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COMMERCIAL STANDARDS GROUP, BUREAU OF STANDARDS

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1. "OVER-STANDARDIZATION" VS. "OVER-DIVERSIFICATION"

Ray M. Hudson, Assistant Director, Commercial Standards.

Sales managers and factory managers may differ in their views on many points but they have at least one point in common. Both want "volume!"

However, the factory manager usually looks to standardization of product, processes, and equipment as the basis of quantity production and low unit cost of manufacturing. The sales manager usually looks to diversification in the product as the basis of volume sales. He favors changes in design, style, color or finish, also novelty in the product, as necessary aids to greater volume. While low price, resulting from low production cost, is also a talking point, the sales manager sometimes brushes this aside, saying "The public will pay the price if the product is right", i.e., if it is what the public wants.

Sales managers fear "over-standardization"; they realize products, however, satisfactory from the standpoint of utility, may lose their appeal. The public is always watching for something new, for better quality, better value, better service; so the sales manager encourages constant refinement and improvement of the product, - even fundamental changes in its design if necessary, - to keep it in step with the consumers' advancing requirements.

Factory managers fear "over-diversification". Too many varieties, too many changes in color, style, or design, interfere with maximum economy in manufacturing. Purchasing problems are complicated, stocks multiply, inventories increase; smaller quantities of each kind of goods going through the shops mean shorter runs, more changes of machine "set-ups", more clerical work, and higher operating costs.

Simplification offers an excellent basis of compromise between the "factory" and the "sales" viewpoints. It affords an opportunity to reduce variety to the point where it permits fair economy in production, and yet retain sufficient variety to satisfy the bulk of consumer demand. It strikes the balance between "no change", and "too much change" in product design, style, quality, or finish.

Some of the most successful companies today are those which through simplification have found it possible to produce and sell the volume that means growth, profit and prosperity for them and still avoid the excessive variety that causes slow turnover, excessive inventory, and avoidable waste. Manufacturers and merchants who keep their lines condensed to the variety represented in this compromise are better able to meet sudden shifts in the consumers' dictates. They have less to discard, less inventory to write off, fewer goods to throw on the bargain counter, or to try to move by clearance sales.

Simplification is the "happy medium" between over-standardization and over-diversification, - between standardization which stultifies demand and loses sales, and excessive variety which runs up manufacturing and selling costs, eats into profits, and causes waste.

Our Division of Simplified Practice will gladly send on request descriptive matters to individuals, companies, and others interested in simplification and its possible application to their production or sales problems.

2. BULLETIN READERS INTERESTED IN SIMPLIFICATION. Last month an offer was made to readers of this Bulletin to send them mimeographed copies of the summary "Results and Benefits of Simplified Practice." Within three days after the Bulletin had been sent out, more than thirty-six letters were received asking for the summary. In compiling these requests, it was found that inquiries came from all over the United States. There are still copies available of this summary, and will be sent to interested parties upon request. Address Division of Simplified Practice, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C.
3. TRADE ASSOCIATIONS HELPFUL. Trade associations were described as effective stabilizing agencies in business in an address last month by Abram F. Myers, member of the Federal Trade Commission, before the Interstate Cotton Seed Crushers Association at New Orleans. Industries possessing strong trade associations, said Commissioner Myers, are "equipped for self-regulation in a degree which, if wisely directed, will effectively preclude governmental interference by rendering it unnecessary."

4. **BRITISH STANDARDS FOR AUTO BUMPERS.** Of interest to American manufacturers of automobile bumpers is the announcement that the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Trades, London, have agreed to fall in line with the United States, France and Germany concerning bumper dimensions. Provisional standards of 20 inches from the ground for front bumpers, and 21 inches for rear bumpers have been in operation in Great Britain since July, 1927. However, to conform with the general practice in the three countries mentioned, dimensions 2 inches less in both cases have been adopted by the leading British organizations. Although bumpers are not as yet in general use in England their popularity is slowly increasing.
 5. **SAFER MATCHES.** The Bureau of Standards is conducting experiments in the hope of developing safer matches. The average match has a lighted life of about 30 seconds. It takes from 6 to 14 seconds for satisfactory lighting of a cigar or a pipe, and that part of the match that burns after its function has been performed is responsible for most of the fires attributed to matches. Since 500,000 matches are used in the United States every minute, the menace that lies in this burning remnant of a match is evident.
 6. **TROY POUND CENTURY OLD.** The Troy pound as the standard of the United States Mint was 100 years old May 19th last. It was adopted by Congress in the following terms of the Act of May 19, 1828. "The brass pound weight, procured by the Minister of the United States at London, in the year 1827, for the use of the Mint, and now in the custody of the Mint at Philadelphia, shall be the standard Troy pound of the Mint of the United States, conformably to which the coinage thereof shall be regulated." That Troy pound, though officially made the standard for coinage only, became in effect the primary standard of the United States for all purposes, the avoirdupois pound being derived from it through the relation, one avoirdupois pound equals 7,000-5760 Troy pounds. In 1911 the Troy pound of the Mint was superseded by the Troy pound of the Bureau of Standards, by Act of Congress, but this involved no change in value.
 7. **HOLD WEIGHT CONFERENCE.** The work of State and Federal agencies which safeguard the public against inaccurate weights and measures was discussed at the 21st National Conference on Weights and Measures, held in Washington on May 22-25, under the auspices of the Bureau of Standards. Methods for improving this service were considered by the Conference, which is an organization of State, county and city weights and measures officials.
- A report by the Bureau of Standards on methods of driving taximeters, supervision of gas and electric meters, specifications and tolerances for gasoline pumps and grease dispensing devices, promotion of educational work on weights and measures subjects, the relation of the business man to weights and measures officials, and the effect of the flood in Vermont on weights and measures were among some of the subjects discussed
8. **NEW VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR WOOD COMMITTEE.** Major R. Y. Stuart, Chief of the Forest Service, Department of Agriculture, has been appointed Vice-chairman of the National Committee, on Wood Utilization of the Department of Commerce by Secretary Hoover. Major Stuart succeeds Colonel William B. Greeley, who recently resigned from both posts to take the secretary-managership of the West Coast Lumber Manufacturers Association.
 9. **MINIMUM PERFORMANCE STANDARDS.** Adoption of minimum standards of performance for electrical products as the next logical step in the standardization program of the electrical industry was recommended by W. S. Rugg of Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company, to the second general session of the policies division meeting, National Electrical Manufacturers Association. Successful standardization already accomplished by the industry on apparatus characteristics, such as capacity, speeds and

dimensions, should be followed by establishment of quality levels of performance, in Mr. Rugg's opinion. Regarding the minimum standard of performance as a direct means of achieving economy and efficiency of production, and above all, of insuring the user of apparatus against unbalanced design and performance, and general unsatisfactory service, Mr. Rugg described the ideal minimum standard as accomplishing a balance between: (1) Lowest cost of manufacturing and distribution; (2) greatest adaptability to the purpose for which the apparatus is to be used; (3) greatest durability, or its length of life; (4) lowest cost of maintenance; (5) lowest cost of power for operating it.

10. SIMPLIFYING ROLLING MILL DESIGN. Manufacturers who have taken up in a comprehensive way the simplification of their product, following the modern trend toward standardization and the throwing out of unprofitable lines, have profited in a large way by their enterprise, remarks The Iron Age adding that this is true in particular of older houses, whose products represent a long evolution in mechanical design in sizes and in uses. A house-cleaning on well-studied engineering lines is quite sure to result in a large measure of simplification and consequent reduction in costs.

11. TIRE SIMPLIFICATION NEARER. Commenting on the progress that has been made in setting up the proposed simplification for balloon tire sizes, the magazine "Tires" says: "As all interests in the automobile and tire industries have had their wishes gratified in the selection of the new standards, it is not expected that any hitch will develop in their general adoption." In discussing the benefits to be derived from the simplification program, "Tires" says: "The benefits of the new program will not be noticeable in the tire dealer field for some time, until cars carrying the 24 sizes now standard with 1928 equipment have been discarded or have had a change in wheel equipment, but the adoption of something approaching tire simplification will undoubtedly have an encouraging influence in the industry."

Another trade publication, India Rubber & Tire Review in discussing the simplification states that tire merchants will become the principal beneficiaries of the tire simplification schedule. From solely the monetary standpoint tire manufacturers perhaps will benefit most. Summarized, primarily from the viewpoint of the dealer, the program will mean: (1) A reduction of from 25 to 40 per cent in dealers' stocks; (2) a proportionate release of capital, now tied up in inventories, for extension of servicing facilities, enlargement of dealers' service stations, and the stocking of profitable sidelines such as batteries, battery service, accessories, etc.; (3) quicker turn-over of stocks, eliminating much obsolescence of stocks; (4) reduction in floor and shelf space required for tire and tube stocks; (5) material reductions in carrying charges on financing of inventories and sales; (6) lower insurance on current stocks; (7) reduced operating expenses; and (8) bigger profits.

12. SEEKS STANDARD CAN. Too many kinds of bottles and sardine cans are complicating life and the cost of living, according to the Minister of Commerce of France who is furthering efforts to trim down the number, hoping standardization will lower costs considerably. There are 52 varieties of bottles and 40 of varying capacity, which, it is agreed by business men of France, can be reduced to a fraction of that number. Sardines now come in 12 sizes of boxes.

13. APPLYING RESEARCH TO SALES. Bulletin No. 2, of a series of reports on applying research to sales, prepared by the Research Committee of the New England Council, cites several examples of how a number of New England companies are dealing with marketing and merchandising problems. One case given is that of Buxton, Inc., of Springfield, Mass. When this concern started in 1897 it offered one product, a facial cream, to the public. At the end of twenty years the line ranged from 2,500 to 5,000 items.

Through simplification this concern today offers only 6 products. The bulletin states that one advantage of this simplification is that a salesman can take the entire line under his arm and display it to ten dealers in the same time that was necessary to show the old line from a sample room in a hotel to one dealer.

14. **BENEFIT THROUGH CENTRALIZED PURCHASING.** Centralized purchasing is becoming more generally recognized as a potent factor in increasing the efficiency of social and charitable agencies in many cities, states The Purchasing Agent. According to the publication, the increased buying power of their appropriations under such a system is directly reflected in the extent and value of the work they are able to undertake. To prove this point, the magazine further states that the Boston Council of Social Agencies, which, in a total fund of \$25,843, representing 27 member agencies, showed a surplus of \$236.98 for 1927, as compared with a deficit of \$108.76 in 1926, when total transactions amounted to \$4,000 less.
15. **FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SIMPLIFICATION.** In discussing simplification within the Government departments in The Tax Digest Captain D. B. Wainwright, U. S. N., on duty with the Office of the Chief Coordinator in Washington, states that the Federal Government saves \$4,500,000 through departmental cooperation. "The procurement of materials and supplies needed in the conduct of our government's business (and our government has been called the biggest business in the world) seemingly lends itself to cooperative or coordinated effort less readily than do the other functions which are common to two or more departments" he writes. Captain Wainwright explains this by saying that it is due, in a large measure, to the diversity of fields of activity of the various departments, and to the fact that the occasion for procurement of the same commodity by two or more departments often results from activities within the respective departments which have no direct relation to each other and which can not constantly be subjected to the same governing factors.
16. **WISE MANAGEMENT.** Instinct of self-preservation impels man to fear what he does not understand and to destroy that which he fears, remarks Herbert D. Allen, in discussing Direct Contact with the Worker, in Executives Bulletin. Mr. Allen, Vice President of the Elliott Service Company of New York, believes that "wise management recognizes this fact and instructs the worker in simple business economics. He is made to realize that, if only for his own selfish interests, he must help maintain quality, reduce waste, and increase productivity. An increased standard of living for the entire nation depends upon maximum individual production within the proper limits of the human machine. Worker must be taught a better understanding of his job. Stimulation of mental attitude and morale of worker makes for higher quality production, reduced labor turnover, elimination of waste, as well as pride in quality workmanship, satisfaction from teamwork, and happiness in work".
17. **NO SECRETS.** "No-Secrets, - The Secret of Our Success" is an interesting item by John I. Romer in Executives Bulletin, in which he says that the key to American industrial progress is circulation of ideas. Executives, knowing that ideas are developed and perfected only when they receive the attention and thought of others, pass their successful sales and advertising plans on to industry. Old-fashioned traits of guarding business plans, refusing to exchange ideas and frankly discuss problems, have been practically banished from American business. "The open door has displaced the bolted door. Operations behind closed doors lock out infinitely more than they lock in. The day is coming when business executives in all countries will appreciate the value of a free exchange of thoughts and experiences on all matters pertaining to management of their organizations".

18. STUDY OF FLEXING OF TIRE TREADS. In a recent press item mention was made of an apparatus built at the Bureau of Standards for observing (through a heavy plate glass) the flexing of tire treads. A technologic paper has been prepared and is now in press which describes in detail the results of tests made with this apparatus, as well as the results obtained by another method which proved to be a satisfactory one for obtaining similar data. With this latter method a piece of sheet metal is given a thin coating of soft wax and is then sprinkled sparingly with grains of carborundum. A tire under the desired load and air pressure is rolled over the waxed plate, the carborundum grains stick to the tire and each traces on the plate the movement of the particular point on the tire to which it happens to stick. Some very interesting information concerning tread movements was obtained in this way, and the method has the advantage that it can be carried out with very little equipment.
19. SIMPLIFIED MEASURING BLANKS. The Clothing Trade Journal believes that the clothing industry is in need of a simplified measuring blank. In the May issue of the magazine, the editor discusses the subject at some length, saying that one would believe from the present condition that each designer is striving to outdo the other in preparing the blank.
20. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF RATIONALIZATION. Oliver Sheldon in a recent issue of Harvard Business Review in discussing "The Significance of Rationalization", made the following observation: "Rationalization is the process of associating together individual undertakings or groups of firms in a close form of amalgamation, and, ultimately, of unifying, in some practicable degree of combination, whole industries, both nationally and internationally; with the allied objects (beyond what is possible to an industry divided into many competitive units) of increasing efficiency, lowering costs, improving conditions of labor, promoting industrial cooperation and reducing the wastes of competition.

"These objects being achieved by various means which unification alone makes in full measure available - the regulation of the production of an industry to balance the consumption of its products; the control of prices; the logical allocation of work to individual factories; the stabilization of employment and regularization of wages; the standardization of materials, methods and products; the simplification of the ranges of goods produced; the economical organization of distribution; the adoption of scientific methods and knowledge in the management and technique of trades as a whole; and the planning and pursuit of common trade policies."
21. ANNUAL CONFERENCE WOOD UTILIZATION COMMITTEE. The third annual meeting of the National Committee on Wood Utilization was held May 4 and 5, just after the lumber conference of the Division of Simplified Practice. About 150 Committee members, government officials and guests attended, and a very interesting and valuable program of brief talks was given. These talks were by representatives of the various groups in the Committee membership, designed to show the interest of each industrial group on the Committee program. The importance of wood utilization as a part of forestry was stressed, and various speakers briefly outlined industrial practices aimed to increased use of wood now wasted for by-products manufacture. Increased use of short-length lumber, odd dimensions, and especially of grade-marked stock, for proper use, economical utilization, and economy in building construction and industrial manufacture,

were advocated by architects, engineers, contractors and others. The meeting was characterized as the most successful in the few years of the Committee's activity.

22. **GLASS SUCCESSFULLY TESTED.** The 70-inch disc of optical glass made by the Bureau of Standards for Perkins Observatory at Ohio Wesleyan University, has been tested for internal strain and appears to be so well annealed that the finishing operations can be started without apprehension. Eleven inches thick and weighing about 3,500 pounds, the disc was uncovered January 21, 1928, after being baked for eight months under graduated temperatures in a specially constructed furnace at the Bureau of Standards. Four unsuccessful attempts had been made to obtain a disc of this size, and the method finally developed was devised by a member of the glass section of the Bureau of Standards.
23. **CADILLAC PUSHES INVOICE.** Early in February the general manager of purchases of the Cadillac Motor Car Company in a form letter to vendors recommended the use of the simplified invoice form. To this letter approximately one hundred and twenty-five replies were received, all stating that the concerns had either changed to this form or would do so at an early date. This is another example of the wide-spread interest and use of the simplified invoice and is indicative of the support which the form is receiving.
24. **RAILWAY SIMPLIFIES STOCKS.** In the early part of 1927, the purchasing, stores equipment and roadway departments of the Atlantic Coast Line determined upon a concentrated analysis of their stores of materials for the purpose of standardizing them into as few sizes and varieties as possible, according to an article on the subject by L. F. Duvall, Assistant General Storekeeper, which appeared in a recent issue of Railway Age. According to Mr. Duvall, by the end of the year a total of 19,370 items of supplies had been studied and reduced to 14,499. The first step taken in the standardization work was to make an index for ready reference, consisting of all the recommended standards adopted by the American Railway Association, Division VI, on standardization and simplification of stores stock, and those published in the series developed under the auspices of the Division of Simplified Practice of the Department of Commerce.
25. **CITY PLANNING AND ZONING REPORTS.** Among publications recently issued by the Division of Building and Housing of the Department of Commerce, are: (1) A preliminary tabulation of city planning commissions in cities of 25,000 or more inhabitants; (2) a city planning primer; (3) a survey of city planning and related laws in 1927; and (4) a survey of zoning laws and ordinances in 1927. These publications explain the importance and the prevalence of city planning and zoning. The primer may be procured at a cost of 5 cents per copy from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. The other three publications may be procured free of charge upon application to the Building and Housing Division, Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C.

Studies of the Building and Housing Division disclosed that, at the end of 1927, zoning laws had been enacted by 45 states and the District of Columbia, while another state has held zoning permissible under home rule provisions of the state constitution. During 1927, 63 cities, towns, and villages adopted zoning ordinances, which increased the total number of zone municipalities in the United States to 583, representing a total population of more than 31 million persons and more than 57 per cent of the urban population of the United States.

26. RAILWAY REDUCES INVENTORY 50 PER CENT. During a course of two years the Richmond Railways, reduced its inventory 50 per cent, according to an article in Railway Purchases and Stores by Joseph A. Koerner, Storekeeper of the road, and Felix E. Reifschneider, Engineer. According to the writers this was accomplished by the elimination of a large amount of obsolete material by sale to other railways, sale to second-hand dealers, scrapping and charging to operating expenses, through standardization of car equipment. This has been an achievement of the equipment department, which has enabled stores to make a very excellent showing. As an example, where parts formerly had to be carried in stock for the repair of seven different types of motors, it has now been cut down to three. This policy was carried through with controllers, car fittings, and all along the line; another medium of reducing the inventory was through the elimination of a number of odd sizes of bolts, screws, rivets, etc. It was found that a number of different sizes were carried in stock which were seldom, if ever, used. These eliminations were then followed up by a more careful stocking and ordering of material.

27. AUSTRALIAN SIMPLIFICATION. The first official work of the Australian Commonwealth Association of Simplified Practice, an organization sponsored by the Federal Government, will be the simplification of forms of Government contracts. Professor Eastaugh, chairman of the association, recently told the Electrical Manufacturers' Association of N. S. W. The work of the association is divided into three groups: (1) The taking of certain definite practices which showed themselves to be wasteful and simplifying them; (2) the prevention of practices becoming complicated, thus obviating the need for simplification; (3) the publication of information concerning simplified practice to educate the public, especially in the direction that complications lead to waste.

In referring to the nature of the work of the association, Professor Eastaugh stated that there was no compulsion to adopt the findings of the association. Further, the association did not initiate work. It was left to some organization or firm to request the association to undertake the simplification of a certain practice and endeavor by agreement among all parties interested to adopt it; in effect, to agree to certain eliminations of superfluities which will lead to simplification. In this the program is patterned somewhat after that of the Department of Commerce. The Division of Simplified Practice does not initiate any simplified practice recommendation. It acts only upon the suggestion of industry.

28. ACTIVITIES OF COMMERCIAL STANDARDS GROUP.

DIVISION OF SIMPLIFIED PRACTICE.

INKS AND ADHESIVES - A meeting of manufacturers of inks and adhesives was held at West Baden, Indiana, on May 2nd, in connection with the annual meeting of the Wholesale Stationers' Association of the U. S. A. The opportunity for simplification of these commodities was discussed and the simplified practice committee of manufacturers instructed to proceed with a survey to acquire the necessary information for a simplification program.

STEEL PEN POINTS - A preliminary meeting of manufacturers of steel pen points was held at West Baden, Indiana, on May 1, in connection with the annual meeting of the Wholesale Stationers' Association. The meeting resulted in the appointment of a simplified practice committee to make a study of the demand for varieties now offered to the trade and to make a recommendation for a simplified schedule for this commodity.

PYROXYLIN COATED FABRICS - There will be a general conference of manufacturers, distributors and organized users of Pyroxylin Coated Fabrics at the Hotel Commodore, New York, on June 19, for the purpose of considering a proposed simplified practice recommendation for this commodity. The manufacturers of Pyroxylin Coated Fabrics are of the opinion that there is a large and unnecessary number of constructions offered to the trade, resulting in confusion in the minds of buyers and inability to make proper comparison between the goods so offered. A simplified practice recommendation has been tentatively developed by the simplified practice committee of Pyroxylin Coated Fabric Manufacturers.

SEPTIC TANKS - A preliminary meeting of manufacturers of septic tanks and officials of the Department of Commerce and the Public Health Service was held on May 2 with a view to taking steps to simplify the number of sizes of these tanks now produced. A committee of manufacturers was appointed at this meeting and are at present engaged in making a survey of current practice in their industry, to obtain data upon which to base a recommendation.

STEEL WOOL - The manufacturers of steel wool have evinced a desire to apply the principles of simplified practice to their products. A preliminary meeting of these manufacturers is to be held at the Department of Commerce early in June.

CANS - The users of cans, represented by the preservers and packers of fruits, fish and vegetables are to be circularized by the Department of Commerce in cooperation with the National Cannery Association, in an effort to ascertain whether or not there is a possibility of eliminating some sizes of these cans which are slow-moving and serve to tie up capital of producers, wholesalers, and retailers.

SINGLE TREES - A meeting of manufacturers of singletrees was held in Cincinnati on May 25, 1928, at which a representative of the Division addressed the manufacturers on simplification. A simplified practice committee was appointed at the meeting, and authorized to proceed at once with a survey of existing production in demand. The Chairman of the Committee has requested the cooperation of the Division in accomplishing a considerable elimination of existing variety.

PLOW SHARES AND SMALL TOOLS - A meeting of manufacturers of this equipment was held in Cincinnati on May 25, 1928, and was addressed by a representative of the Division of Simplified Practice. The manufacturers appointed a simplified practice committee to conduct a survey of production in demand throughout the industry. This committee is to report later to a second conference of manufacturers which will formulate definite recommendations for the industry. The Committee has requested the cooperation of the Division of Simplified Practice in this program.

LAWNMOWERS - A request has been made for the Division of Simplified Practice to have a representative of the Division attend a meeting of lawnmower manufacturers in New York on June 11th for the purpose of explaining the methods and procedure of the Division, in cooperation with the manufacturers in initiating a simplification program in their industry. It is expected that manufacturers representing 90% of volume of production will be present.

FIRE ENGINES - A number of preliminary conferences have been held with manufacturers, fire chiefs and officials of the National Board of Fire Underwriters, and the simplified practice committee of manufacturers has formulated a list of five standard fire engine pumping capacities. Their recommendation was presented to the convention of the Fire Department Institute at Hot Springs, Virginia, on May 28-29, and a general conference of manufacturers, distributors and organized users will be arranged at a future date.

CONCRETE RIBBED FLOOR - Manufacturers, distributors and organized users of forms for concrete ribbed floor construction, are being circularized by the Division of Simplified Practice for written acceptance of the recommendation covering forms for Concrete Ribbed Floor Construction, approved by a general conference held March 21, at Biloxi, Miss. Manufacturers, distributors and users representing at least 80 per cent of the total volume of annual production must have accepted this recommendation in writing before it will be published by the Department of Commerce. The recommendation thereafter will be periodically reviewed by a standing committee of the industry for possible revision, or reaffirmation.

SURVEYS ON PROJECT - Preliminary to submitting Simplified Practice Recommendation No. 54, Sterling Silver Flatware, to the industry for revision or reaffirmation, the Division of Simplified Practice is conducting a survey of the acceptors of this recommendation, to ascertain the average degree of adherence to the project, and to secure the views of the acceptors with regard to any modification that they may consider advisable.

BALL BEARING SIZES - The chairman of the simplification committee for ball bearing sizes has notified the Division of Simplified Practice that the collaboration of the committee with the Ball and Roller Bearings Division of the Society of Automotive Engineers has produced the desired results. Therefore, the Division has removed this project from its active files.

ASPHALT - The standing committee for Simplified Practice Recommendation No. 4, Asphalt, desires to hold a meeting at the time of the convention of the American Society for Testing materials, which is to be held in Atlantic City during the last week of June, to consider suggested modification of the list of penetration limits. This meeting is scheduled for June 27. Aside from the members of the standing committee being present, it is desired that there be present representatives of those state and city engineers who are experiencing difficulty in specifying certain penetration limits for asphalt, and who have recommended that these limits be narrowed down to a five-point range. Accordingly, invitations have been issued for the meeting.

PAPER TAGS - The preliminary conference scheduled for May 25th, to consider the simplification of paper tags was postponed at the request of the Tag Manufacturers' Association. The date for the conference will be announced at a future date.

LOADING PLATFORMS AND LIFT TRUCKS - A conference of shippers, carriers, and warehousemen was held on June 6, under the joint auspices of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce and the Commercial Standards Group of the Bureau of Standards. The purpose of the conference was to consider the use and extension through cooperative effort of simplified methods of handling, moving, loading and unloading goods; to promote the development of interchangeability in the equipment required for handling goods; and to promote the establishment of such dimensional standards as may be necessary to secure interchangeability of equipment.

Various phases of the subject of handling and loading goods were presented by experts in material handling, transportation and warehousing. On account of the fact that interchangeability of platform and truck equipment is immediately feasible, it is proposed to undertake simplification in this class of equipment first, with the idea of taking up in sequence thereafter the various other classes of handling equipment.

ICE CAKE SIZES - At a meeting of the Simplified Practice Committee of the Refrigeration Industries held in Detroit on May 18, a simplified list of five weights of ice cakes for household refrigerators was adopted, together with a list of maximum dimensions for each weight. The recommendation was developed by this committee, representing all branches of the refrigeration industry, as a result of careful surveys covering all existing standard sizes and cuts of manufactured and natural ice. A general conference of producers, distributors and organized users of ice was held at the Department of Commerce on June 13, at which the recommendation of the committee was presented for action. Following this conference, the committee will next undertake to formulate a simplified list of dimensions for cooling compartments and door openings of household refrigerators.

COMMERCIAL STANDARDS UNIT.

PIPE NIPPLES - A general conference to consider the establishment of a Commercial Standard for Steel and Wrought Iron Pipe Nipples is scheduled for 10:00 A. M. Friday, June 29th, in room 704 Commerce Building, Washington, D. C. The recommended standard for steel pipe nipples has been prepared by the Pipe Nipple Standards Corporation in cooperation with the pipe mills. The proposed standard for wrought iron pipe nipples is similar in character and was suggested by the leading manufacturers of this material. All those interested in obtaining satisfactory standards for pipe nipples are invited to attend. Distributors, users, and master plumbers particularly are urged to be present.

COLORS VITREOUS WARE - The Manufacturers Advisory Committee on Vitreous China Plumbing Fixtures has appointed a subcommittee to consider the practicability of standardizing colors of vitreous china plumbing fixtures to work in cooperation with manufacturers of enameled iron plumbing fixtures and bathroom specialties in order that the colors used by various groups may be made to harmonize without undue diversification of lines.

MALLEABLE IRON BRASS SEATED UNIONS - A preliminary conference of manufacturers of malleable iron brass seated unions held in New York City on May 28th, voted to request the establishment of a Commercial Standard through the assistance of the Bureau of Standards and under its procedure. The U. S. Government master specification for this product, Federal Specifications Board specification No. 393, was used as a basis for discussion and the manufacturers recommended a number of modifications which will be considered in further detail at a later meeting and then presented to a general conference of producers, distributors and consumers for further comment and criticism.

AMERICAN MARINE STANDARDS COMMITTEE.

During the past month proposed specifications for three sizes of medicine chests and lists of medical and surgical supplies for different classes of ships were revised and submitted to the membership of the American Marine Standards Committee. Other events of interest are:

The Committee on "Constitution and Rules" met and approved for recommendation to the Executive Board, a number of amendments to the Constitution and Rules originally adopted so as to make them conform to the practical procedure developed; preliminary drawings of revised standards for rigging screws have been prepared; printed publications AMSC #33, Lifeboat Sizes and Capacities, and AMSC# 34, Marine Glue for Seams of Ship Decks, were issued

and generally distributed; preliminary drafts of proposed standard specifications for door bolts and sash lifts for marine joiner work were prepared and submitted to the Subject Committee on "Joiner Hardware"; preliminary drafts of proposed standards for Flanged Pipe Fittings and Pipe Flanges and tables of working pressures were completed and submitted to the Subject Committee on "Pipe Flanges and Fittings, etc."

The Executive Board met on May 23rd for transaction of business accumulated since the annual meeting in January. The following is a digest of the outstanding proceedings of this meeting: Approved 10 applications for membership; approved rosters of the Technical Committees on "Hull Details" and on "Engineering Details", as recently reorganized; considered 9 proposed amendments to the Constitution and 13 proposed amendments to the General Rules recommended by the Committee on "Constitution and Rules" and approved them with minor modifications; approved suggestion that the subject of wire ropes for marine use be investigated with a view to the development of standard specifications with information to indicate the most suitable grades and sizes for specific purposes; directed the Secretary of the Committee to gather data regarding construction of steel hulls and to outline suggested general instructions.

Approved the following standards for promulgation; revised standard for rigging screws with spliced rope; revised standard for rigging screws with sockets; specification for metallic packing for condenser tubes; specifications for rubber air hose; rubber steam hose, 1½" water hose, 2½" water suction hose, and oil suction and discharge hose; specifications for insulation of pipe and machinery. The following specifications for insulation materials: Magnesia molded pipe covering and blocks, Magnesia asbestos cement or plaster, Asbestos Millboard, hair felt, cotton duck for insulation coverings; Hubs for built-up propellers with flush faces and fairwater caps for same; scupper valves of sizes 3", 4", 5" and 6"; medicine chests and contents for, ocean-going vessels, coastwise and lake freighters, and small vessels, steps, heel fittings and caps for tubular steel cargo booms, including proposed alternative standard for the boom caps subject to development.

The meeting decided to appoint a permanent special committee on "International Standardization of Shipbuilding Details", which is to be charged to consider all propositions that may be presented by the Bureau of International Standardization located in Holland.

The Subject Committee on "Joiner Hardware" met and discussed proposed standards for rim locks, mortise locks, door bolts and sash lifts.

29. USE OF SIMPLIFIED INVOICE INCREASING. A survey conducted by Westinghouse Electric Manufacturing Company, revealed the fact that 26 per cent of all invoices received by this company are on the "simplified" invoice form. This covers only the strictly laid out invoice form as approved, and does not include invoices rendered on any modified form of the simplified invoice. In a recent communication to the Division of Simplified Practice, Mr. C. M. Finney, of the Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company, said that he was convinced that the use of the simplified invoice is continuing to expand and that he has no doubt that a later review by the General Electric Company would show an increasing portion of simplified invoice forms received.

30. MORE OF THE CONSUMERS' DOLLAR. Under the title "The Fight for a Bigger Slice of the Consumers' Dollar", Mr. J. George Frederick quotes statistics on the consumers' purchasing power, the way it is divided among commodities from the standpoint of distribution. He says: "The consumer's dollar has just one hundred slices to it, or one thousand if you cut it into mills. The American citizen who responds to the ever increasing stimulations of advertisers can do so only within the limits of his dollar.

He can get more out of his day's work only in two ways; (1) By getting more dollars for it, and (2) by getting more goods for each dollar. He has been doing both, first through higher wages, and second, by declining prices. The concatenation of both these processes has been called the economic miracle of the century, for the two things never before happend together."

31. **THE PROFITLESS BIG LITTLE BUSINESS.** In a recent advertisement a National Bank of New York City said: "A well-known manufacturer of parts supplied a score or more of automobile companies.. Each one bought from 10,000 to 500,000 parts a year but each wanted some minor variation in the pattern. The constant change in machine set-up necessitated by these varying demands kept the parts-manufacturer's plant in confusion. He was practically operating on a job-shop basis, although his total output was large enough to warrant quantity-production economies.

"Careful figuring showed him that he could cut his price in half, improve his delivery service and yet make more money himself, if he could induce all his customers to accept the same pattern. He laid the facts before them. They accepted the proposal. One of them saved \$4,000,000 a year, or \$20 a part on 200,000 parts. This is what simplification means when business cuts off some of its unessential frills."

32. **SEASONING, HANDLING, AND CARE OF LUMBER.** The consumers' edition of "Seasoning, Handling and Care of Lumber", has just been announced by the National Committee on Wood Utilization. This bulletin may be obtained from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., at 15 cents per copy, or from any of the District Offices of the Department of Commerce. In announcing the report, which is of value to manufacturers and distributors of lumber, as well as consumers, the National Committee on Wood Utilization said "Shoddy construction is often due to the use of unseasoned lumber where good construction requires well seasoned stock. This report has been prepared for consumers by a special sub-committee of consumers. It shows how the consumer should store and handle the lumber he buys: how well seasoned lumber should be used, with particular reference to building and construction; and points out how, at a small extra expense, the house owner may eliminate sagging floors cracked plaster, sticking doors, and all the other symptoms of the use of unseasoned lumber "

33. **ACADEMY TELLS OF SIMPLIFICATION.** Many chapters on standardization and simplification are contained in the Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, issued last month. The book is divided into four parts, namely: Part 1 Standardization Programs in Industry; Part 2, Standardization Programs of Specific Industries; Part 3, Standardization Programs Outside of Industry; and Part 4, Standardization and the Consumer.

34. **WORKMEN AND WASTE.** Speaking before a recent meeting of more than 500 engineers, specially invited representatives of large employers' and workmen's associations, held in Paris Mr. Bellouard, general manager of the plants of the Thomson-Houston Co. told of the spirit of collaboration prevailing in the United States between workmen connected with production and distribution. The speaker stated that this cooperative spirit tends to constantly endeavor to simplify the working methods, and introduces ideas of economy both as regards time and material, from the standpoint of the new conception of rationalization.

35. GERMANY STANDARDIZES MINING TOOLS. After two years of preliminary labors, the Industrial Mining Standards Committee in cooperation with the German mining regions, has worked out 37 standardization plans for miners' tools, according to a German publication. In discussing the project, this magazine said that these labors encountered some difficulties, for when the tools were adapted to many different conditions, the force of old habits prevailing to some extent, a large number of varying shapes were retained even for tools used for the same work and under conditions very similar. At first 72 tool standardization plans, i.e., designs and shapes, were prepared, which were subsequently reduced to 37.
36. GERMANY TO HAVE STANDARD CHECK. The Berlin Bankers' Association has developed a final plan for a standard bank check, which will eliminate the present diversity in checks. According to an article in a German publication not only are the sizes and the printed forms of checks different for each bank, but many times the checks of agency and branch house of the same bank differ. A standard bank check has been in use in the United States for several years.