

Zealand is able to purchase its full requirements in the open market it will still be necessary for traders' stocks to be built up substantially and for labour and packaging problems to be overcome before any relaxation of rationing could be considered. Mr. L. M. Wright, Tea Adviser to the Office, left New Zealand for Calcutta and Colombo in February, 1947, to make arrangements for our future tea procurement.

(iii) *Butter*

194. The rationing of butter continues in New Zealand for the purpose of providing a greater volume of export to the United Kingdom. The ration scale has remained constant at 6 oz. per week, except for the bonus of 8 oz. made in December, 1946, as a Christmas concession. During the year, in an endeavour to facilitate the orderly disposal of small-scale production, the coupon value of dairy butter was fixed at half the coupon value of factory butter. Butter consumers are still required to register with retailers.

195. Approximately 13,000 tons of butter were conserved during the year as a result of rationing.

(iv) *Meat*

196. There has been no change in the rationing system operating since March, 1943. The ration scale remained static at 1s. 6d. value per person per week, with half-rations for children under the age of five years. The only additional grant was that of 6d. per head at Christmas time. During the year approximately 29,000 tons of meat were withdrawn from civilian consumption and diverted to the United Kingdom. This tonnage compares more than favourably with the preceding year, when 26,000 tons were conserved by rationing. The improvement indicates that the coupon-replacement system is working satisfactorily and that the control is effective. The total payments made to butchers by way of meat subsidy for the period ended 31st March, 1947, amounted to £931,495.

(v) *Bacon and Ham*

197. These commodities are still subject to control at the source, on the basis of licensed quotas. During the year subsidy amounting to £188,642 was paid to bacon curers.

(vi) *Eggs*

198. Supplies in the main centres of population deteriorated still further in 1946 with the result that the priority system of egg rationing proved most valuable. During the year all priorities were met in the eighteen towns where the scheme operates.

(vii) *Clothing*

199. The year under review was one of the most difficult for supplies of materials and made-up garments. Stocks were insufficient to cover coupons in the hands of consumers, and it is evident that an accumulation of clothing coupons has occurred. The prospects of an early improvement in availability are not good. Coupons issued were twenty-six in June, 1946, and twenty-six in December, 1946.

(viii) *Hosiery*

200. The local production of women's fully fashioned hosiery has remained steady at approximately 600,000 pairs per annum, but imports have considerably increased. The forward position is much brighter with women's hosiery than with other clothing.

(ix) *Rehabilitation*

201. Assistance by way of special allocations of rationed goods reached its peak during the year. A fair proportion of the applicants for assistance are in a position to establish permanent businesses, and particular attention and special assistance has been afforded in such cases. A great number of applicants are, however, taking advantage of temporary shortages, and this is particularly noticeable in the pastrycooking industry, into which a very great number of returned servicemen have been rehabilitated.