

precluded to date. The Government has had the advice of two accredited trade representatives who visited Japan, and a survey of the German position has been carried out by this Department's London representative in collaboration with New Zealand and British textile representatives. The United Kingdom is taking substantial quantities of Continental and Japanese textiles and yarns for further processing and finishing in the United Kingdom before re-export.

In an endeavour to alleviate local shortages the Department has given particular attention towards securing increased deliveries of blankets (including cot blankets), towels and towelling, diaper cloth, babies' and infants' clothing, flannel, flannelette, Viyella and Clydella, winceyette, blind holland, hand fingering yarns (including baby wool), pillow cottons, sheetings, and tickings. We have also sought increased allocations of cotton and rayon yarns, sewing-threads, worsted yarn, worsted suitings, linings and interlinings, bag calico, surgical gauze, cellulose wadding, ducks and drills, palmer nap and denim, and cotton and rayon tire fabrics for our local industries. Our requirements of meat-wraps and cheese-bandages continue to be assured from the United Kingdom, with the assistance of the United Kingdom Ministry of Food. Furnishing fabrics have been freely available from various sources, but prices are high.

The production of the local woollen-mills continues to be limited by labour shortages, but our imports of piece-goods have allowed demand to be substantially met in these lines. Worsteds suitings are still not in full supply, but are more readily available than hitherto, and the improvement should continue. Woollen-yarn production and imports have together been insufficient to meet our needs, but supplies from the United Kingdom are increasing. The over-all New Zealand allocations from Australia of worsted yarn increased slightly, but the quota for worsted piece-goods was less than for the previous year.

To assist in relieving shortages, substantial imports of finished clothing were permitted in 1947 and landings have continued well into 1948. The general position is improving, and the Department, with the co-operation of manufacturing, wholesale, and retail organizations, has endeavoured to ease specific shortages. Preference has been given to materials suitable for men's and children's wear, but non-availability of cloths, particularly flannels and shirtings, is still a limiting factor. Supplementary supplies from overseas of such lines as woollen underwear, men's working-socks, babies' and infants' knitted apparel, and boys' school hose still appear to be necessary.

Prices of both raw cotton and raw wool showed further increases during the year. In the case of raw cotton it was approximately 100 per cent. for Egyptian types and 20-25 per cent. for American types, and this has, in turn, caused steep increases in the prices of textiles and clothing. For raw wool the increase was also substantial, and similar trends are noticeable in respect of processed goods of wool.

Comparative quantities of main classes of textile materials imported during 1946 and 1947 have been as follows :—

	1946.	1947.
Woollen piece-goods (sq. yd.)	3,810,250	5,785,998
Woollen yarns (lb.)	1,385,269	1,606,326
Cotton and linen piece-goods, woven (sq. yd.) ..	44,731,423	37,872,378
Cotton piece-goods, knitted (lb.)	494,331	494,877
Cheese-bandage and meat-wraps (lb.)	2,083,800	2,140,763
Cotton yarns (lb.)	1,797,755	1,664,019
Silk and rayon piece-goods, woven (sq. yd.) ..	9,635,968	16,496,603
Silk and rayon piece-goods, knitted (lb.) ..	461,039	526,440
Silk and rayon yarns (lb.)	362,421	479,360
Tailors' trimmings (sq. yd.)	2,097,746	1,502,618