

is expected to enable our manufacturers to produce at lower costs. The new tariff is reported to have been helpful also to manufacturers of heating-systems.

In the cooking-stove industry a general change is taking place. Coal and wood stoves are giving way to gas and electric ranges, and New Zealand manufacturers are using every endeavour to keep abreast of the times by turning out at competitive prices both gas and electric stoves of the most efficient design and of the highest quality. There are several makes of locally-produced electric ranges, electric stoves, radiators, grillers, bakers' ovens, &c., on the market to-day, and the demand that has recently set in for these clearly indicates that quality, efficiency, and prices are right.

Manufacturers of sheet-metal and ornamental iron, bronze, and brass goods report a fairly good year, with bright prospects.

It is satisfactory to report that Onakaka pig iron is meeting with increased demand throughout the Dominion. Its quality is very well reported upon.

Sauce, Pickle, and Vinegar Making.

Official statistics, year ended 31st March :—				1925.	1926.	1927.
Establishments (number)	..	..	..	18	17	20
Employees (number)	..	..	..	239	237	258
Wages paid	..	..	..	£43,338	£46,919	£49,082
Value of output	..	..	..	£200,164	£202,065	£210,779
Value added by manufacture	..	..	..	£95,960	£98,774	£105,096
Imports, calendar years :—						
Pickles (gallons)	..	..	..	4,481	7,888	2,893
Value	..	..	..	£3,193	£4,922	£1,808
Sauce and chutney (gallons)	..	..	..	15,976	20,859	15,903
Value	..	..	..	£17,491	£21,085	£17,055
Vinegar (gallons)	..	..	..	24,325	31,818	30,820
Value	..	..	..	£6,586	£8,666	£8,244

This industry, though comparatively small, appears to be supplying the bulk of the Dominion's requirements. The output of the local factories is gradually increasing. The past twelve months has proved a very quiet trading year.

Soap and Candle Making.

Official statistics, year ended 31st March :—				1925.	1926.	1927.
Establishments (number)	..	..	..	22	23	25
Employees (number)	..	..	..	472	460	473
Wages paid	..	..	..	£98,278	£97,916	£98,531
Value of output	..	..	..	£560,897	£538,026	£566,802
Value added by manufacture	..	..	..	£288,603	£256,548	£275,976

The total value of the soap and candles consumed in New Zealand is approximately £650,000 per annum, and of this amount about 85 per cent. is made in the Dominion. The use of candles continues to diminish rapidly. The demand for soap shows a fairly steady increase. Soap-manufacturers agree that factory-capacity is much in excess of demand. Extremely keen competition has been a feature of the trade during the past year. Considerable expansion is possible in the local manufacture of tablet and fancy soaps.

Coach and Motor-body Building.

Official statistics, year ended 31st March :—				1925.	1926.	1927.
Establishments (number)	..	..	..	170	173	179
Employees (number)	..	..	..	1,316	1,496	1,497
Wages paid	..	..	..	£260,467	£327,970	£312,691
Value of output	..	..	..	£720,886	£764,491	£681,912
Value added by manufacture	..	..	..	£451,243	£478,066	£426,119

As the figures indicate, the position in this industry has been subject to some change in recent years. Since 1924-25 the number of employees has increased by 181, and wages advanced by £52,000, but as the value of products in 1926-27 fell by a considerable amount it is evident that a change has been taking place in the relation of labour and materials to the value of finished products. The complete building of motor-vehicle bodies is tending to decline, while partial building and assembly has been increasing. In the majority of instances, and apart from bodies of special design, locally-built bodies are constructed for English or European chassis. The local body-builders still hold the business for commercial trucks and buses, but the demand for large passenger-bodies has recently been very slow.