

SESSION II.
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NEW ZEALAND.

PATENTS, DESIGNS, AND TRADE-MARKS.

THIRTY-FOURTH 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, 1921-22.

I HAVE the honour, in pursuance of section 128 of the Act, to submit my report on the operations thereunder for the past year.

It will be noticed from the attached tables that the business of the Office has been well maintained, the total number of applications for patents, designs, and trade-marks being 3,500 for the year, an increase of 250 over the number for the previous year, but not quite up to that for 1920, in which the number received was 3,693, the highest yet recorded.

The revenue—always largely in excess of the expenditure—was last year $3\frac{1}{2}$ times as great. It amounted to £12,913 15s. 3d., an increase of £3,056 13s. 5d. (31 per cent. on the total for 1921, the previous highest year), chiefly owing to greater number of applications and slight revision of the initial fees.

The expenditure was £3,880 0s. 8d.—£136 12s. 9d. less than in the preceding year—salaries and other amounts showing little change from last year excepting the amount for printing, which is less by £400 than that for 1921. This is due chiefly to amounts for work done in 1922 not being passed in that year, rather than to any material difference in the expenditure on that account. The balance of £9,033 14s. 7d. is over £3,000 in excess of that of any previous year. The excess of revenue over expenditure is a striking but in some respects not altogether satisfactory feature of the working of the Office. The fees are already so low, even after recent slight readjustment, that they can hardly be reduced; but, while the revenue seems warranted, a greater proportion of it might be spent to advantage in placing the Office in a better position to deal with applications and in generally promoting invention and manufacture in the country. In Great Britain for last year the expenditure absorbed the whole of the revenue with the exception of 15 per cent.

IMPERIAL PATENT CONFERENCE.

During the year a Conference, which I attended, of representatives of the Patent Offices of the various parts of the Empire was held in London. Though this was called chiefly in connection with a British Empire patent (which forms the subject of a separate report to the Minister in charge of this Office), various matters in connection with the law and practice of patents in the several countries were gone into, and considerable insight gained by the representatives not only into the legislation and procedure elsewhere, but as to the point of view of those in a position to indicate the feeling of their country in such matters. The members of the Conference are indebted to the Comptroller and his officers for the consideration they received and the facilities for enabling them to become as fully conversant as possible in the time at their disposal with the organization and work of the Imperial Office.

I also availed myself of the opportunity of calling, on my way to the Conference, at the Patent Offices at Ottawa and Washington; and, thanks to the facilities kindly afforded by the Commissioner and the Head of the Patent Office in the former, and the Commissioner of Patents at Washington, was able to see at least something of these offices during my very brief visits to them.

In comparing the practices of the offices referred to and the Commonwealth Office with that of this Office the outstanding features appear to be (1) the facilities afforded in most of the former to the public to become acquainted with the particulars of patented inventions, and (2) their provision for examining applications for patents and investigating the novelty of their subject-matter, and the deficiency of such facilities and provision in this country.

With regard to (1): In Great Britain, Canada, Australia, and the United States abridgments of inventions are published, and (excepting as regards Canada) specifications and drawings are printed and sold at low cost. In New Zealand only the abridgments are printed. Inquiry into the cost of