13. The principle embodied in the Act of 1872, when the New Zealand Public Trust Office was founded, has been adopted in other parts of the British Empire, notably in the United Kingdom and some of the Australian States.

That the principle of State trusteeship is still arousing considerable interest is shown by the inquiries which have been received during the year, particularly from the United States and from Canada. Certain gentlemen in the United States of America have been supplied with sets of statutes and other literature bearing on the work of the Public Trust Office, and many of the large trust companies in that country have, at their request, been furnished with details of the Office system.

14. In Canada a commencement has been made with the system of State trusteeship by the establishment of a Public Trust Office in Toronto. Mr. C. J. Holman, K.C., LL.D., who is a member of the Board appointed by the Government of Ontario to supervise the newly established office, has been in correspondence with the Public Trustee of New Zealand, and the information which has been furnished to him has proved of great assistance in the initial stages of the establishment of the Canadian office.

15. Provision is made by section 43 of the Public Trust Office Amendment Act, 1913, for the debiting of losses made by the staff of the Office in the course of the administration of estates. A reference to the Profit and Loss Account for the year shows that the amount required to meet such losses was £61 only. When it is considered that the Office is administering estates of a total value of over £25,000,000 it will be readily seen that this creditable result is evidence of careful management.

16. Special provision has been made for the prompt investment of moneys which are directed to be invested outside the Common Fund of the Office. If investments cannot be found at once the amount available is temporarily invested in Common Fund securities until such time as permanent investments can be obtained. This provision ensures that funds required to be specially invested shall not be idle and unremunerative while desirable investments are being sought, and it should commend itself to testators and others who desire to avail themselves of the system of special investment of estate funds. During the year funds of estates directed to be specially invested outside the Common Fund have been invested at 6½ per cent. or 7 per cent. without any difficulty in obtaining securities.

17. Under the Office Regulations the Public Trustee has power to reduce the amount of the commission which he is authorized to charge for the administration of estates, and during the past year many reductions have been made in proper cases by the Public Trustee.

Under the power referred to a number of charitable trusts have been administered by the Office without charge.

18. The Public Trustee avails himself of the Post Office for the purpose of remitting money to and from clients of the Office and others living in the remoter parts of the Dominion where there are no branches of the Public Trust Office. No charge is made to clients for this privilege, the Office itself bearing the cost of the services rendered by the Post Office.

19. A great deal of the business to be transacted by the Public Trustee in England is conducted by the High Commissioner for New Zealand, and a proportionate part of the cost of the High Commissioner's Office and staff is borne by the Public Trust Office. During the past year the amount so contributed was £633. For the current year this amount has been materially increased.

20. Apart from the foregoing matters, attention may be directed to the following features appearing in the Public Trustee's report:—

(1.) The increase in cash balances held at credit of estates and funds from £13,918,906 to £15,329,125.

(2.) The increase of £3,133,460 in the total value of estates and funds administered by the Office, making the total value as at the 31st March, 1922, £25,497,779—an increase of £5,383,460 of new business, after allowing for the Native trusts taken over by the Native Trustee.

(3.) The steps taken to protect the interests of the Office and of its clients in the difficult financial conditions which have prevailed.

(4.) The measures adopted to secure greater publicity for the functions and activities of the Office.