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PRELIMINARY REPORT ON DEPARTMENT STORE SALES, MARCH, 1941

Favorable weather throughout most of Canada during March had a stimulating effect on early spring purchasing. The influence of this factor is revealed in a 17 per cent gain in department store sales in March, 1941, over March last year, notwithstanding the fact that Easter occurred in March a year ago. Poor weather conditions in March, 1940, acted as a deterrent to the heavy purchasing which normally occurs during the pre-Easter period. March sales increased 18 per cent over February this year. Unadjusted indexes (on the base 1935 - 1939 equals 100) stood at 111.3 for March, 1941, 95.4 for March, 1940, and 94.4 for February, 1941.

There was one more business day in March of this year than last. On making allowance for differences in numbers of business days and for normal seasonal movements the underlying trend in department store sales during March was maintained at a level approximately similar to that of the preceding two months. Adjusted indexes were as follows: 124.6 for March, 1941; 105.8 for March, 1940 and 125.4 for February, 1941.

Regional comparisons for March are not yet available, but will appear in the regular monthly bulletin on retail trade which will be published about the end of April.

INDEX OF THE DOLLAR VALUE OF DEPARTMENT STORE SALES, 1935-1939 = 100

Month	Unadjusted Indexes			Adjusted Indexes(a)		
	1939	1940	1941	1939	1940	1941
January .....	71.0	84.2	92.9	98.4	112.6	123.2
February .....	71.0	84.8	94.4	94.4	108.2	125.4
March .....	86.0	95.4	111.3	91.7	105.8	124.6
April .....	97.1	105.2		102.0	106.2	
May .....	101.4	111.9		98.4	108.1	
June .....	98.9	108.7		94.3	106.5	
July .....	75.0	88.0		101.2	114.6	
August .....	80.4	99.8		95.7	116.6	
September .....	117.3	114.1		113.3	116.7	
October .....	132.4	141.1		118.0	120.9	
November .....	123.9	150.9		107.1	128.5	
December .....	188.9	210.2		116.4	132.2	

(a) Adjusted to allow for differences in number of business days and also for normal seasonal variations.

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