

to fix the rates of remuneration in consultation with the advisory trustees, and taking into account the nature of the services performed. In the matter of remuneration, too, if agreement cannot be reached between the advisory trustee and the Public Trustee the matter may be referred to a Judge of the Supreme Court.

The provision for the appointment of advisory trustees may be also availed of in the administration of intestate and mental-patient estates.

The system of advisory trustees has increased in popularity, and is now being availed of by a large number of business and professional men and other classes of testators who have complicated estates, or who desire that the Public Trustee shall have expert advice on any matters arising out of the administration.

55. *Distribution of Missing Beneficiaries' Shares.*—The distribution of estates is often delayed on account of the difficulty of tracing next-of-kin or of obtaining authentic evidence in regard to the whereabouts of one or more members of the family. Section 25 of the amending Act of 1913 lays down a simple procedure to be adopted in the case of missing beneficiaries. On the Public Trustee fulfilling the requirements laid down in the section a Judge is empowered to make an order authorizing the distribution of the share of such missing person. This has been found to be of considerable assistance in enabling distribution to be expedited and finalized.

56. *Payment of Moneys on behalf of Infant.*—Where an infant or person of unsound mind becomes entitled in a lawsuit to the payment of any moneys or damages, payment thereof is by virtue of the provisions of section 13 of the Public Trust Office Amendment Act, 1913, directed to be made to the Public Trustee unless the Court otherwise orders. The moneys so received are held by the Public Trustee and applied by him as the Court instructs, and failing any such directions, then for the maintenance, education, or otherwise for the benefit of the person entitled as the Public Trustee thinks fit.

Immediately any such moneys are received into the Public Trust Office interest thereon commences to run forthwith, and all such sums become entitled to the State guarantee afforded to moneys in the Common Fund of the Department.

This enactment consequently ensures that in all such cases where moneys are payable to persons who are unable through infancy or mental infirmity to manage their own business affairs the sums paid over shall be absolutely safeguarded against any possibility of loss, whilst being made freely available for the education, support, and benefit of the person entitled. The section therefore serves a most useful purpose, and furnishes another example of the ways in which the organization of the Public Trust Office can be availed of in new cases to meet the needs and convenience of the public.

57. *Payment to Consular Officers.*—Where the beneficiaries in an estate are nationals of a foreign country and are resident abroad there is often difficulty in establishing the names and identity of the persons entitled. By section 52 of the Public Trust Office Act, 1908, with respect to moneys and personal chattels payable or deliverable by the Public Trustee to the subjects of foreign countries resident in such foreign countries, the Governor-General may, by notice in the *Gazette*, notify that such moneys or personal chattels may be paid and delivered to the Chief Consular Officer for such foreign country in New Zealand on behalf of such subjects. The receipt in writing of such Consular Officer shall be a good and sufficient discharge to the Public Trustee therefor. By section 28 of the 1913 Act, in addition to the power given by section 52 of the principal Act, the provision is extended to any specified official of a foreign country. It sometimes happens, however, that there is not a Chief Consular Officer in New Zealand, and so by section 54 of the 1921-22 Act the difficulty is overcome by providing that payment may be made to any Consul or Consular Agent of the foreign country in which the person who is entitled to such moneys lives. These provisions have been of considerable benefit in facilitating the distribution of estates in which foreigners are entitled to participate.

ESTATES OF MENTAL PATIENTS.

58. On the 31st March last there were in the hands of the Public Trustee for administration 1,121 mental-patient estates, the total value of the assets of which