Government to reduce the fees, and to increase the facilities for obtaining protection for inventions. He it was who heard of, and unearthed from their burial place at the old Mount Cook barracks, many cases of British specifications and got them bound. Moreover, he got the government to get the London Patent Office to renew the practice, which had been discontinued, of sending out the specifications and other publications of great importance to inventors. He was also the means of getting out similar publications from other countries, and thus was begun the formation of the large and valuable library now in our Patent Office.

In conjunction with the late Mr. Curnin, Mr. Haselden drafted the subsequent legislation mentioned above, keeping it on the lines of the British statute law, and his work in drafting the regulations of the office is well known. When it was found, in consequence of the increased business, largely due to the energy of Mr. Haselden, that the staff required to be added to, Mr. Lewis was first appointed, and speedily won his way to the front by the industry, care, and ability so well appreciated by all the numerous clients of the office, to whom his promotion the other day to the chief position did not come as a surprise, and with whom it is exceedingly popular.

Some years ago Mr. Haselden's restless energy did full justice to the policy ordered by the House of Representatives (on the motion of Mr. O'Neill) of printing all the specifications in the Patent Office and lithographing all the drawings. But retrenchment, the spoiler of so much good work in the public service, becoming insistent, that beneficial method of spending the surplus revenue of the Patent Office was put a stop to, and the money was diverted to the ordinary work of the State. Mr. Haselden thereupon started the plan of publishing a list of applications, and other particulars, in a fortnightly supplement to the *N. Z. Gazette*, and his successor was able to improve on that plan by publishing extracts from the specifications, with reduced illustrations. The study of such information must be an education to mechanics and others, and must lead to further inventions which will add to the power of the Colony, and its wealth.

Until the passing of the present Act there was no appeal from the decision of the Patent Officer. This was felt to entail too great a responsibility on him, and to be likely to cause serious injury to litigants. One result was that it was the custom to grant every application, unless there was the clearest evidence against it, which was very seldom. Under the present law there is a right of appeal to the Supreme Court. The statistics of the office, however, show that appeals have been few and have generally ended in the decision of the Registrar being upheld. The office is an important one, being both executive and judicial, and as free from political control or interference as that of a Judge.

Do our people take advantage of the Patent Office?

The following table supplies an answer. It shows the number of patent applications sent from various countries to the United Kingdom and the United States.

	U.K.	U.S.
Canada	156	392
New Zealand	130	48
Victoria	109	36
New South Wales	60	21
India	54	5

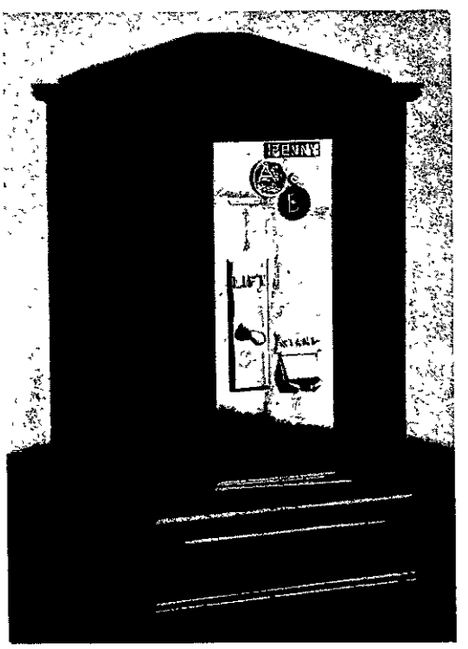
Proportionally New Zealand is easily first.

As the number of patents issued in the United Kingdom every year is something like 30,000, and the number issued in the United States is similar, and all these are reviewed more or less effectually in the literature of the Patent Office Library, the advantage of that institution can hardly be overrated.

As to the protection internationally enjoyed for patents, it is well to know that by the agreement of the International Convention it is provided that twelve months protection is guaranteed, to every patent applied for in any country, in all the other countries of the Convention.

These countries forming the union are, Belgium, Brazil, Cuba, Curacao and Surinam, Denmark with the Faroe Islands, East India Colonies of the Netherlands, Dominican Republic, France, Algeria and Colonies, Great Britain, Italy, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal with the Azores and Madeira, Queensland, Santo Domingo, Servia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunis, United States of America.

The Australian States (Queensland excepted) are, it will be seen, not in the list; neither is Canada. However, separate arrangements have been made between the



THE DICKIE-BROWN STAMP-SELLER.

other States and New Zealand to the above effect. Canada is, moreover, sure to come in shortly.

The credit of being the first New Zealand inventor is shared by Messrs. G. G. Purchas and J. Ninnes, of Onehunga, who made an application for a Patent as joint inventors for the preparation of New Zealand flax. This application was the forerunner of a large number of inventions of the same class.

The Library in connection with the Patent Office is open to the public during the hours of business, and contains the printed specifications of Great Britain, Australia, and United States.

The English specifications alone now number about 30,000 a year. They are contained in 150 large volumes, which occupy approximately 1,000 feet on the shelves of the Library. These specifications date from 1617 to the present year, and every year they are sent out almost as soon as they are published. Australia has also recently started to print her specifications.

The abridgments of specifications of Canada, United States of America, and the complete text of United States specifications since 1905 are also in the Library.

British methods are sometimes decried as old-fashioned, but in regard to Patent publications they compare very favourably with those of the United States. British inventions are divided into illustrated abridgement classes, which give a fair outline of the invention with a small illustration. This is sufficient to enable anyone to tell at a glance whether the invention is the same, or similar to the one that he is searching. In addition, these abridgements are accurately indexed, and are right up-to-date. The United States has no such printed, classified abridgements. The annual index of English Patents for 1906 is now to hand, but the corresponding American index for 1905 has not yet been received.

The Dickie-Brown Automatic Stamp-Seller.

A Successful Invention.

We read in *The Times* that, "with the approval of the Postmaster-General and the First Commissioner of Works, there was placed in the Members' Lobby of the House of Commons a penny-in-the-slot automatic machine for the sale and delivery of postage stamps."

"The contrivance, which is enclosed in a handsome oak case specially designed for its reception by Mr. Ridge, the Clerk of Works of the Houses of Parliament, stands near the entrance to the Legislative chamber, between the letter box and the telegraph counter."

Since the above (which refers to the Dickie-Brown-Stamp seller) appeared, we learn that the machine has been placed on test at the Street Post Offices, the latter instalment being as much for the convenience of the members of the London stock Exchange as for the general public. In view of the fact that Messrs. Dickie and Brown are New Zealanders, a few details regarding the mechanism of the invention, which has passed through every test satisfactorily, and the course adopted for its exploitation, cannot fail to interest our readers.

On reference to our illustration, it will be seen that the machine is unpretentious, but compact, being 13in. in height and 7in. in width. The leather shield, A, has been raised in order to show the slot, B, for pennies. On placing the penny in the slot the handle, C, is lifted in the direction indicated by the arrow, whereupon the stamp falls on to the delivery shoot, D. The mechanism is so finely adjusted that it rejects all spurious, overworn, or foreign coins. Thus, if a French or Italian penny be dropped in the slot, it is promptly returned to the would-be purchaser through the delivery shoot, D. Further, if the supply of stamps should become exhausted, a small metal disc makes its appearance bearing the words "empty."

In Wellington the machine sold 7886 penny stamps in three weeks, and while in use in London each machine had more than trebled the local takings for the same period. We learn that Mr. J. H. Brown recently left for London on business connected with the Dickie-Brown Company, which has been registered in that city with a capital of £60,000, its objects being the manufacture and sale of the invention. Mr. R. J. Dickie proposes to follow his partner about the middle of this month, and we may conclude that the machine has come to be regarded as commercially possible.