

a "convict" as a person sentenced by any Court of competent jurisdiction to death or penal servitude upon any charge of treason or felony, and includes every person who, after the coming into operation of the Criminal Code Act, 1893, is sentenced under that Act or under the Crimes Act, 1908, to imprisonment for a term of three years or upwards, with or without hard labour. In addition to persons defined as "convicts" by the Prisons Act, 1908, by section 24 of the Crimes Amendment Act, 1910, persons sentenced to reformatory detention for any period are deemed to be convicts for the purposes of the administration of their estates.

The estates of convicts are often involved, and present unsatisfactory features. Frequently claims are made for damages by way of satisfaction for compensation out of the estate of a convict for loss of property, or through injury, alleged to have been suffered by criminal or fraudulent action on the part of the convict. Convicts are consulted, through the Prisons authorities, before any realization is arranged or any other important step in the administration is taken.

The administrator is empowered to provide for the maintenance of the wife and children or of any other relative dependent upon the convict for support.

69. It appears that there is no statutory provision for the administration of the estates of persons sentenced to Borstal detention, and the Public Trustee has no special authority to administer the estates of inmates of Borstal institutions, except in certain cases where a transfer from another institution has taken place—*e.g.*, if the person concerned was a convict within the meaning of the Prisons Act, 1908, prior to transfer to a Borstal institution. If a person sentenced to Borstal detention wishes the Public Trustee to act in connection with his estate it is necessary for him to complete a power of attorney appointing the Public Trustee as his agent.

AGENCIES.

70. The Public Trustee is empowered to act as attorney or agent, and the wide representation of the Office throughout the Dominion, its organization for dealing with assets situated overseas, and its facilities for the remittance of funds render it eminently suitable for the prompt and satisfactory conduct of agency business. In conducting this work the Department provides a much-appreciated service, and enables persons who, by reason of ill health or lack of business experience or absence from the Dominion, have found it necessary to appoint an attorney to leave their affairs in safe and experienced hands. This side of the Office operations is building up a very considerable goodwill, and it is gratifying to record that beneficiaries very often appoint the Public Trustee as attorney in connection with work entailed in the management of property descending to them from estates which had been administered by the Office. That the estimation in which the Office stands is high is indicated by the increasing number of persons of all classes in the community who each year appoint the Public Trustee their attorney.

RESEALING.

71. Whilst on the subject of agencies, I wish to refer to one branch of it which is growing in popular favour. On behalf of personal representatives of deceased persons overseas the Office is frequently called upon to act for executors or administrators in dealing with assets situated in New Zealand, or in prosecuting in this Dominion inquiries arising out of the administration. For a personal representative abroad who desires to reseal in the Dominion probate or letters of administration, and who has no agent here, the Office organization is very suitable. As the knowledge of the Office and its activities extends with people overseas, a larger number of executors, trustees, and administrators in foreign countries avail themselves of the Public Trustee's services in this capacity. The organization of the Department ensures speedy handling of the work in all aspects: the resealing of the grant in the Supreme Court, the realization of the assets and other requisite dealings, and the transmission abroad of securities or proceeds of realization. During the past year the Public Trustee has acted in the matter of resealing and administration of New Zealand assets on behalf of executors, trustees, and administrators in various parts of the British Empire, and in a number of foreign countries.