

Whilst this report is in course of compilation the Department is engaged in an inquiry into the present position, in order that the Government may be kept fully advised of any tendencies or recent developments.

Lime and Cement.

Official statistics, year ended 31st March—				1934.	1935.	1936.
Establishments (number)	..	..	..	45	50	57
Employees (number)	..	..	..	631	704	759
Salaries and wages paid	..	..	..	£130,675	£144,617	£165,592
Value of output	..	..	..	£556,425	£582,784	£703,724
Value added by manufacture	..	..	..	£444,125	£459,483	£549,831
Imports, calendar years—						
Cement, building (cwt.)	..	..	..	9,370	9,275	17,920
Value	..	..	..	£4,975	£5,161	£10,312

The increase in the demand for concrete pipes and the development of the building industry mainly account for continued improved conditions which have been evidenced in this industry. Following upon the reductions which have been effected in the price of cement, sales have shown some increase and greater numbers of workers found employment in the industry throughout the year.

Engineering.

Official statistics, year ended 31st March—				1934.	1935.	1936.
Establishments (number)	..	..	..	181	196	204
Employees (number)	..	..	..	2,283	2,772	3,326
Salaries and wages paid	..	..	..	£398,721	£502,118	£602,668
Value of output	..	..	..	£1,054,643	£1,413,701	£1,784,274
Value added by manufacture	..	..	..	£652,638	£855,960	£1,055,050

The year has been an exceedingly good one for the industry, shops have been working to capacity, extra labour has been engaged, and overtime worked. There was a tendency to a definite increase in the demand for local manufactures owing to the inability of overseas manufacturers to deliver promptly, since there was a shortage of metal in the overseas market. Later on this retarding influence was felt by local manufacturers also when supplies of raw materials were unobtainable at short notice. Fears were also felt regarding the continued availability of supplies of scrap metals in this country. In certain quarters the development of new lines of manufacture have been reported.

Sauce, Pickle, and Vinegar Making.

Official statistics, year ended 31st March—				1934.	1935.	1936.
Establishments (number)	..	..	..	19	18	18
Employees (number)	..	..	..	237	236	250
Salaries and wages paid	..	..	..	£39,940	£38,345	£41,583
Value of output	..	..	..	£176,561	£192,219	£217,209
Value added by manufacture	..	..	..	£102,667	£108,125	£120,920
Imports, calendar years—						
Pickles (gallons)	..	..	..	1,010	944	2,375
Value	..	..	..	£669	£731	£1,501
Sauce and chutney (gallons)	..	..	..	8,102	8,702	11,057
Value	..	..	..	£10,466	£10,781	£12,615
Vinegar (gallons)	..	..	..	18,676	12,670	18,346
Value	..	..	..	£6,136	£4,068	£5,656

The general condition of this industry is regarded now as normal, with sales showing some increase and competition for the New Zealand market very keen. Generally, staffs have been kept employed, although in some instances an increased number of hands have been engaged.

Soap and Candle Making.

Official statistics, year ended 31st March—				1934.	1935.	1936.
Establishments (number)	..	..	..	24	23	23
Employees (number)	..	..	..	468	513	492
Salaries and wages paid	..	..	..	£85,207	£86,817	£89,187
Value of output	..	..	..	£468,988	£536,235	£574,191
Value added by manufacture	..	..	..	£258,324	£299,695	£296,128

General conditions in this industry were fairly steady. Keen competition is experienced in the local market. Sales of candles continue to diminish as a result of the increasing use of electricity.

One South Island firm has recently installed a new plant for the recovery of glycerine, while another plans to extend manufacturing operations to include shaving-cream, face-cream, hair tonics, &c.