

1899.
NEW ZEALAND.

PATENTS, DESIGNS, AND TRADE MARKS.

TENTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE REGISTRAR.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly pursuant to Section 128 of "The Patents, Designs, and Trade Marks Act, 1889."

I HAVE the honour, as required by "The Patents, Designs, and Trade Marks Act, 1889," to present my report on the business of the Patent Office for the year ended the 31st December, 1898.

Patents.

The total number of applications received during the year was 1,021, as against 1,093 in the preceding year. The decrease is partially attributable to the falling-off of applications in respect of cycles, only 84 having been lodged during 1898. There was a rapid growth in this class of application during the years 1896 and 1897—130 in 1896, and 164 in 1897—and the sudden drop seems to indicate that the activity of inventors in this industry has reached its highest point, and may now be expected to decline.

With regard to the trend of invention, it is interesting to notice that, coincidently with the expansion of an industry, there seems to be a stimulation of the inventive faculty in respect of that particular industry. The most striking recent instance is that of cycles, the figures relating to which are given in the preceding paragraph; but similar effects may be witnessed in connection with other industries, though in a minor degree. Thus there is a distinct increase in the applications connected with the acetylene, rabbit, and dredging industries, the figures for the past three years being as follow:—

	1896.	1897.	1898.
Acetylene	4	11	23
Crates for packing and carrying rabbits	...	2	7
Dredging	10	7	12

Passing events also seem to have an influence on the course of invention. As an illustration, I quote the increase in the applications in respect of fire-escapes since the disastrous fire in Wellington in December, 1898. In 1896 there were no applications in this class; in 1897, 1; in 1898, 3; while for the first six months of 1899 there have been no less than 10.

As usual, the larger proportion of applications came from inventors resident in New Zealand, of whom there were 616. The United Kingdom contributed 131; Victoria, 85; New South Wales, 65; and the United States, 58. No other country has contributed as many as 20.

Six applications were made under section 106 of the Act, all from the United Kingdom. Applications under this section have a priority over other applications of a similar character, as the protection granted takes effect from the date of filing the application in the country in which it originated.

Thirty applications from women inventors were lodged during the year. Five of these had reference to articles connected with dress.

The first petition for an extension of the term of letters patent ever presented in this colony was received during the year. It was duly referred to the Supreme Court, which reported that the patentees had been inadequately remunerated by their invention, and that the term of their patent should be extended for a further term of seven years. His Excellency the Governor was thereupon pleased to extend the term for a further period of seven years.

Designs and Trade Marks.

Ten applications for registration of designs, and 343 applications for registration of trade marks, were lodged during the year. The fees under these heads amounted respectively to £5 and £385 14s.

General.

Some additional rules were made by Order in Council in May last, and will be found in the Appendix to this report. The only alteration to which attention need be called is the lessening of the fees payable on obtaining extensions of time in which to file a specification or make certain payments.