

The Advisory Council has met on six occasions during the year. Most of the detailed work, however, is carried out through committees, twenty-two of which have been in active operation, and 131 meetings in all have been held.

All standards organizations find that with many of their committees lengthy intervals between meetings are necessary on account of the need for investigations and analyses and, in some cases, research work of a comprehensive nature which has to be carried out before projects can proceed further.

Considering the fact that the organization needed to go through the developmental stages towards consolidation, the volume of work achieved during these deliberations, as outlined in this report, at once testifies to the effectiveness with which the members of the committees have dealt with the business placed before them, and is a tribute to the capacity and earnestness of purpose they have applied. It is desired also to place on record sincere appreciation of the spirit in which committees have co-operated with the executive, rendering every possible assistance at all times.

Consistent with the recognition of the significant advantages that must accrue from the adoption of common standards throughout the British Commonwealth of Nations, the advancement of the principle of uniform Empire standards is regarded as a consideration of prime importance, subject only to proper regard for the special requirements of local conditions and circumstances.

Developed and co-ordinated in this way, standards constitute a medium for specifying, in precise terms, the material, equipment, or goods which will satisfy Dominion requirements. Conversely, they acquaint us with the exact nature of goods which manufacturers in the United Kingdom, or other countries, can supply.

Adherence to national standards by public authorities and private agencies as a basis for purchasing supplies required for the same purpose eliminates the multiplicity of unnecessary variations in specifications to which the suppliers are otherwise called upon to manufacture. This not because the differences are required by any one concerned, but because they are inevitable, unless machinery exists for initiating consultation and collaboration among the affected parties with a view to developing common specifications that will best serve the needs of all consumers.

If the same principle be carried to the point of securing common standards by Empire countries, it is at once apparent that the facility thus provided for concentration of production upon a minimum number of types and patterns must greatly reduce production costs, and, in addition, so reduce the number of types and classes of equipment that need to be stocked by distributors, as to effect great savings in overhead charges, while at the same time affording better service to users. Further than this, the careful scrutiny to which the provisions of all specifications are subjected by competent and representative interests before being finally adopted, ensures the production and use of the most suitable and efficient equipment for given purposes.

It was with these considerations in mind, no doubt, that the Conference on Standardization to the Imperial Conference, 1930 (copy No. 225), page 3, Clause II, reported in the following terms :—

“ II (a). The Conference draws attention to the resolution of the Imperial Conference of 1926 in favour of the adoption, where practicable, of common standards, and recommends that the standardizing bodies in the various parts of the British Commonwealth of Nations should keep in regular and systematic consultation with a view to the establishment of uniform standard specifications so far as is practicable in their common interest.

“(b) As part of this consultation, the practice of communicating draft specifications prepared in one part of the Commonwealth, for the observations of the standardizing bodies in other parts likely to be interested, should be continued and extended . . . ”

A further advocacy of the importance of this principle is contained in the following extract from the Summary of Proceedings of the Imperial Economic Conference, Ottawa, 1932 :—

“ I. The Conference recommends that, with a view to assisting the co-ordination of the work of national standardization the following principles, as far as practicable, be observed :—

“(a) That the specifications should be in accordance with the needs of industry and fulfil a generally recognized want.

“(b) That the community interest of producer and consumer should be maintained throughout.

“(c) That the specifications should be arrived at by general consent.

“(d) That periodical review and revision should be undertaken to prevent crystallization and keep the specifications abreast of progress.

“(e) That full information regarding the initiation of any specification and progress in its preparation should without delay be circulated by the originating body to the corresponding bodies in other parts of the Commonwealth.”

The recommendations of each Imperial Conference from 1926 onwards, from which the above brief extracts are taken, are being carried out by the Standards organizations within the different units of the Empire, and the New Zealand Standards Institute takes its part in this mutual collaboration. Close contact is maintained with the British Standards Institution, the Standards Association of Australia, the Canadian Engineering Standards Association, the South African Standards Institution, and their many contributions, that have assisted the development of standards activity in this Dominion are gratefully acknowledged.

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It is axiomatic that standardizing bodies afford all affected interests opportunity to peruse and comment on the draft proposals, and the Standards Institute provides the facilities whereby manufacturers, distributors, and users in this Dominion have the advantage of seeing and commenting upon the proposals of the industrial, scientific, administrative, and commercial interests of the