

1916.
NEW ZEALAND.

PATENTS, DESIGNS, AND TRADE-MARKS.

TWENTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE REGISTRAR.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly pursuant to Section 113 of the Patents, Designs, and Trade-marks Act, 1911.

I HAVE the honour to submit my report on the proceedings under the Patents, Designs, and Trade-marks Act during the year.

There was a further falling-off in the applications received, the total for the year being 1,953—363 less than in the previous year and 674 short of that received in 1913. The number of applications in 1915, as compared with the number in 1913, was—In New Zealand, 74 per cent.; in Great Britain, 59 per cent.; in Australia, 75 per cent.

Both the revenue (£7,491 13s. 11d.) and the expenditure (£3,230 16s.) were less than in 1914, the former by £80 6s. 1d. and the latter by £305 9s. 3d. The excess of receipts over expenditure, £4,260 17s. 11d., was greater than in any previous year. The maintenance of the revenue is chiefly owing to the renewal fees under the present Act falling due while the fees for the renewal of certain patents granted under the former Act were still payable.

The increase in salaries is accounted for by the inclusion of the amount paid for clerical assistance due to the transfer of a temporary clerk to the permanent staff. Owing to the fewer applications less printing was required, which, with the holding-over of the binding of the printed English and other specifications, has led to the reduction in the expenditure. The increasing issue of the *Journal* and the war rate has led to a somewhat larger amount for postage.

PROCEEDINGS UNDER THE WAR PROVISIONS.

No advantage has yet been taken of the Act enabling licenses to be obtained of enemy patents. Four applications were received during the year for the avoidance or suspension of trade-marks, and an Order in Council was made suspending the registration of the mark in one case subject to certain conditions; in another the Order has not yet been made, and the two remaining cases have been refused.

PATENTS.

General.

Notwithstanding the reduction in the applications, the number in proportion to the population is still very high, being at the rate per 10,000 of 13 for New Zealand for last year as compared with 6 for the United Kingdom, 7 for the United States, and 9 for Australia—the figures in the case of these other countries being for the year 1913. So far as the large numbers of applications in New Zealand indicate the progress of industry they are satisfactory. In dairying and milking appliances, for instance, the number is high, but this country is right in the van of the industry, and the applications on the subject are made, as a rule, with a knowledge of what has been already done and is required, and a fair proportion of them are no doubt for more or less material advances in the contrivances employed. This is also probably the case with fibre-dressing, agricultural appliances, and, in a lesser degree, some other subjects. As regards the field of invention generally, however, many inventors of this country are placed at a great disadvantage through lack of acquaintance with the more recent developments in the branches of invention with which they are engaged, and waste much valuable time, money, and energy in evolving methods or contrivances which have already been devised and adapted elsewhere or tried and found to be of no use.

While there are occasional exceptions, it may be said that, as a general rule, successful inventions are the result of a full knowledge of the subject, and unsuccessful inventions those conceived without such knowledge—*i.e.*, as a result of ignorance. The latter obviously involve a serious loss to the individuals concerned as well as to the country, and should be minimized