

- (7.) The progress made with the disposal of enemy property, and the settlement of debts between British and German nationals. These duties are discharged by the Public Trustee as Controller of the New Zealand Clearing Office, and will form the subject of a special report to Parliament.
- (8.) The uniformly favourable reports from District Officers of the Department showing the progress made by the Office throughout the Dominion.
- (9.) The completion of modern office buildings at Blenheim, Stratford, Timaru, and Waipukurau, and the progress made with the erection of new buildings at Christchurch, Dannevirke, Hamilton, and Whangarei, the building at the last-named place being designed to accommodate both the Public Trust Office staff and the staffs of other Government Departments located in the town.

18. A system has been in existence in the Office for many years to record every complaint received from the public so that such complaints may be fully investigated, and if any weaknesses in the Office system are discovered they may be rectified.

During the year just closed a number of complaints were received and investigated, but the cases in which the Office was found to be at fault were negligible. On the other hand, many expressions of appreciation have been received from clients and beneficiaries. It is gratifying to find that so many of those who do business with the Office have voluntarily expressed their appreciation of the manner in which the business is conducted.

19. In recent years special attention has been given to propaganda work in connection with the Office in order to dispel the large amount of ignorance which exists regarding the powers and functions of the Public Trust Office.

The effect of this action has been to make the Office much more widely known, but there remains a great deal to be done before the public generally become aware of the facilities and advantages which are offered by the Office in the administration of estates and trusts.

W. F. MASSEY,
Minister of Finance.

Wellington, 29th August, 1924.

REPORT ON THE WORKING OF THE PUBLIC TRUST OFFICE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1924.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit a report on the working of the Public Trust Office for the year ended 31st March, 1924.

1. A perusal of the report will show that there has been a steady and sustained growth of the Office business in every department of the work, and that the improvement in the economic and financial conditions prevailing throughout the Dominion has been reflected in the figures showing the volume of business transacted during the year.

The new business received for administration amounts to £3,781,155, whilst by the exercise of strict economy the expenditure for the year just closed is only £1,936 in advance of that for the previous year. This satisfactory result has been made possible by the unremitting zeal of the staff in every branch of the Office.

CONFERENCES WITH DISTRICT OFFICERS AND AGENTS.

2. During the year a series of conferences were held at Palmerston North, Dunedin, Christchurch, and Auckland, at which the more important functions and duties in relation to the Office activities were discussed. The matter of improving the organization of both Branches and Head Office was given special attention.