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PRELIMINARY REPORT ON DEPARTMENT STORE SALES, DECEMBER, 1943

Sales in Canadian department stores for December, including mail order sales, were 23 per cent higher than in November, but recorded a decline of 1 per cent compared with December, 1942. Dollar volume of sales during 1943 was 1 per cent greater than in 1942. Unadjusted indexes (on the base, 1935-1939=100) stood at 239.7 for December, 195.7 for November and 241.6 for December, 1942.

The adjusted index of sales was reduced sharply in December from the high level to which it had risen in November following five successive month-to-month advances. With corrections for differences in number of business days and for normal seasonal movements, the December index was 145.5, approximately on a par with adjusted indexes for December of 1941 and 1942, and comparing with an index of 168.5 in the immediately preceding month of November.

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

	1942	1943		
	December	October	November	December
Unadjusted indexes	241.6	177.8	195.7	239.7
Adjusted indexes	146.6	157.3	168.5	145.5

Sales of department stores located in Quebec and Ontario declined 2 and 3 per cent respectively below 1942. These reductions offset minor increases which occurred in other regions. Sales comparisons between December, 1943 and December, 1942 for the various regions of the country, with results for the full year in brackets, were as follows: Maritime Provinces, +2 per cent (+4 per cent); Quebec, -2 per cent (+1 per cent); Ontario, -3 per cent (-3 per cent); Prairie Provinces, +1 per cent (+5 per cent). British Columbia reported a fractional gain over December, 1942, while 1943 sales in that province gained one per cent over the preceding year.

Total sales reported by 18 departmental firms which provided a breakdown of sales by departments were 2 per cent lower in December, 1943 than in the same month of 1942. Declines predominated among results for individual departments, increases occurring in only five of the fourteen major departmental classifications. Drug departments sold 9 per cent more merchandise than in December of 1942, furniture and stationery departments both reported sales 7 per cent higher, while smallwares sales were up 5 per cent. An increase of 1 per cent was recorded in sales of women's apparel, but men's clothing and furnishings sales were reported 3 per cent lower and sales for footwear departments declined 4 per cent. Food sales were 9 per cent lower and hardware sales were down 1 per cent. Largest decreases were those in household appliances departments and in radio and music departments where sales dropped 18 and 45 per cent respectively below December, 1942 volume.

DEPARTMENT STORE SALES IN OTTAWA

Sales of Ottawa department stores were 10 per cent higher in December, 1943, over December, 1942, while the average increase for the year 1943 over 1942 amounted to 11 per cent.

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DEPARTMENT STORE SALES IN CANADA, BY SELECTED DEPARTMENTS

December, 1942 and December, 1943

(Based on dollar sales of 18 firms including mail order houses)

	December, 1942	December, 1943	% Change, 1943/1942
	\$	\$	
TOTAL SALES, ALL DEPARTMENTS	44,443,728	43,736,071	- 1.6
1. Women's dresses, coats and suits	3,926,115	4,243,651	+ 8.1
2. Girls' and infants' wear	1,732,725	1,648,564	- 4.9
3. Hosiery and gloves	2,483,915	2,443,306	- 1.6
4. Lingerie and corsets	2,301,977	2,192,639	- 4.7
5. Millinery	326,427	350,652	+ 7.4
6. Women's and children's apparel--(Total, 1-5)	10,771,159	10,878,812	+ 1.0
7. Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings ...	6,012,178	5,850,992	- 2.7
8. Drugs and toilet articles and preparations .	1,931,852	2,095,214	+ 8.5
9. Piece goods	2,626,764	2,408,798	- 8.3
10. Smallwares	2,058,894	2,155,035	+ 4.7
11. Food and kindred products	3,269,461	2,982,003	- 8.8
12. Furniture (including mattresses and springs)	1,476,673	1,583,041	+ 7.2
13. Home furnishings	2,508,644	2,494,414	- 0.6
14. Household appliances and electrical supplies	731,695	598,305	-18.2
15. Hardware and kitchen utensils	1,006,462	996,282	- 1.0
16. Radios, musical instruments and supplies ...	609,762	332,786	-45.4
17. Shoes and other footwear	2,872,796	2,763,705	- 3.8
18. Stationery, books and magazines	1,593,861	1,698,241	+ 6.5
19. All other departments, total	6,973,527	6,898,443	- 1.1