

After many discussions with the principal interests concerned, the Bureau presented a provisional plan which was given general publicity in accordance with the provisions of the Industrial Efficiency Act. This plan is primarily in respect of retail pharmacy, to which the difficulties being faced mainly apply; and the Bureau, in presenting the plan, stated that it was a difficult matter, and, in fact, in some cases impossible, to reconcile the various conflicting interests. The plan was prepared with the primary aim of serving the public interests while at the same time being of distinct benefit to those engaged in the industry. The Bureau stated that it was confident that the operation of the plan would achieve a large measure of stability and order in the industry in lieu of probable disorder and destructive competition.

Details of the material proposals of the plan were given in *News Bulletin* No. 49, issued by the Department under date of December, 1937. One of the most important aspects of the plan is naturally in respect of the position of chain-company pharmacy, and the Bureau came to the conclusion that applications from company pharmacies should be considered on their merits as provided in the Industrial Efficiency Act in the same manner as other applications, having particular reference to the public interest and the social implications involved.

The complete plan was circulated to all retail pharmacists and was approved in no uncertain terms. Out of a total of 602 shops, principals operating 568 shops recorded their vote, a return of 94 per cent. Of the votes recorded, 544 were in favour of the plan, 19 against, and 5 informal. This gave a favourable vote equal to 96 per cent. of the votes returned and 90 per cent. of all principals engaged in the industry.

Following upon the submission of the provisional plan to the industry and its approval thereof, the Government decided to adopt the plan and to bring it into operation. For this purpose, and in accordance with the provisions of the plan itself, the following Industrial Committee was appointed:—

Nominees of—

Government.—Mr. E. R. Myers (Chairman), Department of Health; Mr. D. W. Woodward, Department of Industries and Commerce; Mr. W. H. Stevens, Wellington.

Pharmacy Board.—Mr. H. J. S. Rickard, Wellington; Mr. D. S. Dodds, Christchurch.

United Friendly Societies' Dispensaries.—Mr. J. A. Race, Dunedin.

Employees.—Mr. G. P. Adams, Wellington.

Under the plan, a Director of Pharmacy was to be appointed to act as chief executive officer of the Committee, and upon Mr. E. R. Myers being selected for this position the Committee, with the approval of the Hon. Minister, appointed Mr. W. H. Stevens to act in Mr. Myers' place as Chairman of the Committee. In having the services of Mr. Myers available as Director of Pharmacy the Committee is fortunate, because of his long experience and extensive qualifications in health matters, in administration, and particularly in regard to the problems before the pharmacy industry.

Since its appointment in March last the Committee has been actively engaged in carrying out its duties under the plan. In particular, it has considered a number of applications for licenses for both new pharmacies and transfers of existing businesses, and is formulating a national drug list to be observed by all pharmacists. In preparing this list extensive investigation and inquiry has been necessary, so that when the whole scheme is presented to the Government with a request for its adoption it will be based upon sound principles and accurate costings. In this manner the Committee hopes to give a maximum degree of service to the consuming public while at the same time giving a measure of stability and security to the industry.

It may be stated confidently that the progress made with the pharmacy plan during the past year has been most gratifying, and under the direction of the industry's own Committee pharmacists may look forward to considerable benefits accruing in future with a degree of stability and security which has been lacking for some years.

STORAGE BATTERIES.

Following upon the formation, under the auspices of the New Zealand Manufacturers' Federation, of a "trade group" of storage-battery manufacturers and assemblers, a request was placed before the Hon. the Minister of Industries and Commerce for the licensing of the industry. The Hon. Minister was not prepared to agree to this request until at least the basis of a plan had been prepared and submitted to him. The Committee of the industry was able to formulate such a basis or outline, and the industry was then made subject to licensing as from 19th May, 1938. The Hon. Minister intimated that licensing was to operate for a provisional period of, say, six months, during which the representatives of the industry are to co-operate in the formulation of a satisfactory plan.

In order to have adequate information to consider the matter fully, and also that all persons concerned may be consulted, the Bureau has been directed by the Hon. Minister to compile a register of the industry, and for this purpose notice has been given under section 13 of the Industrial Efficiency Act, and forms prepared for completion and lodgment with the Bureau. Action is also being taken for a special committee of the Bureau to collaborate with a committee of the industry in the preparation of the industrial plan, which, if brought to finality, will be placed before the Government and the industry for consideration.

CLAY AND CONCRETE PRODUCTS.

The question of the preparation of an industrial plan for certain sections of the clay and concrete products industry is at present before the Bureau. Some time ago application was made by a special committee set up by the North Island branch of the New Zealand Brick, Clayworking, and Concrete-pipe Manufacturers' Association for the provisional licensing of the industry in the North Island, but the Hon. Minister indicated that he was not prepared at that stage to bring the industry under license unless and until a satisfactory industrial plan had been formulated by the industry.