	69,806,000	44,699,000	52,520,000	59,560,000
P.C. of chain sales to total.....	12.3	9.0	11.5	13.9

¹ Maximum in operation during the year.