

REHABILITATION LOANS REPAYED

The number of loans repaid has almost doubled during the year, due mainly to the maturity of the repayment periods for furniture loans. It will be seen from the table below that 2,442 of these accounts were removed from the Corporation's books in this way during the year, indicating that, whilst there is concern at the number of this class of borrower in arrear, nevertheless the majority do appreciate the assistance they have been given and are making their payments regularly.

	Accounts Repaid During Year Ended 31st March, 1949.	Total Number Repaid to 31st March, 1949.
Farm	111	187
Residential	694	1,471
R.I.C. (stock)	49	93
Business	799	2,544
Furniture	2,442	4,961
Tools of trade	246	952
Miscellaneous	36	135
Totals	4,377	10,343

It will be realized that a fairly large percentage of the repayments of farm and residential accounts is due to the sale of the properties, and many of the purchasers are themselves the recipients of rehabilitation finance to enable them to complete the transactions. Of the 111 farm accounts repaid, 58 were accounted for in this way, and of the 694 residential loans, 285 were repaid by loans granted to the purchasers. The over-all figures disclose a satisfactory rate of repayment and indicate a healthy desire on the part of borrowers to clear their loan liabilities as quickly as possible.

PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION OF TIMBER

In its efforts to maintain a standard of building construction justifying long-term lending, every endeavour is made to ensure that durable materials only are used. So far as the use of timber is concerned this policy has been one of increasing difficulty over recent years. With the depletion of our native forests, heart timbers have become increasingly scarce, with the result that available supplies are proving insufficient to provide timber for flooring, weatherboards, sub-floor framing, and other parts of buildings in which heart grades were normally required. The use of lower grades of native timbers and of our exotic timbers has therefore to be considered for these purposes, and the Corporation has actively encouraged the development of preservative pre-treatment methods to enable these lower grades to be accepted with confidence.

During the war years the position was aggravated by the extraordinary demands for timber and by difficulties in the initiation of preservative methods. There seems now to be an improvement. Supplies of timber (although still difficult) are more readily available, the availability of kiln-drying has greatly increased, thus removing one bottle-neck in production and preservative plants have been installed in various parts of the country. Until pressure-preservation plants were available, the Corporation accepted timber kiln-dried and dipped by an approved process, but this was regarded as a more or less temporary expedient. Kiln-drying ensures that timber is rendered sterile before dipping. The subsequent dipping provides a protective "film" to the