

9. *Intestate Estates.*—Four hundred and fifty-five intestate estates of a total value of £351,417 were accepted for administration during the year at the request of the next-of-kin of the deceased persons. Estates of this class constitute a comparatively small proportion of the business of the Office, due in large measure to the fact that persons, whether of small or of considerable means, are alike becoming increasingly aware of the advisability of leaving testamentary provision for the distribution of their estates. Generally, the intestate estates are of comparatively small value, but for these estates particularly, administration by the Public Trustee, with its security and moderate charges, coupled with the fact that it is not necessary to obtain administration bonds, provides special advantages.

10. *Estates of Persons under Disability.*—The principal class of estates coming under this heading is that of mentally defective persons. By the Mental Defectives Act, 1911, the Public Trustee is appointed statutory administrator of the estates of mentally defective persons where no private committee or administrator has been appointed. In actual practice the majority of the estates of mental defectives are administered by the Public Trustee. Even where a private committee or administrator is appointed, the Public Trustee, in terms of the Mental Defectives Act, is called upon to exercise supervision over the administration of such committee or administrator.

During the past year 438 estates of mentally defective persons, of a total value of £527,145, were reported to the Public Trustee for administration.

Under the Aged and Infirm Persons Protection Act, 1912, the Public Trustee may be appointed by the Supreme Court to act as manager of the estate of a person, who by reason of advancing years, mental or physical disability, or other causes is incapable of managing his or her own affairs, and he is frequently requested to act in this capacity.

Where a manager other than the Public Trustee is appointed the Public Trustee is required to peruse the accounts of the administration and to submit a report on the administration to the Court. The Public Trustee has to satisfy himself that the accounts delivered to him are in order, that the management during the period under review has been proper and efficient and in the best interests of the protected person, and that there is proper authority for any investments arranged during the period and for all disbursements made. These duties are cast upon the Public Trustee by section 18 of the Aged and Infirm Persons Protection Act, 1912, which provides, *inter alia*, that the manager of every protected estate shall at such times and in such manner as is prescribed prepare and file in the Court a statement, verified by affidavit, of his administration of the protected estate. Until last year there were no regulations prescribing the time and manner of filing the required statements. The Public Trustee thus had no means of knowing when an appointment of a private manager was made, and could not be certain that all private managers were complying with the important statutory requirements regarding the rendering of accounts. Rules prescribing the time and manner of filing statements were, however, made on the 16th June, 1936, and were gazetted in the *New Zealand Gazette*, No. 42, of the 25th June, 1936, page 1223, and arrangements were made at the same time with the Justice Department for the Registrars of the Supreme Court to notify the Public Trustee when protection orders are made.

By a general appointment by the Governor-General, pursuant to Part III of the Prisons Act, 1908, the Public Trustee is also appointed administrator of the estates of convicts, other than Natives. Comparatively few estates are administered by the Public Trustee under this provision.

11. *Workers' Compensation.*—The duties which devolve upon the Public Trustee in relation to the Workers' Compensation Act have been fully explained in previous reports. Briefly, in almost every case compensation arising out of the death of a worker is paid to the Public Trustee as statutory custodian, and it then becomes his duty to report to the Court of Arbitration upon the apportionment of such moneys among the dependants, and thereafter to administer the moneys in accordance with the order of the Court. Compensation awarded to an infant or a person under disability is also usually paid to the Public Trustee to be held in trust.