

A sub-committee which was working on standard specifications for portable chemical fire-extinguishers has agreed to work as a sub-committee of the mechanical engineering committee and is proceeding with the work of laying down specifications for this equipment that will ensure the effective fulfilment of its functions and safety in operation.

PUBLIC AUTHORITIES AND LOCAL BODY BY-LAWS COMMITTEE.

In undertaking the responsibility for directing the work of standardization of local body by-laws relating to building construction and materials, this committee is attacking a long-standing problem, the solution of which will almost certainly lead to a very considerable economy in administration and is almost equally certain to render it proportionately more effective and simplified. The committee will also be responsible for reviewing the work of other committees which specifically relates to local-body or public authority interests. Every endeavour is being made to complete this work expeditiously.

DAIRY MACHINERY AND REQUISITES COMMITTEE.

This committee has held two meetings and is conducting a useful investigation into the equipment used in the dairying industry, including refrigeration plant, efficiency of milk-coolers, and base metals from which milk and cream cans are manufactured. It is also giving attention to the chemical analysis of materials that enter into the production of butter and cheese.

Arrangements are being made for the closest collaboration with the dairy sub-committees working within the organization of the British Standards Institution, in particular those relating to bacteriological and chemical analysis.

Owing to the direction the work of this committee is taking it will probably prove to produce long-range, rather than immediate, tangible results.

TESTING FACILITIES COMMITTEE.

The Testing Facilities Committee has held four meetings, during which a complete survey of the testing facilities within the Dominion has been made, which are in process of being catalogued, and has also submitted a report covering the needs of the position in this respect.

TOWN-PLANNING COMMITTEE.

This committee has held two meetings, and through its executive sub-committee, which has held five meetings, has carried out comprehensive investigations covering past work in connection with town-planning, both within the Dominion and overseas, and these deliberations have paved the way towards the development of model clauses for town-planning which will assist local bodies to secure reasonable uniformity of provisions relating to town-planning. This work should also prove of considerable advantage to those responsible for local government.

WOOLPACKS COMMITTEE.

Although the Woolpacks Committee has met only three times, consideration has been given to the adoption of a standard woolpack, incorporating suitable provisions concerning size, weave, and weight.

Consultation with the representatives of interests affected have also taken place in regard to the adoption of a produce sack of standard size and quality.

PAPER AND STATIONERY COMMITTEE.

A Paper and Stationery Committee has also been appointed, which, however, has met but twice. Nevertheless, it has made considerable progress with the important consideration of adopting British Standard Specification No. 730, British Standard Paper Sizes, which may well lead to very considerable economy in the manufacturing and distribution costs of paper.

CONSUMER STANDARDS COMMITTEE.

The Consumer Standards Advisory Committee has held three meetings and has appointed sub-committees dealing with fruit, footwear, and textiles. Draft provisions for standard grades for apples and pears have been completed and circulated, while draft standard grades for citrus fruits are almost completed. The Footwear Sub-committee is at present commencing its work in earnest, the work in this connection having received the full endorsement and approval of the conference of the Boot and Shoe Manufacturers' Association. Attention is being given by this committee to the question of the type and size of boot lasts and patterns that are used for the manufacture of footwear, particularly children's footwear, and this is of far-reaching importance in relation to the effect on children's feet of wearing badly fitted shoes, which in turn reacts on the posture and general physical well-being of the child.

CONCLUSION.

It will be noted that the work that has been undertaken by the foregoing committees is distinctly significant in its economic and social importance. This may be illustrated by the work of the Civil Engineering Committee in developing a standard specification for galvanized (zinc-coated) fencing-wire that may have as much as 50 per cent. longer life, involving a proportionate saving, than a competitive wire which is indistinguishable from a higher grade that is on the market. If this position be observed in its national proportions the value of the work of the committee responsible will be readily appreciated.