

## LEGISLATION.

14. During the last session of Parliament there was very little legislation which intimately affected the operations of the Public Trust Office in its administration work. There was, however, a certain amount which, in varying degrees, affected the Office and its work.

## MENTAL DEFECTIVES AMENDMENT ACT, 1928.

By this amendment to the Mental Defectives Act, 1911, is constituted a special Board to have supervision over certain classes of mentally defective persons. The Board is to be concerned with promoting the welfare of these persons, who, not being persons of unsound mind or persons mentally infirm, may in the opinion of the Board be classified under the Mental Defectives Act, 1911, in certain ways. In fulfilment of the end with which it is concerned, the Board is to secure that proper provision is made for the supervision of these persons, and, where they are detained in institutions, to assist in such manner as seems fit in the conduct of the institutions in the best interests of the inmates. Special institutions may be provided exclusively for persons coming under the supervision of the Board. Generally, the persons who will come under the supervision and the protection of the Board are those who may be classified as "socially defective."

## PROPERTY LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 1928.

This enactment is framed to afford relief to a lessee against an inequitable refusal on the part of a lessor to grant a renewal of a lease on the ground of the lessee's breach of covenant. It is provided that where a lessor has covenanted with a lessee that, subject to the fulfilment of certain covenants, the lessor will on the expiry of the lease grant a renewal or a new lease to the lessee, and the lessor has refused to grant such renewal or new lease on the ground that the lessee has failed to fulfil the stipulated covenants, the lessee may apply to the Court for relief. The Court, having regard to all the circumstances, may grant or refuse relief as it thinks fit, and may order that a renewal or a new lease be granted to the lessee on the same terms as if all the covenants stipulated had been performed.

## MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS AMENDMENT ACT, 1928.

In several boroughs in New Zealand there are lands which, though situated inside the borough boundaries, are still used solely for farming purposes, and will not be suitable for subdivision for many years to come. As farming properties the local taxation upon these lands is often too heavy an imposition, and so provision is now made for a measure of relief from this burden to be afforded them. Section 8 of the Municipal Corporations Amendment Act, 1928, provides for a reduction in the valuation of such lands for borough rating purposes only, provided that the Borough Council and the Valuer-General are satisfied that the land is not likely to be required for building purposes within a reasonable period, and provided that the land is of an area not less than three acres.

This amending Act also makes it obligatory on Councils to provide for depreciation in respect of their trading undertakings. The amount of the charge for depreciation is to be credited to a Depreciation Fund, and where a Council has credited a Depreciation Fund with the amount of a charge for depreciation it shall appoint three Depreciation Fund Commissioners, save that the Public Trustee may, if the Council so decides, be appointed sole Commissioner of the Depreciation Fund. The moneys received by the Commissioner or Commissioners in respect of any Depreciation Fund are, together with the accumulations thereof, to be held upon trust for payment to the Council for the purpose of renewing or replacing the plant of the trading undertaking.

## MAGISTRATES' COURTS ACT, 1928.

This Act consolidates the previous enactments relating to the jurisdiction of Magistrates and Justices of the Peace in civil matters.