

In all, 24,758 wholesale establishments were recorded in the results of the 1941 Census and these provided employment for 117,471 persons who received \$189,449,000 in salaries, wages and commissions. In addition, there were 13,656 proprietors of unincorporated firms employed in wholesale trading. An aggregate volume of business amounting to \$5,290,751,000 was reported for these wholesale establishments, of which \$4,278,342,000 represented sales made by the reporting firms on their own account and \$1,012,409,000 represented sales made on commission for others.

Since one type of wholesaler may sell to another, there is some duplication in the aggregate sales volume of all wholesalers. Nor can the volume of wholesale trade be related to retail trade, since a considerable portion of the business of wholesalers is done with industrial or large users or with foreign buyers and thus never enters the retail field.

Wholesalers are classified on various bases such as according to amount of annual sales, number of employees, form of organization, number of marketing units, etc. The two fundamental bases for classification, however, are by type of operation and by kind of business.

Type of Operation.—Wholesale establishments have been classified primarily by type of operation, that is, according to functions performed, 31 individual types having been grouped into six major classifications. Wholesalers proper, consisting of firms performing most of the functions of wholesalers, such as buying and selling on their own account, extending credit, providing delivery service, etc., form the most important major group. This group, in addition to regular wholesale merchants, includes importers and exporters of merchandise and also voluntary group wholesalers who service a particular group of more or less closely associated retail stores. There were 9,417 establishments classified as wholesalers proper in 1941, and these had sales of \$2,358,475,000 or 44.6 p.c. of the aggregate wholesale sales and employed 74,800 persons who received \$117,390,000 in salaries, wages and commissions.

The next largest group in volume of business was manufacturers' sales branches or offices maintained at locations apart from plants and whose sales amounted to \$1,206,994,000 or 22.8 p.c. of total wholesale sales. These 1,622 establishments provided employment for 20,782 persons with salaries, wages and commissions of \$40,034,000.

Agents and brokers, composed of manufacturers' agents, commission merchants, import and export agents, brokers, etc., doing business on a commission basis for others and, as a rule, carrying no stocks, accounted for \$907,520,000 sales or 17.2 p.c. of the total sales of all wholesalers. Salaries to 4,423 employees in this group of wholesalers, totalled \$8,677,000.

Establishments numbering 7,366 with a sales volume of \$453,301,000 or 8.6 p.c. of the total were classified as assemblers of primary products. This group includes firms engaged in the assembling and distributing of farm and other primary products, such as co-operative marketing associations and sales agencies, grain elevators, and city or country buyers of primary products who purchase directly from producers. This type employed 10,499 persons to whom salaries, wages and commissions of \$13,356,000 were paid.