

The Census and Statistics Office has co-operated with international and other organizations throughout the world in the matter of business statistics, and by means of interchanging publications is in close touch with the rapid advances that are being made in this branch of statistics. To meet the developments of industry and commerce in the Dominion, and to keep abreast of the times, a monthly summary of business statistics was inaugurated in April, 1928. The preparation of the necessary indices month by month, together with the expression of the trends manifested therein, which demands a high standard of statistical technique and a thorough grounding in economics, has so far been on a relatively modest scale. The experience, however, of even a single year, together with certain investigations which have been carried out, has resulted in the Office being able to meet a growing public demand for information of this nature.

*Accident Insurance.*—When the direct collection of statistics of accident insurance was undertaken by the Census and Statistics Office in 1926 a distinction was provided for in the statement of premiums and claims as between workers' compensation and other forms of accident insurance. Last year the form of return was amplified to obtain also separate figures for (1) personal accident and sickness insurance, (2) motor-vehicle insurance, and (3) motor-omnibus insurance (risks under Motor-omnibus Licensing Regulations).

The institution of a system of compulsory insurance for all motor-vehicles under the Motor-vehicles Insurance (Third-party Risks) Act of 1928 will involve an extension of our insurance statistics to cover this class of insurance in detail, providing not only figures of premiums and claims, but also statistics of motor-vehicle accidents due to negligence.

*Electricity Generation and Supply.*—The rapid development in the electricity generation and supply industry during recent years has been accompanied by a growing demand for information relating to the industry. This demand has been met by extending the data collected and presenting the final statistics in such a way as to shed light on the manifold ramifications of the industry. The main classification divides the stations into (a) generating and (b) distributing, an undertaking that has been complicated by the fact that certain stations fall midway between the two. Further classifications group stations according to size. In past years a certain amount of duplication has occurred in the preparation of statistical data in the Census and Statistics Office and the Hydro-electric Branch of the Public Works Department. Arrangements have now been completed whereby the annual statistics will be arranged to fulfil all requirements in one presentation, the whole of the tabulation and preparatory work being centralized in the Census and Statistics Office, with which the Hydro-electric Branch collaborates in respect of technical aspects of the data.

*Dairy-factory Statistics.*—As part of the scheme for the application of science to the farming industry, the Office has been directing attention towards the preparation of relative yields and costs in respect of butter and cheese factories on the lines of what is done annually in Denmark, the object being to raise the standard of the manufacturing processes. Finality has not yet been reached, and collaboration with the Dairy Division of the Department of Agriculture and the companies engaged in the manufacture of butter and cheese shows that a good deal remains to be done to consummate the scheme. An essential to the full development of the scheme is the approval of the dairy companies to the publication of detailed figures for each company, and in a considerable proportion of cases this approval is not yet forthcoming.

*Butterfat - yields.*—Following on the tabulation of statistics of milk and butterfat yields of some seventy thousand cows on behalf of the Scientific and Industrial Research Department last year, a special investigation over a much greater field was made during 1928 as part of the scheme of increasing the statistical knowledge concerning the Dominion's dairy industry. Returns were collected through dairy companies, showing the number of cows milked for supply to the factories and the total butterfat-yield. While the collection was by no means complete, ample returns were received from which to obtain reliable and informative figures as to the average yield per cow in the different districts of the Dominion.

*Use of Fertilizers.*—The realization of the necessity of improving the productivity of the Dominion's farm lands has led in recent years to an ever-increasing use of fertilizers and an extension of top-dressing. Questions as to the quantity and class of fertilizer used and the area top-dressed were added to the agricultural and pastoral statistics questionnaire last year; and in connection with the spring collection of statistics of areas sown in wheat, oats, barley, and potatoes information is now obtained as to whether fertilizer was used, and, if so, the quantity per acre. The information so obtained will shed valuable light on the effect of fertilizer on the per-acre yields.

*Varieties of Oats.*—At the instance of the New Zealand Farmers' Union, the card used in the spring for the collection of information as to sowings of wheat, oats, barley, and potatoes was amplified this year to provide for varieties of oats to be shown, as has been the case with wheat for several years past. Corollary to this change, similar detail as to threshings was also provided for in the form used for obtaining from threshing-mill owners information as to quantities of wheat and oats threshed.

*World Agricultural Census.*—So long ago as 1924 the General Assembly of the International Institute of Agriculture passed a resolution stressing the desirability of a general agricultural census being taken in all countries on a uniform plan, and as far as possible on the same date, which was fixed for the year 1930. The draft scheme subsequently submitted by the Institute does not vary in material respects from that employed annually in New Zealand, and little difficulty will be experienced in this country in falling into line with the international scheme for the 1930 collection. The Census and Statistics Office have been in fairly constant communication with the International Institute on the subject, and Mr. Leon M. Estabrook, who has been appointed by the Institute to direct the international project, visited New Zealand in the course of a world tour and discussed matters on the spot with the Government Statistician. The necessary preliminary steps have been taken so far as possible to ensure New Zealand's participation in the scheme.