

On 31st March, 1949, the capital amount of deposits held under these Acts on behalf of sixty-seven companies was £2,427,854.

Pursuant to the Workers' Compensation Amendment Act, 1947, the Public Trustee will be required to refund statutory deposits, amounting to some £550,000, to various insurance companies which, from the 1st April, 1949, will no longer be engaged in employers' liability insurance business.

LEGAL DIVISION

The legal work in Head Office is under the control of the Office Solicitor and his staff. This work includes the consideration of and advising on the more difficult points of law which arise in the administration of estates, the preparation of and appearance on applications to the Supreme Court on matters relating to estates and trusts on which the Court's directions or authority are required, of reports and applications to the Compensation Court in regard to the apportionment of compensation-moneys paid under the Workers' Compensation Act, 1922, of reports to the Supreme Court on the apportionment of damages recovered under the Deaths by Accident Compensation Act, 1908, and the determination of the next-of-kin in intestate estates where this presents special difficulties, or the amount to be distributed is large. In order to avoid as far as possible difficulties which might arise in the interpretation of a testator's will after his death or in the administration of his estate, all wills except simple ones, are subject to an independent check by the Legal Division.

Except where a private solicitor is employed (at the direction of either the testator or the beneficiaries) to perform the legal work of the estate, it is the practice to file in the Supreme Court Office at Wellington all applications for administration, including grants of probate, orders to administer, and elections to administer. The Court papers are prepared in part by the legal staff at the district offices, and are completed, checked, and filed by the Legal Division in Head Office. Where some assets of estates administered by the Public Trustee are situated abroad, the Division also extracts exemplifications of the New Zealand grant of administration, and in converse cases—*i.e.*, where there are assets situated in New Zealand of estates administered in other British Dominions and the Public Trustee has been asked to get them in—it arranges for the resealing of the foreign grant of administration in the Supreme Court at Wellington. The preparation of powers of attorney to enable the collection of assets situated abroad is also undertaken by the Division.

During the year ended 31st March, 1949, administration was obtained in 2,518 estates, 95 exemplifications of New Zealand grants were sealed, and 29 foreign grants were resealed. Powers of attorney during the year totalled 61, and 105 applications to the Supreme Court were made for authority and directions on various estate matters.

The legal staff in the various branch offices prepares the wills of testators and revises existing wills to meet changes in the circumstances of the testators or in general economic conditions. The district legal staff also performs the greater part of the conveyancing work involved in the administration of estates (including applications to the Land Valuation Court for its consent to sales, leases, &c.), prepares securities for mortgages, and conducts various proceedings in the Magistrate's Court, in addition to giving opinions on legal matters which are not of a nature which renders it advisable to refer them to Head Office. The question of delegation to branch offices of the filing of elections to administer is at present receiving consideration.

REPRESENTATION

To enable the closest personal attention to be given to the work of the Office and to meet the convenience of clients, the Public Trustee maintains a wide representation throughout the Dominion. During the year further representatives were appointed at Alexandra, Featherston, Mangakino, and Waiuku. As at the 31st March, 1949, the