

EMPIRE CO-OPERATION IN GRANT OF PATENTS, ETC.

The Imperial Economic Conference adopted the following report of the Committee set up to consider and report to the Conference on Imperial co-operation with reference to patents, designs, and trade-marks :—

“ This Imperial Economic Conference have given careful consideration to the provisional scheme recommended in the report of the British Patent Conference, 1922, and they are of opinion that, apart from one or two details which might receive further consideration by correspondence between the heads of the Patent Offices, the provisional scheme is a practicable one, and promises considerable advantages to British inventors throughout the Empire ; but, in view of the difficulties felt by the Dominion of Canada as regards the absence of any provision for reciprocal registration of Dominion patents, the Conference feel unable to make any recommendation so far as the self-governing Dominions and India are concerned. The Conference, however, unanimously agree that it is very desirable that the provisional scheme should be adopted by the colonies and protectorates, and that considerable benefits would thereby be derived by inventors throughout the Empire.”

PATENTS.

(The figures in parentheses are for 1922.)

The number of applications received during 1923 was 2,075, 108 fewer than in the previous year.

In 1,169 (1,294) cases provisional specifications were lodged with the applications, and in 318 (352) complete specifications were left during the year in respect of applications for which provisional specifications had been already filed.

The total number of applications to the 31st December, 1923, was 51,486, and the number of patents in force on that date 6,662.

£8,013 19s. 5d. was received during the year in respect of patent fees, £1,805 19s. 1d. less than in 1922. In that year the revenue under that head was, as already pointed out, exceptionally high, owing to the sealing and renewal fees being paid under the provisions of the Order in Council of the 6th June, 1921, relating to extension of time as to rights affected by the war.

Although the entry of assignments, &c., in respect of patents is now required, there has not yet been much difference in the number registered, the total for 1923 being 156, as compared with 134 in the previous year. There were no (5) patents sealed after the prescribed time, and restoration was effected in 7 (3) cases, the fees from this source amounting to £103 7s. 6d., as compared with £94 10s. for the year 1922.

Countries from which Applications were received.

Somewhat fewer applications were received from residents of this country than in the previous year, the number being 1,262 (or 61 per cent. of the total) in 1923, as compared with 1,389 (or 64 per cent.) in 1922. 287 (256) applications came to hand from Great Britain ; 19 (14) from Canada ; 141 (128) from Victoria ; and 115 (104) from New South Wales. The number from the British Empire, including New Zealand, was 1,800 (as compared with 1,943 in 1922), being 91 per cent. of the total number of applications received. The number of applications from the United States shows a considerable falling-off, dropping from 210 in 1921 to 169 in 1922 and 129 in 1923. Of other countries, France sent 15 (14), Belgium 6 (1), Czecho-Slovakia 2 (3), Denmark 6 (8), Italy 7 (7), Sweden 13 (4), Netherlands 5 (10), Switzerland 2 (8), Russia 1 (0), Germany 3 (7).

DESIGNS.

The number of designs for which registration is sought is still very small, and there is not much variation in the number of applications received in the different years. In 1923 the total was 183, and the number of cases in which registration was effected 171, as compared with 153 and 135 in the preceding years. 116 applications were received from New Zealand ; from Great Britain, 32 ; Australia, 20 ; South Africa, 2 ; Canada, 7 ; United States, 3. The amount received in fees was £113 7s. 6d., as compared with £125 19s. 9d. in 1922.

TRADE-MARKS.

Probably the number of trade-marks registered is a better indication of the state of trade than applications for patents and designs are of the condition of industry and manufacture. The number of applications received during the year was 1,163, as compared with 1,103 in the former year ; but this number is 228 short of the total for the previous highest year. The fees received in respect of trade-marks amounted to £3,494 9s. 3d. This shows an increase of £625 11s. 9d. over the total for 1922 ; and, as renewal is required every fourteen years, a gradual increase of the amount received from this source may be looked for.

As usual, considerably more applications were received for registration of trade-marks in respect of articles of food than for any other kind of goods, the number being 211, or 13 less than in the preceding year.

Countries from which Applications were received.

The number of applications—442—received from residents of this country was less than that of 1922, in which year there were 495, but 62 more than in the previous year ; 331 (277) were received from Great Britain, 190 (150) from the United States, 76 (56) from New South Wales, 33 (52) from Victoria, 3 (2) from Queensland, 2 (0) from South Australia, 19 (4) from Canada, and 5 (19) from Germany.

The total number from the British Empire (including New Zealand) was 911 (as compared with 891 for 1922 and 717 for 1921), or 78 per cent. of the total received.