

Great improvement in the management of land settlement finance associations has taken place during the past year.

A Custodian of Deeds and Securities has been appointed to take charge of all documents and other articles of value under the control of the Office.

The Board has been fortunate in securing the services of Mr. J. S. Barton, Stipendiary Magistrate, of Gisborne, in connection with the preparation of a series of instruction-books dealing with the accounting-work of the Office. The work will be divided into three parts, the first consisting of a text-book setting out the law and practice of trust accounting, the second comprising detailed instructions bearing upon the practical work of the Public Trust Office, and the third including annotated copies of all statutes bearing upon the office work.

Further development has taken place during the year in the application of machine processes to certain classes of the office work, and has had an important effect.

A special machine is in use for the preparation of rent and interest notices, vouchers for recurring payments to beneficiaries, and dockets for the payment of salaries of non-permanent officers.

Under the provisions of the Samoan Constitution Order the appointment of a Local Deputy Public Trustee of Samoa, to work under the direction and control of the Public Trustee of New Zealand, is under consideration.

An excellent site has been obtained in Customs Street East, Auckland. I am satisfied that the existing site and building at Auckland are unsuitable.

A new site has been purchased in Oxford Terrace, Christchurch, and the site previously held has been satisfactorily disposed of.

The need of securing additional premises at Wellington was referred to in the last annual report. A block of land has been purchased at the intersection of Stout and Ballance streets which will provide an excellent office-site, and will enable a building to be erected which will serve the requirements of the Office for some time to come. Negotiations are now proceeding for the purchase of certain adjoining sections in order to secure space for the provision of future accommodation.

Sites have also been acquired at Gisborne and New Plymouth.

New office buildings are in course of erection at New Plymouth, Palmerston North, and Invercargill.

Competitive designs are being invited for the erection of a new Public Trust Building at Napier.

Plans for a new office at Christchurch are in course of preparation, and special attention is being paid to the internal arrangements in order that they may be brought into accord with the requirements of modern office supervision and control. The large volume of work at Christchurch has rendered the present building totally inadequate. The pressure has been relieved by the erection of a temporary building in the vacant space at the rear of the office building. The arrangement must be regarded as a provisional one only. The City Council at Christchurch entered an objection to the erection of such a building within the "brick" area of the city, but an assurance has been given by the Office that the building will be vacated and removed within a period of three years.

Extensive additions have been carried out at the Hawera office to accommodate the increased staff rendered necessary by the delegation of estates administration and accounting work from the Head Office to the District Office.

External and internal renovations have been carried out at the Dunedin office which will greatly improve the appearance of the building, and will add to the comfort and convenience of the staff.

I desire to express my grateful appreciation of the excellent work performed by the staff throughout this year.

I have, &c.,

ROBERT TRIGGS,
Public Trustee.

J. W. MACDONALD,
Assistant Public Trustee.

The Hon. the Minister in Charge of the Public Trust Office.

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