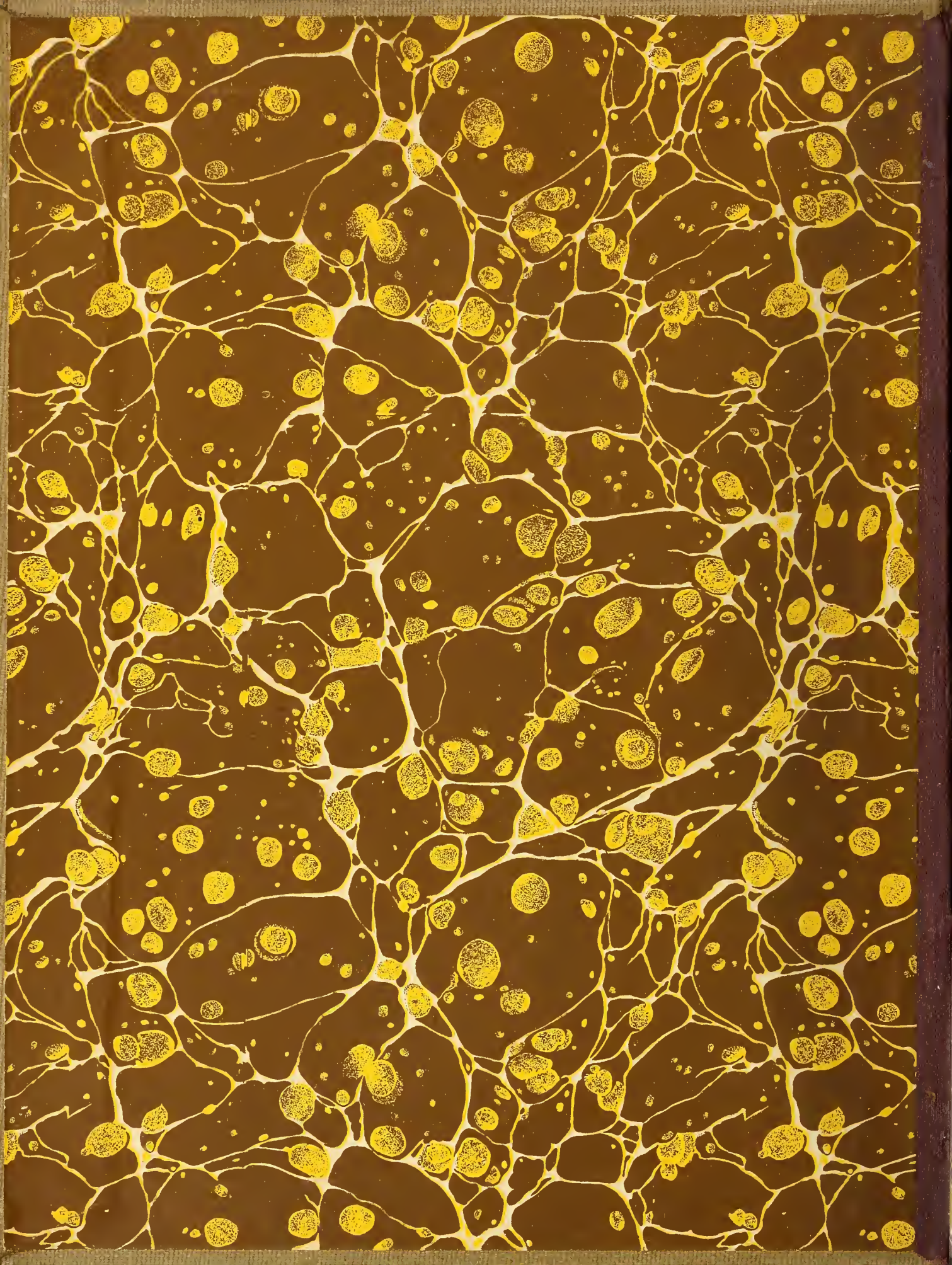


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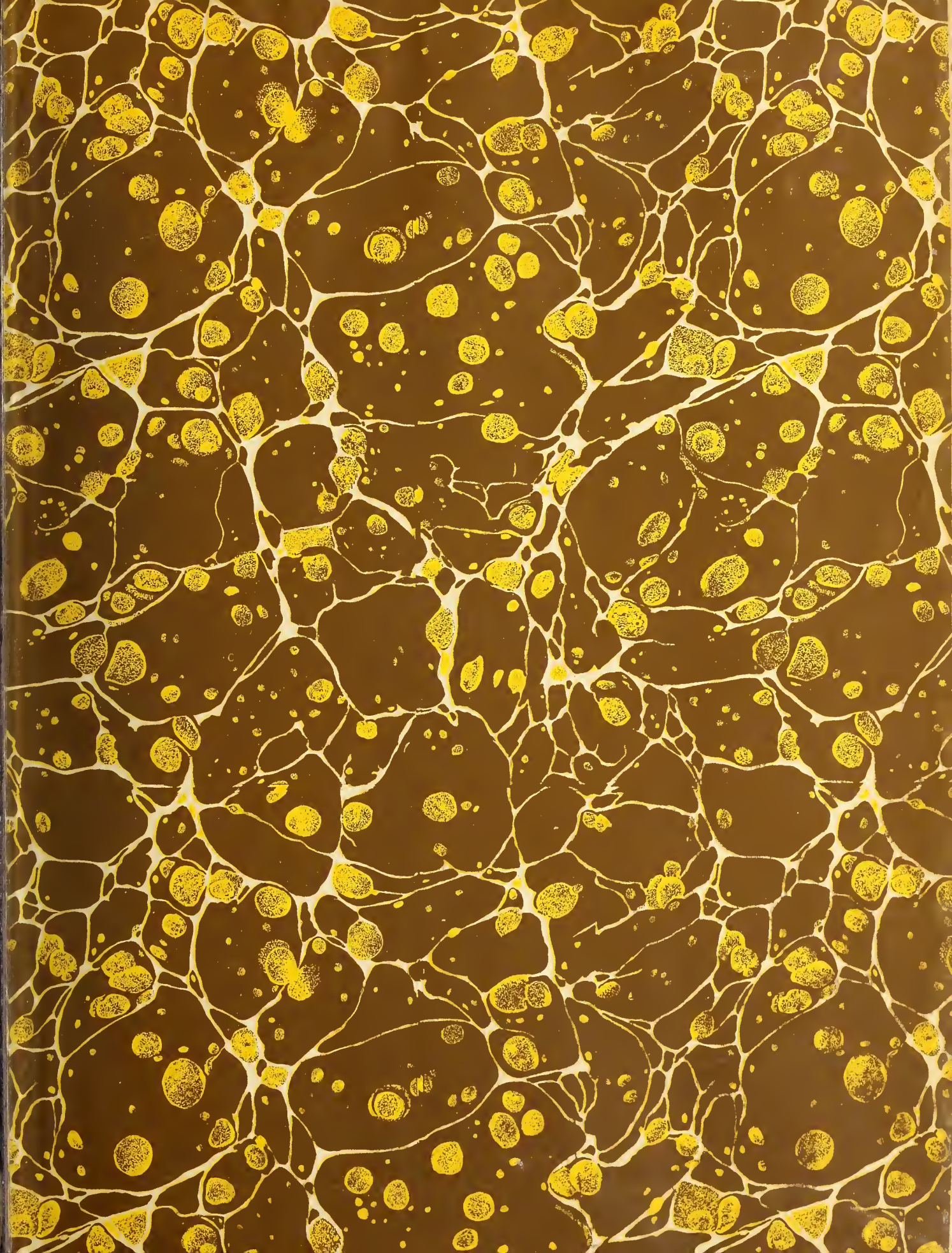


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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Division of Simplified Practice

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MONTHLY NEWS BULLETIN

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EDITOR'S NOTE

With the accompanying material, a monthly bulletin service of the Division of Simplified Practice makes its bow.

This service is intended to keep the industrial and commercial world informed of the progress of Simplified Practice, both as to projects already in effect, those which are going through the procedure which has been found by the Division to be the most valuable, and those which are merely in the initial steps.

If this Bulletin or its successors can help to improve the position of any industry, through cooperation in the elimination of waste and excessive variety, it will have fulfilled its purpose.

None of the material contained herein is restricted as to its use in trade journals or newspapers. Trade journals or newspapers desiring to receive this regularly may do so by communicating with the Division of Simplified Practice, Department of Commerce.



WHAT INDUSTRY IS DOING TOWARD SIMPLIFICATION.

The milling cutter industry, after surveys lasting for some months, placed its proposals for reduction in variety before a general conference of distributors, users and manufacturers on March 25th, with the result that the conference went on record in favor of a 35 per cent reduction of varieties. Proceedings of this conference and the recommendations are being sent out to the three groups for formal acceptance. The conference discussions developed suggestions for further reduction of variety and for technical improvements.

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The preliminary conference stage -- always an illuminating and interesting point to an industry which is considering reduction of variety -- was reached by several industries during March.

One such industry -- whose products enter into everyhome -- was that producing sheet metal ware, whether enameled, tinware, black iron ware or galvanized ware. This industry has been aware for a long time of the wide range of variety of its products, and its Simplification Committees are now submitting to the manufacturers concerned their initial recommendations for further suggestion and criticism.



Another industry which has reached this stage is that concerned with dining car chinaware. Manufacturers and dining car superintendents held a preliminary conference in Chicago on March 24, and the next step will be the calling of a general conference of all interested groups by the Division of Simplified Practice early in May. Initial steps have also been taken in cooperation with the American Marine Standards Committee to determine whether the variety retained in the simplification of hotel and of restaurant and cafeteria chinaware can be similarly used to cover the range necessary on board the ships of companies which are participating in American Marine Standards.

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Among other industries which have begun a serious consideration of the possibilities of simplification of the variety of their output are the sterling silver ware group, which is analyzing a questionnaire to its members, and the shoe polish group, which is about to develop plans for a formal survey. Meetings of these groups will be held during April.

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From a range of sizes and variations which is complex in the extreme, the grocery paper bag industry has developed a simplification program of importance to every householder as well as nearly every retailer. This program, as thus far prepared, will bring about a uniformity of capacity for bags of the same nominal capacity -- which was not the case before the committee on simplification undertook its studies. Before this work was begun bags of a nominal size would vary as much as 50 per cent in capacity. The simplification committee of the industry has been aided by two technical experts who have evolved a guide by which manufacturers can change their machinery with a minimum of trouble and expense to approximate a uniform size, regardless of the type of machinery which the plant uses.

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In the field of lumber there are a number of simplification and standardization projects which will be of great importance to the home builder and the building industry generally. Steps taken by the American Lumber Standardization Conference last May will be elaborated into a further standardization program to be presented at a conference in Washington on May 1. This work will be the summarization of the efforts of the Central and Consulting Committees on American Lumber Standards, which have been giving unstinted effort and time to further developments. While this will affect the soft wood field, progress is being made in conjunction with the Forest Products Laboratory, toward the formulation of standards for hard woods.

In conjunction with this general program, a simplification program is being worked out for the northeast section of the country in the sash, door and millwork industry. The results will be presented at a general conference to be held in Washington on April 29, and if adopted will mean that a single set of standards will replace a widely divergent set of sectional ones.

Progress is still being made in the survey of the use of short length





lumber, which, it is expected, will be completed before May 1.

Still another wood-using industry which is initiating steps which may result in simplification is that of office furniture. The many variations in size of office desks, and the constantly-changing models, have made the problem of purchasing agents of large concerns complicated, especially in view of the need for conservation of floor space. A meeting is to be held the latter part of April to develop a program for action.

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In the distribution field there is keen interest in work done by the carton manufacturers looking toward simplification. Because of the effect on transportation and retail stores as well as on manufacturers -- 200,000 retail stores being affected -- the simplified practice program of this industry will be of tremendous importance. The manufacturers have worked out a set of tentative recommendations, providing sweeping elimination, and these will be submitted for the consideration of 35 shippers associations soon for consideration. It is probable that a general conference of all interests in the carton field will be called before June 15.

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Sharing interest with the general conferences and with the preliminary meetings -- and fully as important because of the values discovered -- are the meetings for revision of Simplified Practice Recommendations which have been put into effect by various groups. Periodical revision is as much a part of the procedure of the Division as is the initial step; for by such revision it is possible to keep pace with changing business conditions and with the progress of invention.

The record number of such revision conferences has been that of the paving brick industry. Starting with 66 varieties of size and shape of paving brick, this industry reduced the range to 11. It soon found that those were too many, and further reduced its variety to 7. A year later the revision conference found the bulk of business had been done in 6 sizes, and another variety was eliminated. In March a fourth revision conference applied the acid test of demand to the tonnage, with the result that but four sizes now remain on the "recognized list" of sizes. And the production figures show that the paving brick is gaining ground in the struggle between the various types of paving materials.

Another group which is getting data together for presentation at a revision conference is that of the metal lath industry which last year reduced its sizes and varieties from 125 to 24.

The paper industry, which last year decided to concentrate on eight basic sizes, is to plan for a further survey which will consider the adherence to the Simplified Practice Recommendation now in effect and will consider further problems.

Still others which are surveying their respective fields to determine bases for revision conferences are: Asphalt, files and rasps, range boilers, milk bottles and caps, bed blankets, and hollow building tile.





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The Division of Simplified Practice has received from the Government Printing Office a number of Simplified Practice Recommendations which embody the action of the manufacturers, distributors and users of:

Structural Slate  
Blackboard Slate  
Builders Hardware  
Steel Barrels and Drums  
Hospital Beds

Copies of these may be bought from the Superintendent of Documents.

The Government Printing Office is also soon to issue the Simplified Practice Recommendation on:

Plow Bolts  
Hot Water Storage Tanks  
Steel Reinforcing Bars  
Loaded Shells  
Concrete Building Units  
Cafeteria and Lunch Room Chinaware.

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Considerable interest was shown in recent conferences on the simplification of commercial forms, invoice, purchase order and inquiry forms. Many firms which have been asked to give their formal acceptance of this simplification are still to be heard from, but every mail brings in more of these acceptances.

The simplification of warehouse forms from hundreds of variations to one uniform set, which was adopted in general conference a few months ago, has been issued from the Government Printing Office. Five thousand copies of this recommendation are being mailed out now for final acceptance. When a sufficient proportion of acceptances have been received from each group concerned in these simplifications, the Division of Simplified Practice will issue the results as Simplified Practice Recommendations, in the "Elimination of Waste" series.

