

Awamutu, Piopio, Otorohanga, Waitara, Otaki, Leeston, Oxford, Methven, Hokitika, Milton, and Palmerston.

New agencies of the Office under the control of non-permanent agents have been opened at Matamata, Waimate, and Temuka, and arrangements are in hand for the opening of agencies at Cambridge, Eketahuna, and Martinborough.

CONTROL OF ENEMY PROPERTY.

34. Important duties have been imposed on the Public Trustee since the outbreak of the Great War in his capacity as Custodian of Enemy Property, Controller of Enemy Firms, and later as Controller of the New Zealand Clearing-house established to work in co-operation with the Central Clearing-office in London under the terms of the Treaty of Versailles and other peace treaties concluded with the late enemy States.

A full account of this portion of the Public Trustee's work will be found in a separate report, which will be presented to Parliament during the present session.

PUBLIC TRUST OFFICE, SAMOA.

35. In the report for the year ended 31st March, 1920, reference was made to the proposed appointment of a Local Deputy Public Trustee at Samoa, to work under the direction and control of the Public Trustee of New Zealand, in terms of the Samoan Constitution Order. On further consideration it appeared that the proposed appointment was impracticable owing to the difficulty of exercising adequate control over an officer at such a distance from headquarters. It was therefore suggested to the Department of External Affairs that an amended Order should be made to permit of the appointment of an independent Public Trustee for Samoa, directly responsible to the Samoan Administrator. The suggestion was adopted, and the necessary amending Order was made and gazetted.

In connection with the preliminary arrangements for the establishment of the Office, the Department of External Affairs was given the advice of qualified legal, administration, and accounting officers of the New Zealand Public Trust Office.

INSTRUCTIONS TO OFFICERS.

36. Pending the issue of a general series of instruction-books, circular instructions have been issued to keep officers informed on many points of Office practice and procedure. These instructions will ultimately form a valuable basis for the preparation of instruction-books.

Included in the instructions issued was a concise and comprehensive outline of the principal steps to be taken in the administration of an estate. These instructions were drafted by experienced officers in the Head Office, and were later considered by a conference of reviewing Inspectors, who were unanimously of the opinion that the instructions would prove a most useful aid to officers engaged in estates-administration work. This opinion has been fully justified.

As a supplement to the instructions, special means have been adopted to check the occurrence of minor omissions and errors in the administration of estates.

LEGAL DIVISION.

37. The probate and administration work has reflected the volume of the business transacted by the Office. For the twelve months ended the 31st March last the figures are:—

Applications for grant of probate	369
Applications for grant of order to administer	254
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			623
Other applications for Supreme Court orders	142
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Total	765