

Much research has been undertaken regarding new industrial processes for several Wellington concerns and others in Christchurch and Auckland. The library has available a volume of technical and industrial information not readily procurable from other sources, and it is pleasing to record that manufacturers and others are making use of the privileges available.

The newsletter relating to social and economic conditions in the Dominion is still compiled, and, after consultation with the Ministry of External Affairs, it has been agreed that copies be sent to the offices of the Minister for New Zealand in Washington and to the various High Commissioners. Comment received speaks very highly of the helpfulness of this service.

BREAD-BAKING INDUSTRY

The Wheat and Flour Controller reports as under :—

“ In connection with the voluntary scheme for rationalization as recommended for adoption by the bread-bakers at the inception of control in June, 1940, I have to report that the year under review is noteworthy on account of the cessation of the steady decline in the number of operating units.

“ Since the gazetting of bread-baking as a controlled industry nearly four years ago, the number of bread-bakers has been reduced by 170, and the following is an interesting classification of the personnel thus affected :—

- “ 42 pastrycooks and storekeepers (still in business) abandoned the manufacture of bread.
- “ 45 breadmaking proprietors transferred their interests, for sundry reasons. Of this number, 6 acquired bakeries in other localities, 11 secured positions with the respective transferees, and 5 were operating in premises that did not measure up to the requirements of the Health Department.
- “ 29 effected sales for reasons of ill health and infirmity.
- “ 16 concern temporary closures during the absence of proprietors with the Armed Forces.
- “ 22 relate to estates that have been wound up (*re* deceased bakers, &c.), and include a few bakers who leased premises for brief terms and were unable to carry on.
- “ 12 bread-bakers (exclusive of above classifications) abandoned bread-baking as the result of action by the Health Department.
- “ 4 bread-baking premises were destroyed by fire and not reinstated.

“ 170

“ The number of proprietors now on the register is 563, and 8 of these operate branch businesses. (Since the inception of control, 2 branch bakeries have been closed.)

“ Bread only is manufactured by 118 bakers, the dual business of bread-baking and small-goods manufacture being undertaken by 445 proprietors.

“ On the basis of population, one bread-baking unit now serves 2,895 persons, as compared with one unit serving 2,230 people at the inception of control.

“ Since June, 1940, 75 straight-out transfers have been effected—*i.e.*, transfers which have not involved the closing of premises.

“ *Military Service and Man-power Survey.*—Following the declaration of bread-baking as an essential industry, data was prepared for the information of the Director of National Service, District Man-power Officers, and Appeals Boards. To this end a questionnaire was circulated to every bread-baker on the register, and only one employing labour failed to respond. The comprehensive details which were thus made available facilitated the compilation of the required information in a uniform fashion, which, I am assured, has been of material help to the officials concerned.

“ During 1942–43, 150 bakers approached me to support their respective appeal cases; some in their own right, but the majority concerned the retention of bakehouse employees. Examination of these cases, in relation to the data supplied by the questionnaire, disclosed a grave shortage of skilled tradesmen. Of the proprietors, it was ascertained that 100 are non-tradesmen. Another 25 master bakers stated that, by reason of old age and infirmity, they were unable to stand up to arduous bakehouse jobs.

The questionnaire also indicated that the weekly average output of bread in the Dominion is 2,775,000 two-lb. loaves. During the year ended 30th June, 1943, these bakers purchased 101,505 tons of flour (a monthly average of 8,459 tons). For the eight months ended 31st March, 1944, their flour purchases amounted to 66,950 tons, a monthly average of 8,369 tons.

“ *Zoning.*—During the year this economy measure was in operation throughout the Dominion. Both the trade and the consumer have settled down exceedingly well under the new methods of bread-distribution. The Dominion Zoning Officer is duly consulted whenever there is a proposed change of proprietorship which may affect any particular zoning scheme.

“ *Bread Standards.*—For the purpose of this report I cannot do better than quote the following extract from the annual report of the Auckland Master Bakers' Association as published in the March issue of *The New Zealand Baker and Confectioner* :—

“ ‘ The Standard Regulations restricting the number of varieties and shapes of bread have now been in force for over twelve months, and have been of undoubted benefit to the trade, operating as it is with insufficient and in many cases inexperienced labour.’ ”

“ *Quota System.*—Flour quotas now operate only in Otago, and the system continues in force at the express desire of the North Otago and Otago master bakers' associations.”