

Inquiries relating to imports of articles of the following description : Coconut fibre, coconut-oil, statuary figures, soapstone bricks, talc powders, nutmeg and mace, chillies, paint, calcimine, and drinking-straws.

*Industrial Investigations, Inquiries, and Surveys.*—An extreme variety of general industrial inquiries has been carried out, including those relating to the following subjects and articles of manufacture : Lignite coal, timber, malt extract, gas, hospital supplies, canned beef and beef extract, wood flour, coke, cement, sheep-dip, mutton-birds, motor-car padding, clothing, flour, acoustical materials, adhesive paste, button-manufacture, carbon paper, clothes-pegs, barbed wire and wire netting, battery-manufacture, benzoil, black granite, brushware, crayfish, cube sugar, diabetic food, diatomaceous earth, fruit-pulp, horse-hair, kapok filter pads, sheep-shearing machines, lanoline, machine die-castings, meat-skewers, mussels, paints and colours, potato flour, rennet, roller skates, shark-oil, slashers, stockings, waxed paper.

Investigations in many cases have covered a wide range of inquiry and in some cases have entailed Dominion-wide survey. Departmental officers have visited many factories and concerns ; the problems facing manufacturers have been investigated, and all possible assistance and advice given. The marketing of New-Zealand-made goods has been given every attention, and it is felt that much has been done to assist manufacturers and traders in increasing the extent and efficiency of their operations.

### CONCLUSION.

In presenting this report covering the main features of the work of the Department of Industries and Commerce during the past twelve months I desire, in conclusion, to acknowledge the helpful co-operation which has been received at all times from the various Consuls, Vice-Consuls, Trade Commissioners, and other representatives of overseas countries resident in the Dominion. The ready assistance received from other Government Departments is also gratefully acknowledged.

The year has been marked by further considerable expansion in the work of the Department, which has necessitated considerable pressure of work on the New Zealand and overseas staff throughout the period.

In retrospect, the year 1938 may be said to have been one largely of consolidation. The years immediately preceding 1938 were years of remarkable expansion, and record trading and activity were reported in nearly every branch of commercial life. It was realized that the rate of expansion could not be maintained indefinitely, and the aim was to prevent any recession from the high levels attained. To a large extent the prosperity achieved was maintained, and, in addition, various trades and industries established yet higher levels of output and turnover.

The first quarter of 1939 witnessed an extraordinary expansion in industrial activity, due to the opportunities provided as a result of the control established over importations. In nearly every factory, production has been at capacity levels, overtime has been worked, and additional workers have been taken on. In addition, many factories have installed more plant and machinery in order to cope with the unprecedented increase in the demand for their products. A further development has been the decision by numbers of overseas manufacturers to have their products made in the Dominion. Some have built and equipped their own factories, and others have arranged to have their goods made by existing factories. In many industries the only limit to even greater expansion has been the difficulty of securing additional numbers of skilled workers, but this difficulty is being overcome gradually by the training of unskilled labour.

In general, it can be said that the year covered by the report was a good one both industrially and commercially.

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