

Fire Fighting Equipment.—The Fire Fighting Equipment Technical Committee is undertaking the preparation of standard specifications for a miscellany of fire brigade and other equipment including hydrants, couplings, riser mains and hose reels.

Chemical Sectional Committee

Parent Committee.—This committee examined 49 draft British standards, 2 draft Australian standards, 3 draft South African standards, 1 draft New Zealand standard, and 2 draft Israeli standards. It also reviewed 41 British standards which had been circulated for comment, 24 of which were recommended for adoption. Three amendments to British standards previously adopted here were endorsed.

Metal Coatings.—The Electro-plating and Protective Metal Finishes Committee examined 4 draft British standards and 1 Australian standard. It also considered and recommended for adoption a British standard which had been circulated for comment.

Laundry Starch.—The Laundry Starch Committee gave preliminary consideration to a standard for laundry starch which, however, was deferred pending the completion of research work at the School of Home Science, University of Otago, and the conclusion of investigations in the United Kingdom by the Research Officer of the Research Institute of Launderers, Dry Cleaners, and Dyers of New Zealand (Inc.).

BUILDING STANDARDS

Building Code Sectional Committee

Amendments to Building Code.—During the year the Building Code Technical Committee considered several proposed amendments to N.Z.S.S. 95, Standard Code of Building By-laws, which experience had shown to be desirable. A special panel was set up to undertake a complete revision of Part IV, Basic Loads and Stresses. The inclusion of provisions for the use of air-entrained concrete was deferred until further information was obtained from overseas. Finally, the definition of "building" given in Part I of the standard code was reconsidered in the light of legal opinions, which suggested that it might not include all those structures which it was intended to cover.

Chimneys.—Good progress was made with draft proposals for building by-laws dealing with chimneys.

Fire Resisting Construction.—The Fire Prevention Committee has given much attention to requirements for fire resisting construction. This work has been given urgency following the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the fire at the premises of Messrs. J. Ballantyne and Co., Ltd., Christchurch. In the absence of any adequate fire protection by-laws suited to New Zealand conditions it was necessary to assemble and analyse all data available from within New Zealand and overseas as a basis for the formulation of an original and comprehensive code practical to administer and affording maximum protection without undue interference with rights of property owners and occupiers.

At the close of the year the draft code, subject to final review, was ready for circulation to the interested parties for comment. It establishes requirements relating to the location, design, construction, and occupancy of the buildings other than private dwellings and buildings for public meetings which are required to be licensed under the Municipal Corporations Act. The draft code divides buildings into five classes according to their degree of fire resistance. The classes range from Type I, "fully protected construction," to Type V, "wood frame construction," which offers the least degree of fire protection. Similarly, occupancies are classified as low, moderate, or high ratings according to the hazards involved. The draft code also prescribes fire zones within which only some classes of buildings are permitted, and stipulates maximum heights and floor areas for the various classes of buildings according to the occupancy rating.