

- (b) As the personal representative of a person who while employed in or about a mine has been killed owing to the non-observance in such mine of any of the provisions of the Mining Act, 1926 ; or
- (c) As the personal representative of a person who while employed in or about a coal-mine is killed owing to the non-observance in such mine of any of the provisions of the Coal-mines Act, 1925 ; or
- (d) Under section 13 of the Public Trust Office Amendment Act, 1913, in any cause or matter in any Court where damages are awarded to an infant or a person of unsound mind ; or
- (e) As the statutory administrator of the estate of a mentally defective person who has suffered injury through the tortious act of another.

The Public Trustee is not, as in the case of compensation moneys, the statutory custodian of moneys awarded or paid as compensation for damages, except in the case of moneys for damages recovered or awarded in any case or matter on behalf of an infant or person of unsound mind.

#### UNCLAIMED LANDS AND UNCLAIMED PROPERTY.

49. Every year property to a considerable value and moneys to a considerable sum are left unclaimed. In many cases it is desirable, in the interests of the missing owners or of those dependent upon them, that provision should be made for the safeguarding of this property, and, where necessary, for its management. In this matter recourse is had to the services of the Public Trustee, and the statutory measures which have been framed to ensure the protection and administration of this property are now embodied in the Public Trust Office Act, 1908. These are—

- (a) Part II of that Act, relating to unclaimed lands ;
- (b) Part III of that Act, relating to unclaimed property generally.

In addition, unclaimed cash balances are paid to or held by the Public Trustee thus—

- (a) Unclaimed dividends and surpluses from bankrupt estates paid to the Public Trustee by the Official Assignee under the provisions of the Bankruptcy Act, 1908 :
- (b) Unclaimed surpluses in respect of property sold under the Rating Act, 1925, for default in payment of rates, paid to the Public Trustee by the local authority concerned :
- (c) Unclaimed balances and shares in estates under administration by the Public Trustee.

The property actually requiring active administration is that dealt with under Parts II and III of the Office Act.

50. With closer settlement, the number of cases where unclaimed lands require administration is decreasing, and on the 31st March last the value of unclaimed lands under administration and cash representing the rents and proceeds of sale undistributed amounted to £5,130. The need for the services of the Public Trustee under Part III of the Office Act relating to unclaimed property is not, however, decreasing, but, in point of fact, shows a tendency to increase in proportion to the growth of the population of the Dominion. In many of the cases where persons disappear property is left which requires attention and management, and there are dependants who require to be provided for. It is here that the statutory provisions and the services of a public official for the necessary work prove themselves to be useful, and of benefit to the parties concerned.

Unclaimed property to the value of £7,784, was under administration on the 31st March last.

Of the other classes of unclaimed money which are mentioned above, amounts held under the provisions of the Bankruptcy Act total £6,441, and of the Rating Act, £1,556.

51. Moneys which come into the hands of the Public Trustee as unclaimed and for which no owners appear are transferred to the Consolidated Fund after the expiry of a certain period, unless applied in part or in whole in the maintenance of dependants (under special powers conferred upon the Public Trustee) or for fulfilment of other obligations of the missing owner where the need exists. This transfer does not, however, save in the case of unclaimed lands administered under