

To avoid difficulties arising from housing and labour shortages in the main centres there is evident desire in some instances to set up factories either as main or as branch units in provincial areas.

A large number of applications continue to be received from ex-servicemen to establish new businesses in licensed industries or to have existing licences transferred to themselves. In these cases the Bureau works in close collaboration with the Rehabilitation Department, and at all times sympathetic consideration is given in the interests of rehabilitation. In cases where servicemen had been obliged to dispose of their businesses before entering the Armed Forces licences have been granted on application to start in business again.

(b) PERSONNEL OF BUREAU

The only change in the personnel of the Bureau during the year was the retirement of Mr. F. Johnson, Deputy Chairman, who completed his service with the Department of Industries and Commerce on 31st March, 1948.

(c) LICENSING OF INDUSTRIES

No new industries were licensed during the year under the Industrial Efficiency Act, 1936. On the other hand, four were delicensed by notices published in the *Gazette* as follows :—

- 5th June, 1947 : Manufacture of dry-cell batteries.
- 12th June, 1947 : Dehydration of plants for medicinal purposes.
- 26th June, 1947 : Manufacture of radio receiving-sets.
- 10th February, 1948 : Canning of fruit and vegetables.

At 31st March, 1948, twenty-seven industries were licensed under the Act.

(d) RESELLING OF MOTOR-SPIRIT

The year under review was a busy one in matters concerning the administration of the licensing of the retail selling of motor-spirit. A total of 618 applications was dealt with by the Bureau. Of this number, 170 were for new pumps, 265 were for transfers of licences, and 183 were for miscellaneous matters such as permission to install additional pumps, to change sites on which pumps were erected, and to sell motor-spirits in drums. Applications and their fate are classified in the following table :—

New Pump Licences—				Granted.	Declined.
Service stations	..	..	..	7	34
Garages	..	..	..	57	15
Other businesses	..	..	..	14	43
Transfers—					
Service stations	..	..	..	75	..
Others	..	..	..	188	2
Miscellaneous	..	..	..	125	58

The great majority of the new licences issued were granted to ex-servicemen. A feature of the transfers of licences at service stations was the large number involved in conversions of ownership to limited-liability companies. Apart from these conversions, the transfers related in most cases to the taking over of businesses by ex-servicemen.

Throughputs of stations are back to pre-war level, and the general indications are that returns to operators are not unsatisfactory. In August, 1947, the gross margin permitted to resellers under the Motor-spirits Prices Regulations was reduced from 3½d. per gallon to 3d., but in recent years income has been supplemented by development in service and accessory sales such as lubrication, tires, &c.