

equity and common law. The Office Solicitor, either personally or by his subordinates, appears in *ex parte* applications to the Supreme Court. He also appears, when required, to represent the Public Trustee in actions for or against the Public Trustee in all Courts and in originating summonses, &c. At times, some new point of law arises which requires the substantive opinion of the Supreme Court, and several of these cases were instituted by the Office Solicitor during the year. Probate applications and applications generally for administration constitute part of the duties of the Office Solicitor.

During the year administration was obtained in 1,983 estates. Other Court applications for leave to take steps necessary in the administration, but not authorized by the will or by statute, numbered 98, while in 12 cases it was necessary to file a certificate under Part IV of the Administration Act electing to administer the estate concerned as insolvent. In addition, 28 exemplifications of probate or administration granted abroad and 58 exemplifications of New Zealand grants were sealed to enable assets situated outside the country in which the original grant was made to be dealt with.

Upon this division also lies the responsibility of investigating the possibility of claims for compensation under the Workers' Compensation Act in respect of estates administered by the Public Trustee, obtaining orders for the apportionment of compensation which has been awarded or paid, and furnishing the Court with reports on applications for apportionment made by other persons.

The legislation providing for the relief of mortgagors and lessees has again necessitated many appearances by members of the legal staff before various Adjustment Commissions and the Court of Review.

NEW ZEALAND CENTENNIAL EXHIBITION 1939-40.

31. Mention was made in last year's report of the intention to make a suitable display which will serve to bring the Office under the notice of visitors to the Exhibition.

A pavilion has been erected on space allotted in the Government Court, and incidental arrangements are being made to provide displays advertising the main functions of the Office and illustrating the progress made since its inception.

OFFICE BUILDINGS.

32. The new Office building at Nelson, reference to the erection of which has been made in previous reports, was completed and occupied by the staff during February, 1939. The modern type of construction adopted and the facilities provided to ensure the efficient performance of the Office work have excited favourable comment from many quarters.

The continued expansion of the Office business and the consequent need for extended accommodation for the staff and the public at certain centres have been further evidenced during the year by the developments mentioned hereunder which have been found to be necessary :—

Minor alterations to existing premises have been made at Hamilton, Whangarei, Blenheim, Gisborne, and Dunedin.

The provision of additional accommodation for the staff of the Ashburton branch was imperative, and premises immediately adjoining the present Office premises were purchased. Arrangements are now being made to alter both buildings to meet the Office requirements.

The premises leased by the Office at Levin were acquired for the purpose of providing an extension to the Post Office building, and it was found necessary for the Office to acquire other suitable premises. A property was purchased and the building thereon altered to suit the Office requirements. A portion of the surplus accommodation available has been let.