

the duties of perusing and reporting on the accounts submitted by such manager devolves on the Public Trustee.

The administration of the estates of convicts, with the exception of Natives, is entrusted to the Public Trustee by a general appointment made by the Governor-General pursuant to Part III of the Prisons Act, 1908.

11. *Workers' Compensation.*—The Public Trustee is, unless the Court of Arbitration otherwise orders, statutory custodian of compensation-moneys paid in respect of the death of a worker, and, in practice, virtually all such cases are handled by the Public Trustee.

Frequently the Public Trustee is called upon to investigate the sufficiency of the amount tendered by way of compensation or the question of taking action to obtain compensation. Such work calls for specialized knowledge, and the Office, by reason of its wide experience in such matters, is well fitted to carry it out. When the amount of compensation has been settled the Public Trustee is required either to make application to the Court of Arbitration for an order apportioning the money among the dependants of the deceased worker or to report to the Court on an application made by an outside solicitor.

When making the application for apportionment it is the Public Trustee's duty to report to the Court as to the best and most equitable method of apportionment, having regard to the circumstances of the dependants. This is required in all cases and obviously necessitates a great deal of inquiry and investigation in order that reliable information may be placed before the Court. Very frequently the dependants consist of a widow and children who are possessed of no means beyond the amounts to be received from the compensation claim, and in any case the dependants can never be considered to be in really prosperous circumstances. For these reasons the Office has always endeavoured to carry out the work required in connection with compensation claims at as low a cost as possible. The fee charged by the Office in such cases is limited to 1 per cent. on the amounts received. This is a very small charge when it is remembered that it is the only remuneration for the services rendered, comprising, usually, protracted negotiations, applications to the Court for an order of apportionment, the payment of maintenance-allowances very often over lengthy periods, and, in some cases, the disbursement of portion of the capital of the compensation-moneys in the purchase of a home for the dependants. All these services, together with the preparation of any documents, are covered by the afore-mentioned charge. In addition, interest runs without interruption from the date of receipt while any portion of the funds is held by the Public Trustee.

12. *Charitable or Public Trusts and Benefit Funds.*—The Public Trustee controls several trusts and funds of this nature. The most important is that established by the will of the late Mr. Thomas George Macarthy, in terms of which, in the events which have now happened, the whole of the income from the residuary estate is available for charitable and educational purposes and institutions in the Provincial District of Wellington in such manner and in such proportions as the Board of Governors decides. The trust has now been in operation for twenty-three years, and during this period the sum of £213,342 has been allocated to charitable and educational purposes specified by the testator.

13. *Resealing and Administration of Assets Abroad.*—During the year the Public Trustee has acted frequently on behalf of executors and administrators abroad relative to obtaining grants of administration in New Zealand and conducting administration of assets situated here. Generally the process known as "resealing" has been adopted, as by this method representation in this country is greatly simplified. Conversely, the Public Trustee has, on behalf of estates under administration, found it necessary to deal with assets outside New Zealand. In such cases it is necessary to appoint a suitable representative in the country concerned. Throughout the British Empire it is usual to appoint those State officials whose functions are similar to those of the Public Trustee. There often arise cases, however, where circumstances render it desirable to employ private legal firms, and in those instances the usual procedure is departed from.