

Real Earnings of Employees in Recent Years.—When the index number representing the average yearly wages, with 1917 as a base, is divided by the index number of the cost of living, converted to the same base, it is seen that real wages advanced by 13·8 p.c. between 1917 and 1933. The details of the computation are given in Table 24. There was little change in real wages during the three years 1917 to 1920, when prices were rising rapidly. During the following two years, 1921 and 1922, when prices dropped rapidly, real wages increased by 6 p.c. From then until 1931 there was an almost continuous rise from year to year with the exception of 1930. In 1931 real wages reached a maximum of 120·2 and then declined to 117·9 in 1932 and to 113·8 in 1933.

24.—Average Yearly Earnings and Index Numbers of Earnings and Real Wages of Wage-Earners in Manufacturing Industries, 1917-33.

NOTE.—The figures of average earnings for the years 1931 to 1933 are strictly comparable with those for the years up to 1925 but not with those for the intervening years. The figures for the latest years—as for the earliest—represent the earnings for complete man-years of work, with no allowance for periods of unemployment. (See footnote 1 to Table 4, p. 412.)

Year.	Amount of Wages Paid.	Average Number of Wage-earners.	Average Yearly Earnings.	Index Numbers.		
				Average Yearly Earnings.	Cost of Living.	Real Value of Average Yearly Earnings.
	\$	No.	\$			
1917.....	420,094,869	552,968	760	100·0	100·0	100·0
1918.....	480,949,599	547,599	878	115·5	114·0	101·3
1919.....	496,570,995	529,327	938	123·4	125·3	98·5
1920.....	583,853,225	526,571	1,109	145·9	145·2	100·4
1921.....	381,910,145	381,203	1,002	131·8	127·6	103·2
1922.....	374,212,141	398,390	939	123·6	116·8	105·8
1923.....	428,731,347	446,994	959	126·1	116·8	107·9
1924.....	420,269,406	432,273	972	127·9	114·5	111·7
1925.....	452,958,655	466,602	971	127·8	116·0	110·2
1926.....	501,144,989	499,745	1,003	132·0	116·8	113·0
1927.....	531,583,250	533,450	997	131·3	115·1	114·1
1928.....	580,428,493	566,780	1,024	134·8	115·6	116·5
1929.....	624,302,170	597,827	1,045	137·5	116·8	117·7
1930.....	551,853,649	551,496	1,001	131·7	115·9	113·6
1931.....	437,734,767	457,628	957	125·8	104·7	120·2
1932.....	341,187,718	400,328	852	112·1	95·1	117·9
1933.....	313,701,767	399,409	785	103·3	90·8	113·8

Percentages of Wages and Salaries to Value of Products.—Table 25 shows the relation between wages and salaries paid by manufacturers and the total net value of production. Figures of gross production are often used in such calculations, but the values out of which the wages of employees must come in the long run are the values added to the raw materials while they are in the factory. Such added values constitute the real production of the manufacturing plant and are alone available for payment of wages and salaries, of interest, rent and taxes, charges for fuel, power, lighting, repairs, and all other overhead charges. The percentage of salaries was highest in the years 1921, 1922, 1924, 1931, 1932 and 1933. These were years in which manufacturing production was curtailed and it is probable that, salaried employees being a part of the organization of an industry rather than of its productive force, salaries were an abnormally high percentage of the lower levels of production then prevailing. The percentage declined with the increasing manufacturing production after 1922, but in 1929 was still much higher than in 1917, while in 1931, 1932 and 1933, due to decreased industrial activity, the percentage of salaries to value added rose to 12·7, 14·1 and 13·6 respectively. It should be borne in mind, however, that salaried employees increased by 37·6 p.c. in the period, while wage-earners decreased 27·8 p.c. (Table 18.) The percentage of wages has