

is practicable. Funds amounting to over £3,000,000 became available for investment during the year, and it will be seen from particulars given elsewhere in this report that suitable investments were found for the whole amount. The matter of finding investments for such large sums is one that gives a great deal of anxiety, and this is added to by the difficulty of arranging for the completion of investments with the receipt of funds.

14. Owing to the conditions which have prevailed in the dairy industry during the past season and to the fall in the price of wool the collection of interest has been attended during the year with some difficulty. Many applications for extension of time have been received, and in practically every case the extension asked for has been granted without infliction of the penal rate of interest provided for in the mortgage-deed. These concessions granted by the Office have been much appreciated by the mortgagors, and in most cases the interest has been forthcoming before the expiry of the period of extension. Notwithstanding the unfavourable conditions and the increase for the year in the amount of funds invested, the amount of interest overdue on the 31st March, 1926, was only slightly in excess of the amount outstanding on the 31st March, 1925. The position may be regarded as very satisfactory.

15. During the year investments amounting to £3,709,706 were completed. This constitutes a record for the Office.

The total value of investments held by the Public Trustee on the 31st March, 1926 (including special investments held on behalf of various estates and funds), was £24,316,637. The nature of these investments was—

	£
Government securities	1,654,592
Local bodies' debentures	7,414,066
Land Settlement Finance Act debentures	45,606
Other debentures and shares in companies	10,789
Mortgages	14,823,270
Savings-bank accounts	374
Overdrafts by way of advances to estates and to beneficiaries	332,695
Advances for protection of securities acquired or in possession	6,658
Property acquired by foreclosure (less reserve)	28,587
	<u>£24,316,637</u>

Other assets held on that date were—

	£
Cash in hand, on current account, and on deposit in New Zealand and London	111,348
Office premises, furniture, plant, &c.	482,699
Interest and rent accrued due and overdue	315,601
Sundry debtors	6,290
	<u>£915,938</u>

16. The gross value of estates, funds, and accounts under administration by the Public Trustee on the 31st March, 1926, was £38,009,480, compared with £35,570,642 on the 31st March, 1925—an increase of £2,438,838 for the year.

17. Although during the past five years the value of the estates and funds under administration has increased by nearly 70 per cent., the expenditure (exclusive of depreciation on premises and plant) for the year just ended was £5,395 less than it was for the year ended 31st March, 1921.

18. As stated elsewhere in this report, substantial concessions were made to clients of the Office during the past financial year, but notwithstanding the liberal increases in the rates of interest credited to estates and the reduction in the scale of charges made for its services the Office has shown a profit of £47,484 for the year. But for the concessions referred to the profits would have exceeded those of any previous year in the history of the Office.