

Production of shop twine, &c., is expected to increase as the manufacturers have added to their equipment, while supplies of raw materials which have been facilitated by the Department will greatly assist in building up output.

Locally produced linen flax has been used, as during the previous year, to assist in the manufacture of seaming twine.

(e) PAPER BAG AND BOX MAKING

	1938-39.	1945-46.	1946-47.*
Number of units engaged	22	30	..
Number of persons employed	621	1,011	1,086
Salaries and wages paid	£101,085	£265,723	£310,000
Value of output	£451,997	£1,420,964	£1,706,000

* Interim figures.

The New Zealand cardboard-box makers have continued to draw to a large extent upon the board produced by Whakatane Paper Mills, Ltd., to meet the needs of the packaging industries. Increasing quantities were, however, available from Scandinavian sources in the past year, and this relieved the pressure on the limited output of the local mill.

Wrapping-paper requirements and the demand for bag reels have been reasonably covered by local production, even though demand has considerably increased since pre-war. Further demand will come from a multiwall-paper-bag factory which it is anticipated will be in production shortly to supply a considerable portion of the packaging necessary for cement and fertilizers.

(f) PRINTING, PUBLISHING, AND BOOK-BINDING

	1938-39.	1945-46.	1946-47.*
Number of units engaged	373	346	..
Number of persons employed	8,337	7,065	7,697
Salaries and wages paid	£2,003,930	£2,325,894	£2,641,000
Value of output	£4,873,530	£6,857,067	£7,716,000

* Interim figures.

Paper has been obtainable in reasonable quantities from Canadian, United Kingdom, and, latterly, Scandinavian sources, and, on the whole, the industry has experienced little difficulty with supplies except in the case of newsprint. The quantity of this paper available from Canada was still short of requirements, causing newspapers still to restrict the size of their publications. The modernizing and extending of plant has been continued, although delivery of machinery from overseas is frequently much delayed.

SECTION 3.—CHEMICALS, RUBBER, AND TOBACCO

Difficulty in obtaining desired quantities of raw materials has continued to be particularly marked in the case of alkalis. Especially has this been so with caustic soda and soda ash, which are required in important local industries. As Great Britain could not export enough caustic soda to meet New Zealand's minimum requirements we were forced to obtain supplies from America and the Continent. Scarcity of soda ash mainly affected the glassmaking industry, and production of white glass could not be continued. Some soda ash became available from America, Japan, and Europe, and towards the end of the year supplies improved. The position now looks promising, but procurement of caustic soda will require close attention. While the other alkalis are not in easy supply, future prospects for them are fair and further serious difficulty is not anticipated.