

CONCLUSION.

The Department desires to place on record its appreciation of the assistance and co-operation which have at all times been received from the various Trade Commissioners, Consuls, and Vice-Consuls of overseas countries resident in New Zealand. In particular it is desired to acknowledge indebtedness to His Majesty's Trade Commissioner, the Australian Trade Commissioner, and the Canadian Trade Commissioner. Acknowledgment must also be made of the assistance which has been extended to this Department by other Departments, and in this connection it is desired specially to mention Customs, Scientific and Industrial Research, Labour, Forestry, and Agriculture.

In conclusion it is desired to refer briefly to economic conditions within the Dominion. The increased purchasing-power which has been placed in the hands of the people, partly as a result of higher prices being received overseas for our products and partly as a result of the policy of the Government which caused wage-rates to be increased, has led to a keener demand for our goods. As a result it has been observed that, in general, factories in New Zealand have worked at full capacity, with substantial increases in turnovers. The increase in importations has resulted in a more balanced overseas trade and has been a factor in stimulating business activity within the Dominion. In particular the distributive and merchandizing services have benefited. Towards the close of the period, however, uneasiness prevailed amongst some manufacturers, who felt that increasing importations from overseas were affecting adversely certain of the manufacturing industries. Throughout the year public confidence has strengthened, and generally improved conditions have prevailed. The outlook appears favourable for expansion of industry and commerce.

The Department has experienced a year of great activity, and the increasing volume and importance of the work thrown upon it has necessitated the addition of several officers to the staff. At no time, however, has the pressure of work on individual officers slackened, and the staff are deserving of the highest consideration and praise for the capable and trustworthy manner in which they have carried out their duties.

APPENDIX.

MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES.

NOTE.—In every case the factory-production statistics of each industry detailed hereunder relate to the twelve months ended 31st March, 1934, 1935, and 1936 (the latest year for which statistics are available).

The comments appearing below the statistics in each case relate, however, to the twelve months ending 30th April, 1937, the period covered by this report.

FRUIT-PRESERVING AND JAM-MAKING.

Official statistics, year ended 31st March—	1934.	1935.	1936.
Establishments (number)	9	12	17
Employees (number)	347	371	425
Salaries and wages paid	£48,830	£48,994	£56,328
Value of output	£257,263	£302,142	£361,151
Value added by manufacture	£123,437	£122,795	£148,250
Imports, calendar years—	£ (N.Z.)	£ (N.Z.)	£ (N.Z.)
Jams and preserves (including preserved ginger)	13,341	13,218	13,653
Fruits, bottled and preserved in syrup—			
Apricots	13,995	19,111	18,260
Peaches	17,871	29,093	31,413
Pears	585	849	2,574
Fruit pulp, n.e.i.	6,224	4,610	10,049
Total	52,016	66,881	75,949

Despite a poor fruit season generally, a satisfactory year ensued so far as manufacturing operations were concerned. In some instances reports have been received indicating increased business, with staffs being increased to cope with demand. Generally, prospects for the coming season are considered good.

Boot and Shoe Making.

Official statistics, year ended 31st March—	1934.	1935.	1936.
Establishments (number)	71	76	75
Employees (number)	2,429	2,541	2,788
Salaries and wages paid	£336,391	£344,504	£360,684
Value of output	£1,064,544	£1,102,950	£1,140,306
Value added by manufacture	£523,487	£540,663	£534,340
Imports, calendar years	£252,492	£282,123	£311,900

For the greater part of the year most of the units in this industry continued to enjoy much improved conditions, resulting in some expansion in production and additional staffs being engaged, while in certain instances there was difficulty in securing skilled workers. Some manufacturers expressed the fear that they would not be able to compete successfully with imported footwear, but during the year under review the cause of this fear did not materialize to any marked degree.