

(d) RETAIL SALE OF MOTOR-SPIRITS

Applications to the Bureau under this heading totalled 589 for the year, compared with 618 in the previous year. A broad classification of the applications and of their fate is given in the following table :—

					Granted.	Declined.
New pump licences—						
Service stations	..	..	..	..	58	22
Garages	..	..	..	..	59	22
Others	..	..	..	..	12	15
Transfers—						
Service stations and garages			..	..	134	..
Others	..	..	..	..	116	..
Miscellaneous	..	..	..	..	109	42
					488	101

Compared with the preceding year, the number of new licences issued for service stations shows a considerable apparent increase, but because of a change in policy away from that requiring garage-proprietors to install their pumps inside the premises it is now somewhat difficult to distinguish between a garage and a service station.

The majority of new licences granted were to ex-servicemen, and they figured prominently among transferees of licences.

The entry of the British Petroleum Co. of New Zealand, Ltd., into the New Zealand market as a wholesale distributor of petroleum products is giving rise to a number of applications for adjustments in licences.

There has been during the year a further increase in the number of motor-vehicles in use in New Zealand, and the aggregate petrol sales were higher than in the previous year. These factors indicate that the garages and service stations again enjoyed a good trading year.

(e) INDUSTRIAL PLAN COMMITTEES

Three Industrial Plan Committees established under Part II of the Act were active during the year and a brief summary of important points concerning the industries involved is now given.

(i) *Flax-milling (Phormium tenax) Industry*

An encouraging response has been made to the inducements designed to increase production offered by the Government in the form of a guaranteed price and, from 1st April, 1948, of a guarantee to purchase all fibre produced over a period of ten years.

Since 1941 the annual output of fibre and tow has been as under :—

						Tons.
1941-42	..	..	..	..	..	3,371
1942-43	..	..	..	..	..	3,961
1943-44	..	..	..	..	..	6,637
1944-45	..	..	..	..	..	4,969
1945-46	..	..	..	..	..	3,496
1946-47	..	..	..	..	..	3,655
1947-48	..	..	..	..	..	5,070