

The range of articles imported into New Zealand is very wide and in almost all cases have increases taken place as compared with the previous year, one noteworthy feature being the increase recorded in imports of luxury items and capital goods. The higher prices now ruling for imported lines is a factor contributing to the increased aggregate of our imports, but the volume of imports has increased very substantially. This is not to be wondered at in view of the increased purchasing-power of the public.

ORIGIN OF IMPORTS.

Table V hereunder sets out the sources from which New Zealand obtains her imports over the past four years, values and percentages of total imports being shown:—

Table V.—Source of New Zealand's Imports (excluding Specie).

	1934.		1935.		1936.		1937.	
	Value.	Per-centage.	Value.	Per-centage.	Value.	Per-centage.	Value.	Per-centage.
British possessions, protectorates, &c.—	£(N.Z.)		£(N.Z.)		£(N.Z.)		£(N.Z.)	
United Kingdom	15,789,761	50·38	18,283,884	50·39	21,852,347	49·51	27,866,857	49·62
India	667,552	2·13	571,627	1·58	554,102	1·26	580,224	1·03
Ceylon	585,689	1·87	633,594	1·75	750,982	1·70	823,469	1·47
South African Union	56,092	0·18	55,800	0·15	119,385	0·27	131,971	0·23
Canada	2,098,610	6·70	2,450,616	6·75	3,325,692	7·53	4,564,051	8·13
Australia	3,238,124	10·33	3,955,677	10·90	4,941,313	11·19	6,594,572	11·74
Fiji	103,166	0·33	80,084	0·22	95,802	0·22	95,564	0·17
Other British countries	600,619	1·92	571,401	1·57	558,435	1·26	693,110	1·23
Totals, British countries	23,139,613	73·84	26,602,683	73·31	32,198,058	72·95	41,349,816	73·62
Foreign countries and possessions—								
United States of America	3,749,559	11·96	4,534,086	12·50	5,525,431	12·52	6,960,191	12·39
France	240,813	0·77	221,982	0·61	215,115	0·49	232,450	0·42
Germany	482,644	1·54	534,442	1·47	748,374	1·70	972,743	1·73
Belgium	137,139	0·44	217,516	0·60	409,102	0·91	545,950	0·97
Japan	836,595	2·67	1,100,177	3·03	1,328,199	3·01	1,629,979	2·90
Dutch East Indies	1,381,974	4·41	1,437,379	3·96	1,722,802	3·90	2,238,105	3·99
All other foreign countries	1,371,215	4·37	1,639,279	4·52	1,987,245	4·52	2,231,461	3·98
Totals, all foreign countries	8,199,939	26·16	9,684,861	26·69	11,936,268	27·05	14,810,879	26·38
Totals, all countries	31,339,552	100·00	36,287,544	100·00	44,134,326	100·00	56,160,695	100·00

The table does not disclose any marked variation in the source of our imports as compared with previous years, and it is satisfactory to note that the proportion of our requirements obtained from Empire countries is slightly in excess of last year's figure.

TRADE WITH UNITED KINGDOM.

The trade of New Zealand with the United Kingdom in the calendar year 1937 marks a record so far as exports, valued at £50,724,550, are concerned, and on only one occasion have imports been valued at a figure in excess of £27,866,857, the value of imports in 1937. These figures represent increases of £5,231,561 and £6,014,510 respectively over the previous year's figures. The excess of exports over imports was £22,857,693.

In our trade with the United Kingdom it is interesting to note that, of our total exports, 76·03 per cent. was absorbed by the Mother-land, against 80·15 per cent. in 1936, and this notwithstanding the increase mentioned above. On the import side, 49·62 per cent. of total imports into New Zealand were obtained from the United Kingdom, as against 49·51 per cent. in the previous year. At this juncture it is interesting to note that, per head of population, New Zealand ranks first in consumption of the produce and manufactures of the United Kingdom with £12 15s. 5d. sterling, or £15 18s. approximately in New Zealand currency, the next greatest consuming country being the Irish Free State with £7 5s. 9d. sterling.

When speaking of the value of our export trade with the United Kingdom it must always be remembered that owing to several factors, notably lack of direct shipping to the Continent, much of our produce shipped to the United Kingdom is destined for other countries. In 1935 this entrepôt trade was valued at £3,885,986 sterling. Wool, hides and skins, and butter form the greatest bulk of this trade, and in 1935, owing to the very greatly reduced quantity of wool re-exported, the figure given above is substantially below normal.

It is recognized that imports from the United Kingdom comprise a huge variety of manufactured goods. Of these, motor-vehicles again show a substantial increase, being valued at £3,416,124, or £741,969 in excess of 1936 figures. Other marked increases have been in carpeting, imports in 1937 being £816,701; textile piece-goods, cotton £1,710,596, woollen £1,105,420, silk and artificial silk £430,032; iron and steel, plate and sheet, £1,371,568; tubes, pipes, and fittings, £432,665; cigarettes, £464,214; electrical machinery, including apparatus, £1,678,787.