

The attention of the business and commercial community in the Dominion is drawn to the facilities offered by the Government representatives, agents, and correspondents in various parts of the world. They are at the disposal of any person or firm desiring to extend trade relations with the countries concerned, and it is hoped that exporters and merchants in New Zealand will co-operate with the Department and with the Trade Commissioners and honorary representatives concerned by utilizing the services and facilities offered to the fullest possible extent.

STORES CONTROL BOARD.

A representative of the Department continues to act on the Stores Control Board Advisory Committee. The value of the stores purchased by Departments of State during the year ended 31st March, 1933, was £2,109,698, against £2,715,215 for the previous financial year.

CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE.

The Department continues to be represented by honorary membership on the executive of the Chamber of Commerce in each of the chief centres.

The annual conference of the Associated Chambers of Commerce of New Zealand was held in Dunedin last October. The Conference agreed to the venue of the 1933 Congress of the Federation of Chambers of Commerce of the British Empire being held in London instead of New Zealand.

MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATIONS.

The District Officers of the Department in the four chief centres are closely associated with the Manufacturers' Associations, and attend in an advisory capacity the regular meetings of the executives.

The Auckland Association in its forty-sixth annual report records a membership of 297. The Winter Exhibition was again held this year, with results that may, in view of present economic conditions, be considered satisfactory. Record entries were received in several sections, the standard of excellence being specially commented upon by the judges.

The Wellington Association reported in its thirty-seventh annual report a membership of 233, an increase of thirty-two members during the year. During the year a "New-Zealand-made" Shopping Week was held. Gratifying response from retailers resulted in 419 shop windows being devoted exclusively to the display of New-Zealand-made goods. A window-dressing competition was held in connection with this effort and resulted in many entries being received. In conjunction with the Wellington Show Association the exhibition at the Winter Show Building, John Street, was held this year during Easter, 8th to 22nd April. The attendance reflected present economic conditions, and, although a fair number of interesting exhibits were staged, the support of the public was somewhat disappointing. The association has been active in assisting shopping-week efforts in other towns by the loan of propaganda material such as posters, windows-cards, &c. Among the towns that have staged these "weeks" have been Waipukurau, Masterton, Hawera, Palmerston North, Marton, Featherston, and Petone.

The Canterbury Association held their fifty-third annual meeting. The membership now stands at 263. A "Made-in-New-Zealand" Week was held in May last, and proved a successful effort, judging by the generous support of retailers. The exhibits made by chemists illustrated the extension that has been made in the number of products now produced in New Zealand factories. The City Council materially assisted the effort by supplying the city streets with festoons of coloured lights and the Tramway Board with a specially illuminated traincar for the occasion. The annual Winter Show was again held in the King Edward Barracks, and reports show that the attendance exceeded that of the previous year.

The membership of the Dunedin Association at last annual meeting was 156, an increase of twelve for the year. The association in conjunction with the Dunedin Trade and Labour Council held a very successful Industrial Exhibition in the Drill-hall, Kensington, for a period of two weeks from 29th April. The attendance during the period was thirty thousand. The exhibition space of 6,945 square feet was taken by manufacturers who staged effective and attractive exhibits of New-Zealand-made goods. The association has been active in assisting New-Zealand-made Shopping Weeks in Gore, Riverton, Oamaru, and Cromwell.

STATISTICS RELATING TO MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES.

The latest figures available are for the year ended 31st March, 1932. As might be expected, all-round decreases are a feature of the summarized figures for 1931-32, as compared with 1930-31 and also 1929-30.

The general decline in trade has had the effect of increasing the short time worked by factory employees, the number of short hours worked being increased by 1,535,326 to 4,998,983 as compared with the preceding year.

Commencing with the year 1931-32, figures relating to the operation of electric tramways are being omitted from the statistics of factory production. The summary given hereunder excludes the operations of electric tramways for each of the two years shown.