

Priority orders for the Commissioner of Works and the Building Controller left only limited quantities available for normal supply to usual distributors and stockists.

Demand was intensified by the lack of roofing-iron, and supply impeded in some measure by man-power difficulties and lack of asbestos fibre. Raw material is now in better supply, however.

Nail Manufacture.—The industry was fully occupied, but here again man-power shortages resulted in production difficulties. Export to the Armed Services overseas has taken a large portion of the output.

Baths and Sinks.—Production of enamel baths was maintained by the local factory, despite labour shortage and occasional supply difficulties. Enamel sinks continued to be produced, though manufacturers encountered considerable difficulty in securing raw materials.

Builders' and Plumbers' Hardware. The manufacture of butt hinges in large quantities for the needs of the housing programme is the most recent development under this heading.

Casement stays, sash pulleys, door furniture, and similar items were produced in increased quantities, and production of taps, fittings, &c., maintained.

Paint Manufacture.—The industry has had many difficulties to overcome during the year, and supplies of raw materials have been curtailed. Despite this, a good output was maintained, and substitutes successfully used in some cases for materials in critical supply.

Linseed-oil.—The factory worked to capacity in producing raw oil, and extensions proposed will permit increased production. Adequate raw material was available, and the factory's product assisted in relieving a critical shortage.

Bituminous Paper and Roofing Felts.—Full production of building paper and two-ply roofing fabric has been maintained. Production of heavier grade roofing fabric was restricted by the shortage of imported three-ply and heavier felts.

Surplus Government stocks of imported three-ply roofing were allocated to meet urgent calls for three-ply without disrupting the existing two-ply fabric production.

Electric Stoves and Ranges.—Production was limited by the quantity of materials which it was possible to secure for manufacturers, suitable steel sheet being particularly difficult.

An improved supply position is anticipated, and the five manufacturing units in the industry have planned for increased production to meet the extending housing programme.

Electrical Appliances. Some relaxation was possible in the wartime controls over manufacture of certain electrical appliances for industrial use, these including refrigerators, urns, fans, &c.

The manufacturers of electric toaster elements also benefited by a partial lifting of restrictions, and were enabled to commence production of elements for replacement purposes.

Steps have been taken to prepare for the reversion of the electrical appliances industry to civilian production, and to ensure that, when controls can be removed, adequate stocks of raw materials are held by makers of some twenty types of electrical appliances for domestic use. These include jugs, kettles, irons, radiators, toasters, refrigerators, washing-machines, &c.

Furniture and Upholstery.—To utilize to best advantage limited materials and skilled labour, all household furniture manufacture has been subject to control, limiting types and dimensions that manufacturers might produce.

Utilizing timbers not required in building construction, and also plywoods, output has been maintained, and the control has been lifted.

Activities on the upholstering side have been restricted by the shortage of covering fabrics and springs.

Tubular steel furniture may now be made, and increased activity by makers is expected.

CHEMICALS, ETC.

Match Manufacture.—The two units in this industry—one at Wellington and the other at Dunedin—have been busy during the year endeavouring to cope with the demand for their products.

There was considerable improvement in the supply of raw materials coming forward, but not in the supply of female labour available to the industry. Efforts are being directed towards increasing the staffs and output.

Soap and Candles.—Besides meeting the requirements of the domestic market, several thousand tons of soap were manufactured for export for war purposes.

Casein.—The manufacture of casein from skim milk reached a record during the year, over 1,200 tons being produced, of which some 400 tons were used by local industries for various manufactures. The balance was exported.

Plastic Industry.—This comparatively new industry in New Zealand has shown considerable expansion, and proved its value by manufacturing essential munitions and various general utility articles for the Armed Forces.

Articles for civilian use, such as combs, tableware, and household utility lines, are being produced in sufficient quantity to meet requirements.

Additions to plants have been made, and more equipment is on order. When this is installed and supplies of raw materials return to normal, additional types of articles will be available to meet requirements.

Preservatives for Timber and Textiles.—During the year the problem of combating decay caused by fungus growths and borer received considerable attention, and quantities of locally produced material such as oleic acid and creosote have gone into the making of various preservative compounds for treating canvas and jute fabrics for the Pacific Armed Forces.

The pre-treatment of building timbers is being extended, and the erection of treatment plants in various parts of the country will enable the life of even inferior grades of timber to be extended.

Fertilizer Manufacture.—The industry has been fully occupied, and, with additional quantities of Florida rock phosphate and sulphur coming forward, hopes to overtake the leeway that occurred during the war years.