

patents, designs, and trade-marks, the advantages that their respective laws grant to their own subjects. Consequently they have the same protection as the latter, and the same legal recourse on any infringement of their rights, provided they observe the formalities and conditions imposed on subjects by the legislation of each State. To this Convention Great Britain, the United States, Belgium, Brazil, Spain, France, Italy, Holland, Portugal, Switzerland, Queensland, and other countries belong; and in these countries the people of this colony have the benefit of the advantages of the Convention, including protection for seven months of inventions, and four months of trade-marks and designs, protected in this colony.

10. Arrangements will shortly be completed with the Colony of Victoria for similar reciprocal protection.

11. It will be observed that the number of applications for registration of trade-marks has increased. As search has to be made in every case to ascertain whether a similar mark is already on the register, and questions have constantly to be decided as to the admissibility for registration of such marks, either on account of old marks being similar, or of doubts whether the new marks contain the essential particulars required by the Act, the work of the office in connection with them is very considerable.

12. My assistants perform their work with care and ability. The senior clerk, Mr. Lewis, has very responsible duties to perform, and takes great interest in them. He receives a very inadequate salary.

13. A comparison of the work and staff in this office with those in other colonies may be interesting. In 1889 the New South Wales Patent Office staff consisted of three officers and a messenger, with salaries amounting to £1,220, and the number of applications for patents was 796. Trade-marks are dealt with by another office. In Victoria the staff consisted of six officers, whose salaries amounted to £1,760; the number of applications in 1890 for patents was 1,017, and for registration of trade-marks 267. In Queensland, besides the Registrar, who is also Registrar-General, there are three clerks, with salaries amounting to £450; and the number of applications in 1890 was, for patents 395, and for registration of trade-marks 188. In this office there are two clerks with salaries amounting to £250; the number of applications for patents last year was 589, and for registration of trade-marks 225.

14. In the last report of the Commissioner of Patents for the United States that officer remarks that the patent law "exists for the benefit of the public, and to promote progress of science and useful arts. There is no class or condition of men in the whole country which has not felt the blessings of American inventive genius, fostered into its fullest flower by wise and kindly patent laws." And most undoubtedly we in New Zealand owe much to the patent laws of Great Britain, the United States, and other countries, as well as to our own Patents Acts. Inventions have furnished profitable employment for thousands of people, and have made the world richer as well as more comfortable. The profits of the Patent Office should be wisely and generously expended in fostering inventive talent. This could be done by publishing in a cheap and handy form, and by distributing to public reading-rooms, the specifications and drawings lodged in our Patent Office. Artisans and others might learn from them what has been done, and thus be urged to further inventions. Many, too, might be saved some disappointment and waste of precious time by knowing what has been already discovered and need not be repeated. It must be remembered that these specifications include not only New Zealand inventions, but those of the United Kingdom, America, Australia, and other countries. Up to the end of 1879 these specifications were published in yearly volumes, with photolithographs of the drawings: then a desire for economy caused the discontinuance of the publication. The system was defective and the sale was small, because publication was delayed till after, for some purposes, the time for its usefulness had passed. My proposal is now to print the specifications, with drawings, separately, and as soon as possible after they are lodged in the office, and to sell them at a moderate price. The several inventors would be only too glad to purchase copies of their own specifications, and there would be a gradually increasing sale to others; but there should be also a liberal distribution to public institutions. The present practice of specifications and drawings being copied by hand when required is necessarily costly, and prohibitive for the purpose of education.

15. There appears to be considerable ignorance of the fact that merchants, shopkeepers, and others are liable to a heavy penalty for representing articles as "patent" which have not been patented in this office, and trade-marks as registered which have not been registered, and this opportunity is taken of giving a word of caution on the subject.

16. Very few of our manufacturers seem to be aware of the advantage to be gained by them by registering designs, or more of them would probably take steps to protect their patterns from piracy.

17. As showing that some New Zealand inventions, at any rate, are considered of value, and that this colony is not backward as regards patents, I have extracted from the Patent Office report of England and statistics of New South Wales the following information: During 1890, 68 applications for patents were received in London from Victoria, 57 from New South Wales, 30 from India, 11 from South Australia, 7 from Queensland, 12 from Ceylon, 2 from Cape of Good Hope, 1 from Tasmania, and 48 from *New Zealand*; and during 1889 this colony showed a still better record. In New South Wales, out of 768 applications during 1890, 145 were from Great Britain, 43 from the United States, 150 from Victoria, 16 from Queensland, 27 from South Australia, and 43 from *New Zealand*. I regret that no information from Victoria has been received on this subject.

Patent Office, Wellington, 16th June, 1892.

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