

The contract for the manufacture of rope from phormium for the United States of America Navy has terminated, and this has reduced the fibre needs by approximately 1,000 tons. At the moment the needs of manufacturers are being met, but when labour becomes freely available at Foxton difficulties may arise in the fibre-supply position, and measures to overcome this are now before the Government.

The machine capacity of the New Zealand Woolpack and Textile's factory at Foxton is approximately 1,000,000 woolpacks per annum, which would provide for the total requirements of the Dominion. For the past few years the Foxton woolpack has sold below the cost of the jute pack from Calcutta, and as the price of woolpacks has been stabilized a very considerable subsidy has been paid by the Government to allow the imported packs to be sold at the stabilized price, based on the selling-price of the New Zealand phormium pack.

The State mill at Westport is still not producing to capacity on account of shortage of cutters, but the State mill at Kerepehi has shown a much improved turnover with a slight profit on the year's workings.

The Moutoa Estate has supplied a considerable quantity of green leaf for the Foxton woolpack-factory, and cutting will show increased results in the near future. The incidence of yellow leaf has been a matter for very great concern, and a combined drive by various sections of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research has been organized in an attempt to discover the cause and provide a remedy. All the officers concerned deserve the highest praise for their continued and combined efforts, from which it is hoped practical results will soon eventuate. Alongside this specially directed effort, the normal experimentation and research activities have been maintained in regard to planting technique and the development of better strains of fibre, &c.

Pharmacy.—It can be safely claimed that the objective of the Pharmacy Plan—namely, to rehabilitate the industry—has been achieved. The appearance of prosperity which the industry now enjoys has been effected to a considerable extent by the influx of dispensing work under social security. Although high wages are the rule, there is still a noticeable urge among assistants to acquire pharmacies of their own, and it has been perhaps fortunate that some restraint by way of licensing has existed, as otherwise there might well have been an excessive and consequently uneconomic number of new units opened up. Actually there are not enough pharmacists available to do comfortably the work to be done, and the opening of new units would not improve the position.

A development taking place is the tendency of the older businesses to reconstruct on a private company or partnership basis with a view to giving former assistants some financial interest in the business. This is a desirable movement and should tend towards greater efficiency in a manner that the widespread dispersal of personnel could not accomplish. During the year there were twelve such cases.

In every case which does not involve a transfer within the family of a pharmacist or the taking-in of a professional associate of long standing, full opportunity is given through the Director of Rehabilitation to all servicemen to present their claims for consideration, and a useful contribution is being made to the problem of rehabilitation.

APPEALS

The Hon. Sir Francis Frazer has continued to act as Industrial Efficiency Appeal Authority throughout the year, and has heard a total of twenty-nine appeals, of which four were allowed. The decision of the Bureau was varied in two further cases, and the remaining twenty-three were disallowed. Appeals have in every case been decided by the Appeal Authority after a personal hearing at which all interested parties were invited to be present. The help and guidance given by the Hon. Sir Francis Frazer has been much appreciated by the Bureau, and it is pleasing to record also that the various parties attending appeals have repeatedly expressed themselves as fully satisfied with the manner in which the appeals have been conducted.