

## STAFF CHANGES.

30. The transfers and removals of staff which have been so marked a feature for some time past are now rapidly diminishing. During the recent period of change it was inevitable that a large number of adjustments of staff should become necessary. The effect of the return to more settled conditions is now being felt, and each of the District Offices possesses an efficient staff. Where possible, officers are being trained as understudies for the higher positions.

The frequent transfers of officers which have taken place in the past were not only a source of considerable expense, but also had an effect which was not beneficial on the work of the Office. In the future it is intended that as few transfers as possible shall take place.

## DECENTRALIZATION.

31. The concluding stages of the scheme of decentralization contemplated by the Public Trust Office Amendment Act, 1912, and temporarily suspended during the war period have now been reached.

The Local Deputy for the North Auckland District took up duty on the 5th June, 1920.

On the 31st March, 1921, the only branch offices controlled from the Head Office were Blenheim, Greymouth, Masterton, Taihape, and the agencies at Pahiatua, Carterton, Hokitika, and Westport.

Arrangements are now practically complete for the establishment of Local Deputy Public Trustee offices at Blenheim, Greymouth, and Masterton. The agency at Westport and a part-time office which is being established at Hokitika will be controlled by the Local Deputy Public Trustee, Greymouth, and the whole of the agencies in the Masterton district will be controlled by the Local Deputy Public Trustee, Masterton. The work of the District Manager, Taihape, will be supervised by the Local Deputy Public Trustee, Palmerston North. The establishment of these additional Local Deputy Public Trustee offices will make it possible to transfer the administration of the remaining estates from the Head Office to the District Offices concerned. When this is completed the administration of all estates will be conducted by the office nearest to the principal assets, and the functions of the Head Office will be confined to general policy matters and to important matters of administration which are referred for the decision of the Public Trustee or the Public Trust Office Board.

32. A new system of regulating the relations between District Manager offices and the controlling Local Deputy Public Trustee offices has been established, so that the work may as far as possible be conducted at the office where it properly belongs. The system has had the effect of reducing to a minimum any duplication of the work. The modifications made in the system have been in the direction of giving to the District Managers a more active part in the administration of estates in their districts, and allowing of a more direct method of approach to the Head Office in matters requiring the decision of the Board. Certain groups of offices are already working satisfactorily under the system, which will be extended as opportunity offers.

## EXTENSION OF ORGANIZATION.

33. There has been a marked expansion of the organization throughout the Dominion during the year. Full-time offices in charge of permanent officers of the Department have been opened at Feilding, Gore, Levin, Otautau, Rangiora, Stratford, Te Kuiti, Waipukurau, Wairoa, and Whakatane, and arrangements are in hand for the opening of an office at Marton. The Hastings office has been raised to the status of a District Manager's office.

Part-time offices in districts where there are good prospects, but where the present business does not warrant the appointment of a full-time officer, have been opened at Pukekohe, Inglewood, Eltham, Patea, Waipawa, Rakaia, Tuatapere, and Wyndham. Further offices will shortly be opened at Rotorua, Te Aroha, Te