

The following are the annual statistics of the ratio to population of the number of applications in certain countries for the years indicated :—

Country.	Year.	Applications.	Population.	Applications per 10,000.
Australia	1904	2,563*	3,984,376	6·4*
Canada	1903	5,793	5,528,847	10·4
Great Britain	1904	29,655	42,789,552	7·0
New Zealand	1904	1,491	857,533	17·4
United States of America	1900	50,213	76,303,387	6·6

* Estimated annual rates.

NOTE.—This table is taken from the first report of the Commissioner of Patents of the Australian Commonwealth Patent Office. In Australia, Great Britain, and New Zealand provisional specifications are lodged with many applications, while in Canada and the United States of America complete specifications are required in every instance.

The following figures roughly indicate the percentage of applications accepted without alteration and of those to which exception was taken by this office on various grounds during 1905 :—

Accepted without Alteration.			Accepted after Alteration.		Not accepted at end of Year.	
Without being questioned.	After being questioned		On Ground of want of Novelty.	On Ground of Informality.	On Ground of want of Novelty.	On Ground of Informality.
	On Ground of want of Novelty.	On Ground of Informality.				
65·7	10·6	0·4	5·3	10·9	8·2	2·4

CLAIMS.

The New Zealand Act, in common with the patent laws of most countries, requires that the complete specification "must end with a distinct statement of the invention claimed."

In many cases these claims are drawn in a way that, in the words of Sir R. Finlay, A.G., is "apt in its results to be eminently perplexing—eminently perplexing to the public who have to deal with these specifications so as to avoid any infringement, to see how far the ground is covered, and eminently perplexing particularly to those who, under recent legislation, have to consider the effect of claims with a view to seeing how far there may have been any anticipation and how far it may be necessary to refer to other specifications." The English office now requires a clearer definition of what is claimed, besides the insertion in certain cases of disclaimers, and statements of the novel features. This practice has much to recommend it, and should, in my opinion, be adopted in this colony.

DESIGNS.

The number of applications for registration of designs rose from 24 in 1904 to 54 in 1905. No particular cause can be assigned for the increase, which has been chiefly confined to Class 1. Thirty-two designs were registered in Class 1 (articles composed wholly or partly of metal not included in Class 2), 10 in Class 2 (jewellery), 4 in Class 3 (articles composed wholly or partly of wood, bone, ivory, papier-maché, or other solid substances not included in other classes), 1 in Class 4 (articles composed wholly or partly of glass, earthenware or porcelain, bricks, tiles, or cement), 4 in Class 5 (articles composed wholly or partly of paper, except hangings), 1 in Class 8 (carpets and rugs in all materials, floor-cloths and oil-cloths), and 2 in Class 10 (millinery and wearing apparel, including boots and shoes).

The fees paid in respect of designs amount to £27 11s., as compared with last year's total of £13 5s.

The number of designs registered is still surprisingly low considering the small cost of this form of protection and the ease with which it can be obtained.

TRADE MARKS.

A greater number of applications for registration of trade marks was lodged last year than in any former year, the total being 607. This is only 15 more than in 1904, but the total for that year was very much larger than that for any prior years.

The following figures, showing the number of applications for registration of trade marks received from 1866, when the first Act came into force, will be of interest :—

	Applications.
1866-89 (thirty-four years)	1,242
1890-99 (ten years)	2,912
1900 to date (five and a third years)	3,036

The fees derived from trade marks amounted last year to £811 15s., £25 1s. less than in the previous year. The falling-off occurs chiefly in the fees paid for registration of assignments, for notices of opposition, and renewal of trade marks, the increase being confined to the fees paid for application and registration of trade marks.