

45. Owing to the delegation of estates to the District Offices it has been found possible to group the whole of the administration staff in the Head Office on one floor of the building. This has made for economy and for effectiveness of control.

REVIEW OF SHARES HELD IN ESTATES.

46. An important task which has been undertaken and carried out to completion during the year is the review of all company shares held in estates under administration. Complete lists of such shares were obtained from District Offices, and were first reviewed by the Office Solicitor to ensure that in every case where shares were held under a will or trust their retention was sanctioned by the trust instrument. The lists were subsequently submitted to the Financial Adviser of the Office, who carefully reviewed each holding and furnished a recommendation as to the sale or retention of the shares in each case. Instructions in accordance with his recommendations have been issued to all District Officers.

Returns are now rendered periodically of all new share-holdings coming into the Office, and these are reviewed in each case by the Office Solicitor and by the Financial Adviser.

REVIEW OF ESTATES UNDER ADMINISTRATION.

47. A system of reviewing estates under administration, which was adopted in 1919, and which was referred to in the report of 1920 as being "probably the most important and far-reaching development introduced by the Board," has been further extended, and has proved to be a most valuable factor in the general improvement which has taken place in the standard of the administration work throughout the Office. The whole of the District Offices have been suitably grouped, and the Reviewing Inspectors, who are experienced in both administration and accounting work, have been appointed to review the estates at each office in the groups. By this means what is practically a continuous audit of the administration work of the estates has been secured.

The results have been excellent in every way. The system has imposed a valuable check on the details of the administration in every estate which the Inspectors have reviewed. The whole of the outstanding matters requiring attention have been brought together in a comprehensive report, and it is then a comparatively simple matter for the local officers to see that the necessary action is taken to dispose of such matters.

A copy of each review is sent to the Head Office, and is submitted to the Board if necessary.

Generally speaking, the results revealed by the reviews have been most satisfactory, the omissions and errors which have occurred in the course of administration being for the most part of a minor character. In the few instances in which an unsatisfactory position has been revealed special attention has been given to the outstanding matters, which are being followed up by the local officers under the direction of the Public Trustee.

48. Two typical expressions of opinion by local officers as to the value of the system may be quoted:—

Local Deputy Public Trustee, Invercargill:—

The value of the reviewing system cannot be overestimated, and it is of considerable assistance to the Controlling Officer in carrying out his duties. It is also valuable for the purpose of rendering a uniform system possible in the administration of estates, and comprises a system which gives a close watch on the administration work.

Local Deputy Public Trustee, Auckland:—

I am convinced that the system will be most beneficial to the administration of estates. In the cases of larger estates or those presenting difficulty, it has enabled particulars of all outstanding matters to be collected and set out in such a manner that the whole position can be gathered at a glance. It thus forms a basis for successful administration. The new system should undoubtedly prove of immense value to administration.

The following remarks of the Head Office Reviewing Inspector may also be quoted:—

I have frequently noticed that in cases where reviews have been called for, matters which have been overlooked or delayed have received attention as a result of the perusal of the files preparatory to the preparation of the reviews, and matters which the Reviewing