

- (3.) Millers determined upon prices as follows: £18 per ton for flour f.o.b. South, a maximum of £8 per ton for bran f.o.b. South, and a maximum of £9 per ton for pollard f.o.b. South.
- (4.) Duty on bran and pollard from Australia to be reduced from £2 10s. to £1 per ton.
- (5.) Millers to find cash for wheat from Australia to supply the deficiency till next harvest, and Government to purchase, import, and distribute these necessary additional supplies.

This decision of the Government did not involve reimpositions of the embargo on flour, nor any alteration in the duty upon flour. The lowering of the price of flour from £19 per ton South to £18 per ton was effective in reducing bread-prices in those cities and towns where a rise of 1d. per 2 lb. loaf had been made in early March. Generally speaking, the arrangement effected gave stability to the wheat-growing, flour-milling, and baking industries of the Dominion, and the bread-consumers of the Dominion were relieved to the extent of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per 2 lb. loaf. The reduction of the duty on bran and pollard has also made available at satisfactory prices the necessary additional supplies from abroad. Purchase and importation of Australian wheat for milling requirements is now again being carried out by the Department.

CONCLUSION.

This report does not, of course, set out in detail by any means the whole of the work carried out by the Department during the past year. The limitations of staff—seventeen only for the whole Dominion—necessitates concentration upon essential duties and leaving-over of work which can be undertaken at a later period. Some important investigations into the Dominion's industries have had to stand aside, but these will be undertaken as opportunity offers. Everything possible has been done, however, to check unfair methods of trading, and to foster and promote the Dominion's industries and commerce.

There is reason for congratulation in that the Dominion has substantially been free of that commercial and industrial depression which has so seriously affected the position in Great Britain. The statistical position discloses steady growth in both industry and commerce, and in regard to industry particularly the support from our own citizens now given to goods made in this country is distinctly encouraging. There is still, however, much scope for the removal of prejudice, and for co-operation between manufacturers, retailers, and the general public.

It is pleasing to be able once again to record the generally satisfactory condition of the commerce of the Dominion, which is at all times so largely dependent upon a satisfactory production and sale of our primary products. Provided that the present prosperity is not made the basis of extravagance and speculation, a period of healthy and sound progress appears to lie ahead of the Dominion.

For the Department of Industries and Commerce,

J. W. COLLINS, Secretary.

APPENDIX A.

AGRICULTURE AND DAIRY MACHINERY AND IMPLEMENTS.

Output—(1906) £200,000; (1924) £600,000.

THE condition of this industry has been normal during the past year. Competition, especially from overseas, has been keen, and labour, with the exception of that required for highly skilled work, plentiful. The export trade, especially with Australia, has improved since the reciprocal tariff arrangement was made.

ENGINEERING.

Output—(1906) £437,000; (1924) £1,650,000.

Subnormal conditions have prevailed in this industry for some considerable time. Ample labour is available for practically all branches. In Auckland and Dunedin boilermakers and pattern-makers are in demand. Those in a position to judge regard the prospects as likely to be a little brighter during the coming year.

BOOT AND SHOE MAKING.

Output—(1906) £501,000; (1924) £1,355,000.

This industry has been passing through a very difficult period, and has been depressed through extraordinary overseas competition and excessive importations, a large proportion of which retailers were compelled to sacrifice. The surplus stocks of imported footwear are being reduced, and local manufacturers are commencing to obtain a larger proportion of orders. The quick changes of fashion, especially in ladies' footwear, are having a helpful effect.

CLOTHING.

Output—(1906) £423,000; (1924) £2,400,000.

The clothing industry, like the bootmaking industry, is passing through a period of depression, and during last winter a great many of the factories were working only part-time. There is plenty of labour available in all centres for this industry. The present tendency is for slackening of operations, with consequent partial unemployment that will only be alleviated by a greater demand for locally made wearing-apparel.