

work to the State Advances Corporation certain members of the staff of the Public Trust Office, who had been engaged on the work, were transferred to the staff of the Corporation.

34. *Appointment of Cadets for Training.*—During the year fifty additional cadets were appointed to the staff of the Office. Of this total, twenty-nine were appointed to enable juniors engaged on records and other routine duties to be placed on more advanced work and the remainder to fill numerical vacancies caused by resignations and transfers of officers to other branches of the Service.

OFFICE ORGANIZATION AND REPRESENTATION.

35. *District Representation.*—The Public Trustee is represented by forty-four permanently established branches in the main cities and towns in the Dominion. In thirty-eight other towns there are agents of the Public Trust Office, while in certain districts the representation is by means of part-time offices. This wide representation facilitates direct contact with the Office by persons desirous of taking advantage of the services offered.

In those towns where the Office is not represented the Post Office attends to the receipt and payment of moneys on behalf of the Public Trustee. Residents in such towns who desire to avail themselves of the services of the Office may, however, set out their requirements in writing—for example, many settlers in the outback districts who have wished to appoint the Public Trustee their executor have had their wills prepared and despatched to them for execution—the whole matter being attended to entirely by correspondence. As is well known, no charge is made by the Public Trustee for this service.

36. *Inspections and Audit.*—The system of thoroughly inspecting all phases of the work at the district offices has been maintained throughout the year, and with one exception all branches have been inspected during the past twelve months. The inspectorial staff comprises the Chief Inspector, Assistant Chief Inspector, three Inspectors, and two assistants. The inspections not only comprise a thorough examination of the administration and accounting work and the system and organization directly connected therewith, but also include a careful investigation of all matters in respect of the staff, accommodation, equipment, office buildings, expansion of business, and any other matters having a bearing on the efficient conduct of the work.

The internal checks in regard to cash, securities, deeds, &c., and the auditing by the Government Audit Department are co-ordinated under the supervision of the Chief Inspector.

LEGAL DIVISION.

37. The legal officers of the Department have been fully occupied during the year in carrying out the legal work entailed by the Office activities, consisting chiefly of the preparation of wills, the preparation and perusal of documents of various kinds, general legal advising, applications to the Court, and the representation of the Public Trustee in Court proceedings in which he is directly concerned or in which he is directed by the Court to represent a party.

During the year administration was obtained in 1,879 estates. Other Court applications for leave to take steps necessary in the administration, but not authorized by the will or by statute, numbered 112, while in 5 cases it was necessary to file a certificate under Part IV of the Administration Act electing to administer the estate concerned as insolvent. In addition, 22 exemplifications of probate granted abroad and 69 exemplifications of New Zealand grants were sealed to enable assets situated in the respective countries to be dealt with.

Upon this Division also lies the responsibility of investigating the possibility of claims for compensation under the Workers' Compensation Act in respect of estates