

Kauri-gum.—The Bureau has also made certain proposals in regard to the kauri-gum industry, and it has been necessary to conduct exhaustive investigations in England as regards the market for gum. The competition of synthetic resins presents a considerable problem in this connection, and if investigations now being made prove satisfactory a brighter future may be given to those engaged in the industry.

Manufacturing Industries.—The Bureau also has before it a number of plans for expanding and co-ordinating manufacturing industries so that such industries can develop to produce better-quality products in a more efficient manner both as regards actual manufacture and distribution. For the purpose of considering the many factors involved in such plans, special committees of the Bureau are functioning and discussions are held with those sections of an industry immediately affected.

Preparation of Hides for Export.—The Bureau of Industry, in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture, has been giving consideration to the question of the institution of a system of grading and regulation in connection with the preparation of hides for export.

In accordance with representations which have been made by buyers in overseas markets, it is most essential that hides exported from New Zealand conform to certain grades, and are marked accordingly. In this connection draft regulations were prepared providing for measures to secure the better preparation of such hides and their grading for export, and the regulations were submitted to those engaged in the industry. Following upon the preparation of these draft regulations the industry itself has formed an association which is to consider the question of improving the standard of hides exported and to endeavour to arrange methods to achieve that end. As the industry itself is taking action in this direction, the Government is holding over the immediate gazettement of the regulations and has referred the question to the New Zealand Standards Institute for the taking of the necessary action to develop standards for the preparation of hides. It is expected that when the necessary action is taken to ensure that all hides exported conform to certain grades and qualities not only will our existing markets be protected, but an increased overseas market will be built up for these products.

NEW INDUSTRIES.

A further duty of the Bureau is to promote new industries, and a number of proposals to establish major industries are now before it. Certain new industries have also been established during the period the Bureau has been in operation, a major one being that of the manufacture of asbestos-cement products embracing high-pressure pipes, sheets, corrugated roofing, &c. In this connection the Bureau granted licenses on certain conditions to Jas. Hardie and Co., Ltd., and to the Hume Pipe Co. (Aust.), Ltd. The former firm has been the principal supplier of asbestos-cement goods for some time from its Australian factory, and immediate steps are being taken to build a modern factory at Auckland. The Hume Pipe Co. (Aust.), Ltd., is actively engaged in developing a mine for the production of raw asbestos which, it is hoped, will be utilized at a later date to manufacture asbestos-cement goods.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO INDUSTRIES.

The Bureau works in close co-operation with the Labour Department in relation to the subsidizing of industries and with the State Advances Corporation in respect of the extension of financial assistance to industries under the provision of section 29 of the State Advances Corporation Act, 1936. In connection with such applications, investigations are conducted by the Bureau, and recommendations made accordingly.

During the short period the Bureau has been established a number of favourable recommendations have been made and funds provided to enable industries to become established in cases where finance from other sources is not available, or to develop an existing industry.

VALUE OF BUREAU ORGANIZATION.

It has been found that, notwithstanding the short period the Bureau of Industry has been established and the time which, of course, has been required in the initial stages in evolving organization and procedure, foundations have been laid and valuable work done in the securing of co-ordination in regard to a number of industries, and the operation of such industries on more efficient lines so that benefits will accrue to consumers, workers, and those conducting such industries. It is worthy of mention that, in regard to a number of industries which are subject to license under the Industrial Efficiency Act, it is already evident that the work of the Bureau in regulating new entrants into such industries in accordance with economic considerations, and especially service required for the consumer, has resulted in the prevention of the establishment of redundant units which would, in the long-run, operate to the detriment of all concerned. It is evident also that the Bureau of Industry organization is serving a very real purpose in co-ordinating the activities and functions of the various State Departments directly concerned in industrial development, especially in regard to major problems.

VISIT OF HON. W. NASH TO UNITED KINGDOM, ETC.

It was deemed advisable to include an officer of this Department in the delegation which accompanied the Hon. W. Nash to the United Kingdom, the Continent of Europe, Canada, and the United States in connection with the Minister's discussions on trade matters with the Government of the United Kingdom and other Governments. Accordingly, it was decided that Mr. G. A. Pascoe, Technical Advisor to the Department, should accompany Mr. Nash.

Prior to the Minister's departure the Department assembled a great amount of detailed information respecting the Dominion's trade and suggestions for the expansion of industrial activity within the Dominion. Whilst abroad Mr. Pascoe has investigated a number of industries which offer prospects for suitable development within the Dominion.

The results of his investigations and inquiries will be of considerable value and use to the Government and the Bureau of Industry.