

Bricks, Pipes, Tiles, and Pottery Making.

Official statistics, year ended 31st March :—

	1926.	1927.	1928.
Establishments (number)	71	73	71
Employees (number)	1,392	1,316	1,300
Wages paid	£310,194	£303,561	£295,848
Value of output	£700,183	£697,477	£680,220
Value added by manufacture ..	£664,912	£666,096	£650,999

The figures for the current year have not appreciably altered from those of the previous year. In the Otago District the quality of sinks and other sanitary ware has considerably improved, and the manufacturers are obtaining increased support by plumbers and hardware-merchants.

Flax-milling.

Official statistics, year ended 31st March :—

	1926.	1927.	1928.
Establishments (number)	71	73	70
Employees (number)	1,241	1,193	1,020
Wages paid	£275,755	£233,897	£181,304
Value of output	£553,285	£495,784	£402,421
Value added by manufacture ..	£430,393	£369,465	£310,116

Rope and Twine Making.

Official statistics, year ended 31st March :—

	1926.	1927.	1928.
Establishments (number)	6	7	7
Employees (number)	227	228	225
Wages paid	£44,144	£45,151	£45,680
Value of output	£237,573	£227,562	£214,344
Value added by manufacture ..	£105,676	£100,198	£98,660

These two industries are closely related. Flax-milling shows a substantial decline in value of output as compared with the figures of 1927. The number of employees has also declined by 173 during the current year. The industry has drifted into an unfortunate state during recent years. In 1917 the output of New Zealand hemp was 30,809 tons; in 1928 it had declined to 11,700 tons. The prices ruling in London regulate the prices of New Zealand hemp, and owing to competition from sisal and manila low prices have been realized for the New Zealand article. Manufacturers of rope and twine report that conditions are normal. In the Otago District considerable decline in business has been experienced during recent years through the area of oats sown being considerably reduced. The volume of the binder-twine trade depends to a great extent on the quantity of wheat sown.

Clothing.

Official statistics, year ended 31st March :—

	1926.	1927.	1928.
Establishments (number)	221	229	215
Employees (number)	6,833	6,881	7,101
Wages paid	£844,383	£873,140	£869,953
Value of output	£2,515,280	£2,600,462	£2,507,446
Value added by manufacture ..	£1,168,595	£1,211,716	£1,198,064

Imports, calendar years :—

Apparel and ready-made clothing	£2,202,791	£1,994,525	£2,156,520
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It will be noted that the value of output by New Zealand factories declined by approximately £100,000, whereas imports increased by £160,000. The countries from which increased imports were received were United Kingdom, £179,000; France, £38,000; Germany, £17,000. The number of New Zealand factories decreased by fourteen during the year, but the return of employees engaged in the industry is given as 7,101, an increase of 219. In the Auckland District manufacturers advise that competition is very keen and business has been quiet. In men's wear trade has been good, while women's frocks and costumes show decided improvement in style, and prices are competitive with imported goods. With the exception of special and exclusive patterns, the New Zealand factories can make all reasonable requirements. In the Canterbury District the outlook is not considered promising, the capacity of manufacture being greater than the demand. The standard of New-Zealand-made clothing shows a decided improvement in quality and style. One large clothing-manufacturer in the Otago District states that business has shown a decided improvement, with a consequent increase in the number of employees and the amount of wages paid. Prospects, in the opinion of this firm, are bright, and increased sales in the coming year are looked for.