

Eaton, Simpson Move to Fight Discount Stores

Canada's two biggest department stores, Robert Simpson Co. Ltd. and the T. Eaton Co. Ltd., have taken their first steps to counter competition from suburban discount department stores.

Eaton's yesterday opened its Warehouse Bargain Centre, west of No. 400 Highway and north of 401 Highway, and next Thursday Simpson's will launch its Super Value Bargain Centre in its warehouse at Lawrence Ave., west of Bathurst St.

Both will be operated on the same basis as the discount stores—low overhead and minimum service, and offering items running almost the complete range of consumer goods. They offer no charge accounts, no delivery and no telephone orders. Unlike the discount houses, all goods must be satisfactory or money will be refunded.

Eaton's and Simpson's have tested the bargain centres in warehouses on a small scale, the former for the past year, and the latter for the past two months.

The discount operations came to Toronto with the opening of Tower Discount Department Store in Scarborough last year. Tower's is building a second store in northwest Toronto and has plans for several more. Sayvette Ltd. is building a low-price department store at Thorncliffe Park and turned sod for another yesterday at Yonge St. and Steeles Ave.

Third big entrant in the race for suburban dollars is Metropolitan Stores of Canada Ltd., which recently announced plans for a chain of discount houses.