

Value of Principal Imports from Undermentioned Countries.

Country.	Articles.	1926.	1927.	1928.
		£	£	£
India	Cornsacks	276,593	249,470	211,709
	Jute and hessian bags	175,660	165,946	211,459
	Wool-packs	146,626	104,676	147,906
	Hessians and scrim	72,519	77,528	67,503
Ceylon	Tea	61,747	48,720	33,459
	Tea	843,228	823,266	836,759
Dutch East Indies	Mineral oils	620,945	487,306	290,865
	Sugar	607	262,924	601,092
	Kapok	80,821	68,247	64,166
Japan	Silk piece-goods (including artificial silk)	323,720	377,832	368,160
	Cotton piece-goods	64,007	61,347	51,606
	Timber	58,247	47,625	48,951
	Apparel	23,371	22,501	24,969

Other important items imported in 1928 were hemp from the Philippine Islands amounting to £25,593, rice from Burma to the value of £21,494, fruits (preserved and bottled) from the Straits Settlement totalling £44,488, spices from the same country amounting to £24,838, and nuts (edible) from China, which reached £28,322.

Two items are worthy of special mention. One is that of sugar imported from the Dutch East Indies, which it will be noted rose from £607 in 1926 to £262,924 in 1927 and £601,092 in 1928. This great increase is reflected in decreases in the imports of raw sugar from Fiji and Cuba. There have been considerable changes of recent years in the direction of our imports of this commodity, and these are shown in the section relating to sugar.

The other item which should be particularly mentioned is that of mineral oils, also imported from the Dutch East Indies, the value of which declined from £620,945 in 1926 to £290,865 in 1928. This is mainly accounted for by increased imports of motor-spirits from the United States, and a corresponding decline in the quantity imported from the Dutch East Indies. The decline in value may be accounted for to some extent, too, to the change to importation in bulk. The quantities of motor-spirit imported from the Dutch East Indies were 10,374,644 gallons in 1926, 11,841,133 in 1927, and 8,604,189 in 1928, as compared with imports from the United States amounting to 34,135,875 gallons in 1926, 36,201,437 in 1927, and 45,935,868 in 1928.

The Department is willing at all times to co-operate with any firm desiring to open up trade relations, and will endeavour to advise it upon any matters connected therewith.

OVERSEAS TRADE REPRESENTATION.

The Department has no officers abroad exclusively engaged in trade-development work, but to an increasing extent every year calls are made upon the Government representatives located at Melbourne, Sydney, and Vancouver, and to a lesser extent much useful commercial information is obtained from New Zealand representatives at San Francisco, Durban, Johannesburg, Honolulu, Belgium, Marseilles, and Calcutta.

The Department has honorary correspondents in other localities, notably New York, where Mr. Frank Kennedy, a New-Zealander, who is manager and agent for a large British manufacturing concern, affords on request advice and information on trade matters. Mr. Kennedy has been particularly helpful and courteous to New-Zealanders visiting New York.

The expansion of our trade relations with Canada during the last three years has imposed upon Mr. W. A. James, the New Zealand Government Representative at Vancouver, a great deal of extra work of a commercial nature. The call for this extra work emanated from the New Zealand end, and has been undertaken most willingly. Acknowledgment should be made of the fact that the services are most efficiently carried out. Mr. James has kept the Department in close touch with industrial and commercial affairs in Canada, and his offices have been frequently used by New Zealand visitors to Canada. The increasing growth of our trade with that country has rendered it necessary for special consideration to be given to our representation there, and the subject has been dealt with more fully in the paragraph relating to Canadian trade.

In Australia Messrs. H. J. Manson, Melbourne, and W. R. Blow, Sydney, devote a good deal of their time to commercial matters, and regular reports are received from each officer as to the duties undertaken. So far as the trade relations with the Commonwealth are concerned, it has been apparent for some years past, probably owing to changed communications and to the establishment of the Federal Government headquarters at Canberra, that Sydney is becoming the more important centre. For the past three years New Zealand has been less dependent for its supplies of wheat and flour on Commonwealth sources, and the bulk cargoes that were imported from Victoria to New Zealand ports have fallen off considerably. The exports to New Zealand from the Commonwealth for the twelve months ending the 31st March, 1929, show a decrease in value of £322,138 as compared with the previous twelve months, and the trade from the Dominion to the Commonwealth shows a reduction of £607,193. In his annual report Mr. Manson describes this decrease in general trade to