

AUCKLAND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT LABORATORIES

Director : J. BROOKE

Advisory Committee.—Mr. D. T. Clifton-Lewis (Chairman), Professor T. D. J. Leech (Vice-Chairman), Dr. J. C. Andrews ; Mr. G. B. Bell, Dr. G. H. Cunningham, Mr. A. Dennison, Mr. K. M. Griffin, Mr. L. W. Tattersfield, Mr. I. Taylor, and Mr. F. C. McCullough (Secretary).

INAUGURATION

These Laboratories were, with Cabinet approval, formally established on 1st October, 1945, in Auckland as an experiment in the provision of immediate scientific and technical facilities to industry, thought desirable partly by virtue of the large number of manufacturing industries located there, and partly by the necessity for personal contact in dealing with certain scientific aspects of production. The nucleus of the staff and equipment was previously engaged on war work as the Auckland Technical Development Branch.

This proposal had the support of the Manufacturers' Research Committee, and the inauguration work done by the Auckland members of that Committee has been a major factor in the progress shown in this report.

Such a decentralized establishment is capable of giving speedy service where required and serves as a liaison office to correlate the activities of branches of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research in Auckland in their dealings with industry.

As a central location was desirable for such work, which entails close contact with manufacturers, with the Government Analyst, and with the University, the Laboratories have been located at Smiths' Buildings, in Albert Street, and, at the same time, the opportunity taken of correlating the clerical side of the Department in Auckland in the form of a district office, which is conveniently located adjacent to the technical side.

Although the final set-up has been considerably delayed by difficulties in obtaining the precision machinery and equipment necessary for its efficient functioning, considerable progress has now been made in this direction.

ESTABLISHMENT

As originally planned, the branch consists of an engineering and metallurgical laboratory to which is attached an instrument development workshop containing light precision machines capable of handling accurate developmental work on instruments, mechanisms, and prototype equipment. These machines have been carefully chosen to be complementary to existing facilities in Auckland and to be capable of handling instrument work to comparable standards and limits to those obtaining overseas. An electrical and electronics laboratory and workshop similarly can handle developmental and servicing work in the electronic field, and will also have sub-standard testing facilities which are an integral part of the Dominion standards at Dominion Physical Laboratory in Wellington.

A Physical Section will deal with optical and physical problems, and attached to this is a small optical workshop capable of making precision components, such as lenses, prisms, and sensitive level bubbles. Chemical and biological problems are carried out in co-operation with the Government Analyst and the Plant Diseases Division, and similarly with projects involving other sections of the Department.

To allow of design work being handled efficiently either by local industry or by the tool-rooms of the Dominion Physical Laboratory, a Design and Draughting Section has been provided, with which is located a Technical Library and Information Section.