

MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES.

Assistance towards the development and progress of the secondary industries of the Dominion is one of the statutory responsibilities of the Department, which has closely associated itself with manufacturers generally throughout the Dominion, and especially in Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch districts, where local officers are stationed. The Department's local office at Dunedin, closed in 1921, has now been reopened, and the close relationship that has existed between the Department's officers and industrialists in the other centres will be extended to the highly important manufacturing provinces of Otago and Southland.

Before referring to the state of the main industries in various centres during the past year, and to their present position and future prospects (see appendix), the following review is submitted in regard to the general progress made by the manufacturing industries during the latest year (*viz.*, ended 31st March, 1924), for which the Government Statistician has published figures.

STATISTICAL.

The returns for the year ended 31st March, 1924, covering the whole Dominion, show decided improvement when compared with 1923:—

	1923.	1924.	Increase.
Establishments	4,335	4,461	126
Employees	73,662	77,661	3,999
Wages and salaries	£13,764,884	£14,573,441	£808,557
Power employed (horse-power)	227,101	250,911	23,810
Materials used	£45,095,687	£47,027,033	£1,931,346
Value added	£28,757,736	£29,969,364	£1,211,628
Total products	£73,853,423	£76,996,397	£3,142,974
Land, buildings, plant	£44,219,125	£45,498,054	£1,278,929

Statistics for recent years indicate brisk advancement among the principal branches of manufacture, as well as a tendency with the increasing population for greater diversity in the branches covered.

Establishments.—The industries which contributed mainly to the increase in the number of establishments were—

Motor and cycle engineering	35
Sawmilling	20
Woodware and turnery	17
Printing and publishing	12
Engineering	12

In a few cases decreases were recorded, these being chiefly clothing-factories and brick and tile works.

Employees.—The following industries were responsible for the more important increases in numbers of employees: Sash and door making (785), engineering (452), printing (366), biscuit and confectionery (240), brick, tile, and pottery (147), furniture (161), and flax-milling (214). In the clothing, boot-and-shoe, and meat-freezing industries, decreases in the number of employees are disclosed.

It is interesting to record that employees classified as "administrative" represent 4 per cent.; as "productive," 87½ per cent.; and as "distributive," 8½ per cent., of the total.

Wages.—The wages paid in 1924 by the manufactories of New Zealand amounted on the average to the large sum of over £50,000 per working-day. A slight reduction is noticed in the average yearly wage paid to males—£197 5s. (£199 8s. in 1923); but to females an increase is recorded—£95 7s. (£91 1s. in 1923). The general average wage paid—*viz.*, £178 6s.—is the same as it was in 1923. In 1923 the average for males in Australia was £210 8s., and the average for females was £94 8s. Twenty years ago the wages paid to males averaged £88 and to females £41 per year. These figures are in respect of productive employees.

Motive Power.—Cheap power and an abundant supply of it is essential to industrial manufacturing progress and success. The tendency is for the additional use of electric power, a further 6,113 horse power of this nature having been put into commission by manufacturers during the past year. The horse-power available per productive employee in New Zealand factories is 3.6.

Production.—The most noticeable increases in production were in meat freezing and preserving, £584,377; sawmilling and sash and door making, £452,181; biscuits and confectionery, £150,000; tanning and fellmongery, £230,000; fertilizers, £160,000; woollen-milling, £290,000. Decreases are recorded as follows: Butter and cheese, £254,394; boots and shoes, £86,868; grain-milling, £340,000; and coopering and case-making, £160,000.

Land, Buildings, and Plant.—The values of this item—*viz.*, £45,500,000—give a fair indication of the permanency and stability of the Dominion's manufacturing industries. Less than fifteen years ago the same assets were only £16,700,000.