

Superphosphates and Chemical Fertilizers.

Official statistics, year ended 31st March—				1935.	1936.	1937.
Establishments (number)	..	..	..	8	8	8
Employees (number)	..	..	..	644	690	753
Salaries and wages paid	..	..	..	£138,257	£149,020	£186,208
Value of output	..	..	..	£1,358,108	£1,360,123	£1,498,228
Added value	..	..	..	£511,552	£539,428	£597,020

Reference is made in a previous section of this report to the operation of the Board of Trade (Fertilizer Prices) Regulations 1938. Manufacturers of fertilizers enjoyed a good year, sales having shown great expansion. The total sales from the eight works during the year ended 31st December, 1937, were 434,732 tons, as against 365,349 tons in the previous year. The improvement has continued into the present year, as may be evidenced from the fact that 129,586 tons were sold during the three months ended 31st March, 1938, as against 86,932 tons for the similar period in the previous year. The figures illustrate in a striking manner the fact that a consciousness of the advantages of fertilizers is developing considerably amongst farmers. The outlook for this industry appears favourable.

Aerated-water and Cordial Factories.

Official statistics, year ended 31st March—				1935.	1936.	1937.
Establishments (number)	..	..	..	127	129	116
Employees (number)	..	..	..	531	529	544
Salaries and wages paid	..	..	..	£99,878	£102,698	£115,519
Value of output	..	..	..	£321,176	£327,106	£375,082
Added value	..	..	..	£232,256	£230,269	£258,404

The conditions in this industry have been good. Owing to the hot summer, sales have shown a marked improvement, although price-cutting has affected conditions to some extent. Employment has shown a slight improvement.

Iron and Brass Foundries.

Official statistics, year ended 31st March—				1935.	1936.	1937.
Establishments (number)	..	..	..	41	42	44
Employees (number)	..	..	..	674	791	883
Salaries and wages paid	..	..	..	£113,215	£137,764	£168,710
Value of output	..	..	..	£263,844	£338,951	£427,736
Added value	..	..	..	£174,405	£214,739	£260,009

Generally, satisfactory conditions have prevailed during the year.

Hosiery-factories.

Official statistics, year ended 31st March—				1935.	1936.	1937.
Establishments (number)	..	..	..	33	33	35
Employees (number)	..	..	..	998	1,012	1,226
Salaries and wages paid	..	..	..	£111,551	£114,379	£146,623
Value of output	..	..	..	£440,089	£461,653	£564,990
Added value	..	..	..	£214,178	£248,236	£258,715
Imports (calendar years)	..	..	..	£196,630	£246,536	£429,525

Production expanded, and the industry, although faced with certain difficulties, experienced a satisfactory year. Competition was keen, especially from overseas, so that operating margins were fine on many lines. The recent tariff alterations have benefited this industry.

Tinned-plate and Sheet-metal Working.

Official statistics, year ended 31st March—				1935.	1936.	1937.
Establishments (number)	..	..	..	130	127	128
Employees (number)	..	..	..	1,452	1,384	1,554
Salaries and wages paid	..	..	..	£214,918	£204,118	£270,608
Value of output	..	..	..	£763,682	£792,461	£1,032,347
Value added by manufacture	..	..	..	£358,577	£344,107	£451,464

The year has been a very busy one for this industry, with sales showing some increase. Prospects are good.

Electrical Engineering.

Official statistics, year ended 31st March—				1935.	1936.	1937.
Establishments (number)	..	..	..	53	69	74
Employees (number)	..	..	..	355	617	598
Salaries and wages paid	..	..	..	£52,683	£90,080	£94,837
Value of output	..	..	..	£162,755	£302,056	£321,306
Value added by manufacture	..	..	..	£86,944	£172,614	£181,541

Business throughout the year was exceptionally good. Prices of raw materials exhibited violent fluctuations in the first quarter, but since then showed a tendency to ease. A decided shortage of skilled workmen was evident in some cases, and this hampered production to some extent. In many instances increases were made in both factory and shop space to cope with demand. On the year as a whole, production has shown a good increase, and employment has increased also.