

Statistics of the three main divisions of our textile industry—woollen-milling, hosiery manufacture and knitting, and clothing-manufacture—show very marked expansion in recent years.

(a) WOOLLEN-MILLS

		1938-39.	1945-46.	1946-47.†
Number of units engaged		12	18*	..
Number of persons employed		2,406	3,557	2,996
Salaries and wages paid		£392,393	£970,695	£891,000
Value of output		£951,636	£2,579,171	£2,389,000

* Includes hand weaving-plants and units engaged in spinning yarn for carpet-manufacture.

† Interim figures.

From the following comparative statement of the domestic output of woollen yarn and piece-goods for the years 1945, 1946, and 1947 it will be noted that 1945 production levels in the lines specified are not being maintained. Shortages of labour are the source of much difficulty to the mills:—

		1945.	1946.	1947.
Yarns (lb.)		1,835,672	1,663,674	1,403,822
Woollen and worsted piece-goods (sq. yd.)		3,984,654	3,381,945	3,400,000
Flannel (sq. yd.)		794,428	529,860	500,000
Blankets (pr.)		152,988	128,942	142,381

(b) HOSIERY AND KNITTING MILLS

		1938-39.	1945-46.	1946-47.*
Number of units engaged		36	51	..
Number of persons employed		1,259	2,113	2,254
Salaries and wages paid		£182,956	£540,034	£584,000
Value of output		£574,237	£2,223,907	£2,447,000

* Interim figures.

Production in this group covers wool, cotton and rayon fabrics, together with a wide range of garments, including bathing-costumes, underwear, socks, and stockings, and knitted outerwear for juveniles and adults. Since silk has again become available for making women's full-length hosiery there has occurred a substantial reduction in the number of pairs made of lisle, both of the circular-knitted and fully-fashioned types.

(c) CLOTHING-MANUFACTURE

		1938-39.	1945-46.	1946-47.†
Number of units engaged		380	496	..
Number of persons employed		12,270	14,825	15,377
Salaries and wages paid		£1,568,886	£3,167,997	£3,516,000
Value of output		£3,809,093	£9,126,411*	£10,308,000

* Includes own materials used, but excludes value of customers' materials made up.

† Interim figures.

Clothes-rationing was discontinued at the end of 1947, and in some lines the return of a buyers' market is reported. Labour is somewhat easier than before, and it appears that manufacturers will be intensifying their attention to such things as price and quality.