

(k) BREAD-BAKERS' FLOUR CONSUMPTION

233. For the twelve months ended 31st January, 1947, the quantity of flour used by bread bakers and bread-pastrycooks increased by 2,257 tons. Figures covering a period of four years exhibit a large trade expansion, as follows :—

	Tons.		
Year ended 31st January, 1944 101,120
Year ended 31st January, 1945 103,877
Year ended 31st January, 1946 107,716
Year ended 31st January, 1947 109,973

Flour consumption for the period from 1944 to 1947 has therefore shown an increase of 8,853 tons per annum. Since June, 1946, the bakers have used 80 per cent. extraction flour, but with increased output, as shown by the following figures :—

	Eight Months ended 31st January (Tons).		Increase (Tons).
	1946.	1947.	
Flour consumption for bread-baking ..	72,733	72,814	81

(l) APPRECIATION

234. Thanks are again extended to all sections—wheatgrowers, flour-millers, bakers, grain-merchants, and poultry-keepers—for the excellent measure of co-operation which has been received from them.

SECTION 4.—TOBACCO BOARD

235. The following is a summary of the report of the Tobacco Board for the period under review :—

(a) GROWTH OF INDUSTRY

236. In the Board's ten years of administration crop production has increased by slightly more than 340 per cent.—namely, from 1,197,161 lb. in 1936 to 4,080,135 lb. in 1946, with no fewer than seven record-breaking totals. The year under review (1946 harvest) exceeded the previous record (1945) by 21 per cent. This steady increase in production is in accordance with the policy of the Government and the Board.

(b) 1945-46 CROP

237. Climatic conditions during the 1945-46 season were most variable. Commencing with rather unfavourable weather conditions, the season concluded with the best late summer and autumn experienced for many years. The early summer was very dry, and from planting-time onwards there was an unusual prevalence of cold south-west winds, which were hard on the plants, and which further depleted the already limited supply of soil moisture. Although some day temperatures were high, night temperatures were low, bordering on frosts on several occasions; some districts actually recording a frost on 28th December. Good rain fell in March, and from then onwards a long spell of fine frost-free weather was experienced, enabling harvesting to be carried out to an unusually late date.

238. The crop was a heavy one. With good late summer and autumn conditions prevailing, the crop finished out unusually well, a maximum development of upper leaf being obtained, with less loss in the field than usual. The leaf was of good quality, and, although not quite as bright as usual, was of good body and texture and sound. There was less loss in grading than in previous years.