

Coach and Motor-body Building.

Official statistics, year ended 31st March :—

	1926.	1927.	1928.
Establishments (number)	173	179	190
Employees (number)	1,496	1,497	1,469
Wages paid	£327,970	£312,691	£309,961
Value of output	£764,491	£681,912	£672,212
Value added by manufacture ..	£478,066	£426,119	£432,732

The position of this industry is practically unchanged from that of last year; a slight decrease has taken place in the number of employees, and a further decrease in the value of output. The value added by manufacture, which is a true indication of progress, has increased by £6,000. The building of motor-vehicle bodies is tending to decline, whilst the partial building and assembling has increased. The local body-builders hold the business for commercial trucks and buses, and also for bodies of special design. Reports from the southern manufacturers indicate that the future prospects of the industry are not bright.

Biscuit and Confectionery Making.

Official statistics, year ended 31st March :—

	1926.	1927.	1928.
Establishments (number)	69	79	83
Employees (number)	2,494	2,655	2,640
Wages paid	£347,878	£365,442	£373,896
Value of output	£1,588,459	£1,626,269	£1,637,597
Value added by manufacture ..	£805,691	£841,798	£846,915

This industry shows a very steady growth, which has been maintained for the past six years. Notwithstanding that the total consumption of the Dominion of these products declined by £68,000, local value of output increased by £11,000. The total decline in imports represented approximately £80,000, which no doubt is due in some measure to the tariff protection afforded by the Government in the 1927 tariff-revision. The effect of the tariff has also been to induce overseas manufacturers to erect factories within the Dominion, and consequently the number of factories has increased by four during the year. It has been already intimated in the press that the well-known English firm of Messrs. Cadbury and Fry also propose to erect a factory in the Dominion, the exact location of which has not yet been decided upon. Business among New Zealand manufacturers is reported as generally good, an improvement being particularly noticed since the commencement of the present year.

Furniture and Cabinet Making.

Official statistics, year ended 31st March :—

	1926.	1927.	1928.
Establishments (number)	311	337	343
Employees (number)	2,767	2,751	2,708
Wages paid	£532,808	£538,386	£522,923
Value of output	£1,375,620	£1,413,054	£1,318,957
Value added by manufacture ..	£747,900	£783,414	£752,261

The value of output shows a falling-off of approximately £100,000. Manufacturers complain generally that the increasing use of motor-cars for pleasure purposes has diverted trade which previously was obtained by them, the purchase of furniture being reduced to a minimum in order to provide funds for motor-cars. Since the beginning of the year, however, there has been a better tone in this industry, and manufacturers look forward to an improvement in output during the current year.

Ham and Bacon Factories.

Official statistics, year ended 31st March :—

	1926.	1927.	1928.
Establishments (number)	38	44	41
Employees (number)	353	401	394
Wages paid	£82,838	£93,378	£98,739
Value of output	£1,009,020	£1,164,180	£1,041,910
Value added by manufacture ..	£315,672	£240,289	£334,475
Cost of materials used	£783,348	£923,891	£707,435

The annual report of last year stated that the value added by manufacture showed a substantial decline as compared with the 1926 period, due to the high cost of raw materials. The figures for the current year, however, show the reverse position. The cost of the materials has decreased £200,000, and the value added by manufacture has increased by £94,000. The industry is in a relatively better position than for the four preceding years, notwithstanding the decrease in the value of output as compared with the 1927 figures.