

RECORD RETAIL SALES: Sales by Canadian retailers topped all previous records in 1956, according to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. Estimated at \$14,088,724,000, they were 7.4 per cent greater than 1955's previous peak of \$13,111,895,000. Sales gains over 1955 were common to all months, with December sales rising to a monthly peak of \$1,438,590,000 compared to the previous peak of \$1,356,596,000 reached in December 1955.

Both chain and independent stores shared in the higher sales in the year. Chain store sales climbed 9.2 per cent to \$2,570,953,000 from 1955's \$2,353,955,000 and independent stores 7.1 per cent to \$11,517,771,000 from \$10,757,940,000.

INCREASES GENERAL

All provinces and all trades recorded larger sales in 1956. Proportionate increases in 1956 over 1955 were: Alberta, 10.7 per cent; British Columbia, 10.3 per cent; Saskatchewan, 8.9 per cent; Quebec, 8.8 per cent; Atlantic Provinces, 6.2 per cent; Ontario, 5.6 per cent; and Manitoba, 4.8 per cent. December increases were: Saskatchewan, 15.1 per cent; Alberta, 10.1 per cent; British Columbia, 7.8 per cent; Manitoba, 5 per cent; Quebec, 5 per cent; Ontario, 4.9 per cent; and Atlantic Provinces, 3.4 per cent.

Among the trades the largest increase in 1956 was recorded by fuel dealers (10.8 per cent), followed by variety stores (9.8 per cent), lumber and building material dealers (9.1 per cent), department stores (8 per cent), grocery and combination stores (7.9 per cent), women's clothing stores (7.8 per cent), motor vehicle dealers (7.5 per cent), shoe stores (7.5 per cent), and hardware stores 7.1 per cent. The other increases ranged from 6.6 per cent for furniture, appliance and radio stores to 4.8 per cent for restaurants. Sales in the miscellaneous category rose 9.9 per cent compared to 1955.

Motor vehicle dealers recorded the largest gain in sales for December, rising 16.9 per cent, trailed by "other" food and beverage stores with 8.8 per cent, and variety stores with 8 per cent. Other increases were between 7.6 per cent for women's clothing and 0.4 per cent for family clothing. Sales declined 1.8 per cent for lumber and building material dealers, 0.3 per cent for furniture, appliance and radio stores, and 7.8 per cent for fuel dealers.

Estimated sales totals for 1956, ranked according to size by provinces, were as follows (in thousands): Ontario, \$5,402,959 (\$5,115,239 in 1955); Quebec, \$3,269,111 (\$3,005,671); British Columbia, \$1,557,207 (\$1,411,640); Atlantic Provinces, \$1,197,527 (\$1,127,112); Alberta, \$1,146,094 (\$1,034,995); Saskatchewan, \$814,585 (\$747,985); and Manitoba, \$701,308 (\$669,254).

Estimated sales for the 10 leading trades in 1956 were (in thousands): grocery and

combination stores, \$2,620,964 (\$2,429,581 in 1955); motor vehicle dealers, \$2,547,109 (\$2,370,062); department stores, \$1,242,006 (\$1,150,456); "other" food and beverage stores, \$1,000,775 (\$949,570); garages and filling stations, \$756,742 (\$717,878); furniture, appliance and radio stores, \$576,315 (\$540,546); general stores, \$557,795 (\$529,757); lumber and building material dealers, \$491,661 (\$450,661); restaurants, \$490,234 (\$467,611); and drug stores, \$316,570 (\$300,341).

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ARTISTS NAMED: Conductors and soloists who will appear with the Symphony Orchestra of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation at the Stratford Music Festival this summer have been announced by Gordon Jocelyn, Festival Music Administrator.

Dr. Heinz Unger will conduct the Symphony in its opening concert on July 31, with Miss Lois Marshall as soloist. Dr. Unger, now on an extended European tour, is director of the York Concert Society of Toronto and conducted the Stratford Festival Orchestra in two concerts last summer. Miss Marshall, who has achieved an outstanding success since her Town Hall debut in 1952, appeared during the first music season at Stratford in 1955.

Mr. Walter Susskind, conductor of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, will conduct the CBC Symphony on August 7, while conductor for the August 14 concert will be Mr. Geoffrey Waddington, Music Director of the CBC, with Miss Betty Jean Hagen as soloist. Mr. Thomas Mayer, conductor of the Halifax Symphony Orchestra and of the orchestra for "The Rape of Lucretia" at Stratford last year, will conduct the final concert on August 21.

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NEW HIGH SCHOOL: Bringing shop work and home economics courses for the first time to a combined enrolment of Treaty Indian, Metis and White children in northern Saskatchewan, a new high school will be built at La Ronge this year.

Education Minister W.S. Lloyd, describing the school as "the most important development in the field of northern education in recent years," said it would be built on a shared-cost basis with the Federal Department of Citizenship and Immigration. It is a continuation of co-operative steps by the two governments to integrate all northern children into one school system, initiated in 1953 with the building of a combined-enrolment school at Pelican Narrows.

Plans for the new La Ronge school call for five classrooms, along with large fully-equipped shop and home economics sections. Expected to be ready for the fall term, the school will be big enough to handle out-of-settlement children, with enrolment likely to include about 75 Treaty Indian and about 175 Metis and white children.