

have been given to all parties concerned to make representations to the Bureau. There are, of course, several industries in which there was already redundancy in the number of units when licensing was introduced, and the Bureau has been able in a number of these cases to effectively encourage amalgamations or rationalization which should ultimately mean greater efficiency in the industries concerned and cheaper products for the consumers. There is, undoubtedly, extensive scope for industrial reorganization in the Dominion, and present trends would appear to indicate that industry generally is beginning to realize that more effective planning on a national basis is becoming essential if our industrial structure is to expand on modern and progressive lines to meet the heavy demands now being made on it.

A pleasing feature of the year's work has been the manner in which industrial groups throughout the Dominion have been meeting at frequent intervals and submitting their joint representations to the Bureau and to the Government through the New Zealand Manufacturers' Federation. This marks another new phase in industrial organization, and one which is proving very satisfactory to all concerned. Indeed, a great saving of time is possible when the Bureau or the Government is able to deal with a particular industry as one group making representations previously discussed and agreed upon, rather than with the sometimes numerous and conflicting viewpoints of individual units, as was very often the case previously.

Reference to the more important work undertaken by the Bureau during the twelve months under review is set out hereunder along similar lines to last year's report.

MEETINGS HELD.

Thirty-six meetings of the Bureau were held during the year ended 30th April, 1939. Each meeting of the Bureau usually involves consideration being given to a lengthy agenda covering matters pertaining to particular industries or to industrial problems generally. It will be appreciated that the preparation of the reports for these meetings entails a great deal of investigation work, and a considerable number of Investigating Officers of the Department of Industries and Commerce are engaged for a great portion of their time on matters relating to the administration of the Industrial Efficiency Act.

Mention was made last year of the committees of the Bureau and of the frequent meetings held by them in regard to the industries or problems with which they were appointed to deal. During the year the meetings of some of these committees became so frequent, necessitating a heavy call on the time of State executives who are members of the Bureau, that it was decided to replace the committees by an Executive, the members of which were able to meet frequently and at short notice. This Executive comprises the Deputy Chairman, Secretary, Messrs. Bromley and Pascoe, and at least one of the special members of the Bureau, and meets whenever preliminary discussions or interviews with representatives of industries are required to be held in regard to licensing or other matters.

It is worthy of note that the ordinary members of the Executive also function as members of the special Industries Committee appointed by the Government to meet representatives of industries in regard to their applications for import licenses for raw materials, plant and machinery, &c., and during the first four months of 1939 this Committee met representatives of most of the main industries in the Dominion in addition to many prospective manufacturers from overseas. In fact, the ordinary members of the Executive of the Bureau have been meeting to discuss major industrial problems almost continuously during 1939 to date (whether as the Executive or as the Industries Committee), so that the Bureau is kept in extremely close touch with the industrial life of the country. This experience will be invaluable for the Bureau in view of the increasing number of applications being received for the licensing of industries.

LICENSING.

As mentioned in the last annual report, the powers of licensing given to the Bureau by the Industrial Efficiency Act are designed to secure greater efficiency in industry by regulating the entry of new units into licensed industries and so preventing possible redundancy and unnecessary costs to the producer, while ensuring that the consumer is adequately protected both as to price and quality of the goods concerned. It should be stressed that the Bureau is careful to ensure that, in return for the protection and security which licensing affords to licensees, such conditions are imposed on the units concerned as will tend to ensure that the economic welfare of the community as a whole is benefited. Noticeable evidence of this is in the pharmacy industry, where a more modern and efficient type of shop is becoming familiar while, at the same time, prescription prices have been lowered.

Although the power to declare industries subject to licensing rests with the Hon. the Minister of Industries and Commerce, the latter refers applications for licensing to the Bureau for its consideration and recommendation before finally deciding the questions. Again, as during the previous year, although the applications for licensing have been many, the Hon. the Minister has granted applications only when it was quite clear that the introduction of licensing for any particular industry would further the aims of the Industrial Efficiency Act, which are stated to be—

“to promote the Economic Welfare of New Zealand by providing for the Promotion of New Industries in the most Economic Form and by so regulating the General Organization, Development, and Operation of Industries that a Greater Measure of Industrial Efficiency will be secured.”

The Act is being used to encourage more efficient conditions in industry, and if, where an industry is subject to license, the units in that industry are unable to agree in the formulation of suitable industrial plans for their better organization and efficiency, consideration is given by the Hon. the Minister to the delicensing of the industry. Last year, as during the previous year, one industry