

INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL BULLETINS.

During the past year the Department has continued the issue of bulletins containing information on industrial and commercial subjects. As is customary, these bulletins have been widely distributed to the press, Chambers of Commerce, Manufacturers' Associations, prominent business executives, overseas trade representatives, and other persons and firms to whom they are likely to be of interest and value.

The issues made during the period under review were as follow :—

Bulletins Nos. 24, 25, 26, and 28 : Summary of the Finance, Trade, and Industries of New Zealand for the quarter and year ended 30th June, 1933 ; 30th September, 1933 ; 31st December, 1933 ; and 31st March, 1934, respectively. Bulletin No. 27 was a special issue relating to trade with the British West Indies, and was compiled from the report of the New Zealand Trade Commissioner in Canada upon his recent official visit to that territory.

MISCELLANEOUS ACTIVITIES.

The activities of the Department are so varied and so diversified that it is impossible to make references to them all in a report of this nature. Moreover, many of the commercial and industrial investigations carried out by the Department are of a confidential nature, and for this reason cannot be referred to in reports for publication.

In general, it may be said that the Department has been called upon to an ever-increasing extent during the past few years to supply general information relating to the Dominion's industries, commerce, and economic and social conditions, and particular information relating to specified industries. This information pertains particularly to the development of markets for our products both within New Zealand and overseas, and it may be said that the functions of the Department in this connection have been substantially extended in recent years, and that the importance and value of its activities in this direction to the commercial community have been materially enhanced.

The following list of a few of the inquiries made by the Department during the past year may provide some indication of the extensive variety of subjects with which the officers of the Department are constantly required to deal :—

Markets for kauri-gum, dairy-produce, canned fruits, honey, chamois-leather, wool, sausage-casings, cattle-hides, meatmeal, builders' materials, cocoa-beans, rag stock, scrap metals in Canada and the United States ; *Phormium* fibre, sausage-casings, tallow, timber, fish on the Continent of Europe ; fish, lard, certain leathers in the United Kingdom ; mineral waters, feathers, Stilton cheese, ammunition in Australia ; butter and cheese, milk-powders, apples in Egypt ; casein in Palestine ; dairy-produce, meats, canned rabbits and game, fish, wool in India ; dairy-produce and general provisions in the British West Indies ; wool to Brazil ; canned meats, condensed milk, butter and cheese, casein, woollen noils to the East, &c.,

Price and cost investigation of various commodities sold in the Dominion, including tobacco and cigarettes, coal, lime, superphosphates, petrol, bread, gas, woollen goods, &c.

CONCLUSION.

It is desired to place on record the Department's appreciation of the co-operation and assistance given by the various Trade Commissioners, Consuls, and Vice-Consuls of various overseas countries resident in New Zealand and, in particular, to acknowledge its indebtedness to His Majesty's Trade Commissioner and the Canadian Trade Commissioner. Acknowledgment must also be made of the assistance given by other Government Departments during the year, particularly by the Customs Department, the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, and the Department of Agriculture.

In conclusion, it is gratifying to note that there are many indications definitely pointing to our further emergence from the adverse economic conditions which have enveloped us during the past four years.

The far-reaching effects of the depression have clearly demonstrated that New Zealand has placed too much reliance upon a few main classes of exportable commodities, and it was only natural that increasing attention should have been given to the question of exporting a wider variety and to the exploitation of new and undeveloped markets. In this connection the Department is active in its endeavours to open the way for an increase in the export volume of a more diversified range of our products and for the extension of present overseas markets.

While there is still a measure of uncertainty and obscurity in the world economic position and the consumptive demand for all classes of commodities continues to remain at a relatively low level, it is becoming more apparent as time goes on that there must soon come about the formulation of a definite policy by the leading nations of the world in respect of the trend of economic nationalism, and it is to be hoped that a policy will be adopted that will open the way to a greater flow in the volume and value of international trade.

Commodity prices generally show a steady upward trend, an improvement which, if sustained, will soon rid us of the fear of a relapse to the conditions from which we are emerging and will quickly form a sound foundation for the building-up of that confidence which had been so badly shaken during the period of falling and contracting markets.

The marked improvement apparent in the economic progress of the majority of those countries in which our principal markets are found is being reflected in our own progress along the road to the attainment of more prosperous conditions.