

RETAIL SALE AND DISTRIBUTION OF MOTOR-SPIRIT.

The industry of the retail sale and distribution of motor-spirit is subject to license and is one in which a large number of operators are engaged. During the year over eighteen hundred applications connected with this industry were considered either for new reselling sites, installation of additional pumps, transfer of ownership or premises, or variation in the method of distribution. During the year the *Gazette* notice licensing the industry was amended to require all persons engaged in the industry to apply for a license at 1st April, 1938, and at the same time regulations were issued prescribing fees to be paid and procedure to be followed. These regulations were also designed to co-ordinate administration of the two forms of licensing—namely, the storage of dangerous goods, and industrial efficiency.

The question of the preparation of a plan within the meaning of the Act for this industry is now under consideration.

FISHING INDUSTRY.

The industries of the taking of fish (by use of boats) for sale, the export of fish, and the taking of oysters from oyster-beds are subject to the licensing provisions of the Industrial Efficiency Act. During the year some four hundred applications in regard to these industries were considered by the Bureau. Until the issue of the report of the Sea Fisheries Investigation Committee the policy of the Bureau in respect of the fishing industry was designed to hold the position as far as possible, especially where any action might conflict with the recommendations of the Committee. This report has now been issued, and the position is being re-examined in the light of the recommendations made therein. It is anticipated that some action will shortly be taken to arrange for the preparation of an industrial-efficiency plan for the wholesale and export side of the industry.

DEVELOPMENT OF EXISTING INDUSTRIES.

In addition to its activities evidenced in the actual preparation of industrial plans or by the administration of licensing, action is also being taken along various lines to assist the development or better organization of industry. A number of the industries affected are—

Kauri-gum.—During the year continual investigation has been carried out in England in regard to the production of refined gum, and especially as to the prospects of marketing. As stated in the last annual report, competition of synthetic resins presents a considerable problem, but the Bureau is seeing that every effort is made both in regard to manufacture and marketing, to endeavour to re-establish this industry on what will amount to a new basis. The results of these investigations are now more hopeful, and if these hopes are maintained it is anticipated that new life will be given to this once-important industry.

Radio.—Close contact has been maintained with the radio-manufacturing industry, which has shown considerable development and now constitutes a major industry in the Dominion. The Bureau carried out a comprehensive investigation in regard to this industry, and its recommendations were of great value in considering the factors for the granting of additional protection against competition from those countries which were seriously affecting the local producer.

General.—During the year the Bureau has made a considerable number of reports and recommendations to the Government regarding measures for the development of domestic industries and, in particular, recommending tariff protection in certain directions. During the trade discussions with Australia the Bureau's opinions were of considerable assistance in the Government's discussions with the Australian Trade Delegation so far as the industries reported on were concerned, and which finally resulted in additional protection being given leading to further development and increased employment.

NEW INDUSTRIES.

The Bureau has also made extensive investigations into numerous possible industries for the Dominion, and it is hoped that as a result of the Bureau's efforts several new industries may be started in the Dominion. Included among the possible industries, the establishment of which is at present under consideration, are the preparation of unfermented fruit-juices, the manufacture of cream-separators, linen fibre, leicester goods, beet-sugar, power alcohol, wallboards, and rubber tires. No decisions have yet been come to in regard to these industries. Reference was made in our last annual report to licenses issued to two companies to manufacture asbestos-cement products in the Dominion. It is expected that one factory will be commencing production very shortly, and the other is still actively engaged in developing a mine for the production of raw asbestos, which, it is hoped, will be utilized in the manufacture of asbestos-cement and other goods.

In addition to the industries enumerated as being directly subject to investigation by the Bureau, there have been numerous cases where assistance and advice given by the Bureau staff has facilitated either the setting-up of new industries or the expansion of existing industries to include processes and lines of manufacture not previously undertaken in this Dominion.

GENERAL.

Much of the work undertaken by the Bureau of Industry necessarily involves extensive investigation, with benefits to be secured in the long-run rather than in the immediate future. A considerable proportion of the work carried out is also in the direction of recommending, or arranging for, other organizations or State Departments to undertake research or inquiry into a particular problem or to take certain action. In this connection it may be mentioned that the past year has shown evidence once again of the valuable function carried out by the Bureau in co-ordinating the activities of Departments of State in regard to industry, and in providing, through its committee