

SESSION II.  
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# PATENTS, DESIGNS, AND TRADE-MARKS.

THIRTY-SECOND ANNUAL REPORT OF THE REGISTRAR.

*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly pursuant to Section 113 of the Patents, Designs, and Trade-marks Act, 1911.*

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I HAVE the honour, in pursuance of section 113 of the Act, to submit my report on the operations thereunder during the past year.

The number of applications received again exceeded that of any previous years, as is shown by the following figures:—

1910 (previous highest year) .. .. .	2,695	
1919 .. .. .	3,226	Increase per cent. 19·7
1920 .. .. .	3,693	„ 37·0

To some extent at least this considerable increase is the result of applications recently coming forward which have been delayed by the war, and with the last of these the tendency will be for the number of applications to remain stationary, or decrease rather than advance, till normal conditions again prevail in the country.

It is usual, though not necessary, for a rise in the applications received to be accompanied by an increase in the yearly revenue. This was the case last year, in which £9,696 17s. 4d. was received, as compared with £9,345 1s. 2d. in the preceding and previous highest year (an increase of 3·7 per cent.). The expenditure likewise increased, amounting to £3,736 4s. 1d., as compared with £3,373 6s. 9d. in 1919. This was due to the rise in salaries, bonuses towards increased cost of living, and extra clerical assistance to cope with the additional work, the expenditure in other respects being below that for the former year. The balance of receipts over expenditure was £5,960 13s. 3d. (as compared with £5,971 14s. 5d. for 1919), and brings the total of the amount received over that expended since the 1st January, 1890, to £91,388.

With the progress of the Office increasing difficulty is experienced in carrying out the provisions of the Act with regard to examination and searching. By carefully regulating and employing to the best advantage the time available for this work the Office force is enabled to do a good deal in the direction referred to, but to thoroughly examine and investigate the novelty of all cases would necessitate the employment of a highly trained and extensive examining corps. This would involve too heavy an outlay for the advantage derived for some time to come, and the better course for the present would appear to be to simplify procedure, dispense with all but strictly requisite formalities, and make such further provision for investigating the novelty, &c., of such cases as it becomes practicable to do so.

The need for such inquiry might also be reduced without much expense by extending the printing and distribution of abridgments of specifications and drawings of inventions, and rendering patent publications from other countries more freely available to enable inventors and others to become as fully acquainted as possible with the progress of any subject in which they are interested, and thus restrict cases of applications for patents lacking in novelty, besides promoting technical knowledge in the country.

## PROVISIONS FOR CASES DELAYED OWING TO CIRCUMSTANCES ARISING FROM THE WAR.

While the Temporary Act and Regulations, and the Peace Treaty, applied to New Zealand by the Treaty of Peace Order, 1920, made provision for extensions and restorations, in certain cases this was found to be insufficient to meet all the delays arising from the war. By acceding to the Agreement of Berne on the 13th January last, and passing the necessary legislation, which was included in the Finance Act of last session, this country made further provision for all cases affected by the countries referred to. Rules recently passed thereunder contained liberal provisions for restorations, and for extensions which, owing to delay in enactment, and with a view of avoiding any further provision, have been made longer than in other countries.