

In view of the highly specialized nature of the work of this Department, and the fact that the instructional system is maintained at considerable expense, it is essential that juniors entering the Office should possess a high standard of education.

#### QUALIFICATIONS OF OFFICERS.

41. Large numbers of officers of the Department continue to qualify each year in law, accountancy, or commerce.

Every encouragement is given to officers to qualify themselves by examination, as it is only by the possession of a skilled and competent staff that the specialized work of the Office can be carried out with satisfaction to clients.

There are now attached to the Office staff eight barristers, fifty-two solicitors, sixty-five accountants, and two graduates in commerce.

#### EXPANSION OF ORGANIZATION.

42. The growth of the Office business at Dannevirke has warranted the creation of a District Public Trustee Office in that town. The necessary change was made as from the 1st February, 1924, when the administration and accounting records relating to estates in the Dannevirke and Woodville districts were transferred from the Palmerston North Office to the charge of the new District Public Trustee at Dannevirke.

Part-time offices under the control of permanent officers of the Department have been established at Clinton, Manaia, Nuhaka, Opunake, Taradale, and Te Puke. The part-time offices at Oxford, Te Awamutu, and Waitara have been closed, as the volume of business being performed did not warrant their continuance.

#### NEW AGENCIES OF THE OFFICE.

43. Agencies of the Office, under the charge of non-permanent Agents paid by commission, have been opened at Hokitika, Marton, Methven, Middlemarch, Murchison, Raglan, Takapau, and Whakatane.

The newly appointed Agents at Marton and Whakatane replaced permanent officers of the Department.

The Public Trustee is now represented in 107 cities and towns throughout the Dominion.

#### CONTROL AND DISPOSAL OF ENEMY PROPERTY.

44. The duties performed by the Public Trustee as Custodian of Enemy Property and Controller of the New Zealand Clearing Office in connection with the control and liquidation of enemy property in New Zealand and the settlement of debts between British nationals resident in New Zealand and nationals of ex-enemy States have been fully dealt with in special reports presented to Parliament in preceding years (H.—25, 1921, 1922, 1923).

These reports have made it clear that many onerous and complicated problems have called for solution.

During the year just closed many matters of importance and complexity have called for attention.

Steady progress is being made towards the completion of this work, but it cannot yet be stated when the matters outstanding are likely to be finally disposed of. Every effort is being made to hasten the completion of the work, but the final disposal of claims and other matters is not entirely within the control of the New Zealand Office, but must depend largely upon the progress made by the British and German Clearing Offices.

A further report covering the work done during the year ended the 31st March, 1924, will be presented to Parliament by the Hon. the Attorney-General, under whose direction the Public Trustee acts in carrying out the special duties associated with the control and disposal of enemy property.