

amounts invested by them in the securities of some corporations whose property was intentionally overvalued for the sale of a greater number of shares of stock, the necessity has been revealed of having enacted in Porto Rico a law, similar to the so-called "blue-sky law" now in force in several States of the Union, to govern the sale in Porto Rico of stocks, bonds, and other securities of foreign and domestic corporations or associations for the protection of bona fide purchasers. Some governmental officer should be authorized by law to supervise the selling of such securities with a view to affording small investors any possible protection against fraud and speculation.

ASSOCIATIONS NOT FOR PECUNIARY PROFIT.

From July 1, 1913, to June 30, 1914, 23 domestic and 2 foreign associations were registered and authorized to do business under the provisions of an act of March 9, 1911, to incorporate associations not for pecuniary profit.

Said act was drafted in this office, after a careful perusal of some similar State laws whose provisions were conveniently modified so as to make them adaptable to conditions existing in this island. The advisability of having an act of this nature among the statutory laws of Porto Rico has been clearly shown by the number of nonpecuniary organizations incorporated since it became effective, which has been 98 in a little more than three years.

UNITED STATES PATENTS AND TRADE-MARKS.

During the last fiscal year 35 United States patents and 17 United States trade-marks were registered in this department, and certificates of such registration duly issued, under the provisions of section 58, paragraph 11, and section 59, paragraph 18, of the Political Code. Said registration is made by the filing of certified copies of the certificates of registration issued by the United States Patent Office, and only for the purpose of enabling the owners of United States patents and trade-marks to have an official record of them in Porto Rico, from which they may acquire certified copies for judicial use here in case they need to ascertain their rights before the courts, as this office understands that the registration in this island of United States patents and trade-marks does not afford the owners thereof any more protection than that secured by the original registration in the office of the Commissioner of Patents, at Washington, D. C.

DOMESTIC TRADE-MARKS.

Under the domestic trade-mark law, sections 213 to 222 of the Political Code, and the rules and regulations issued thereunder, 49 domestic trade-marks were registered in 1913-14, and the proper certificates of registration issued, after due examination of the applications presented and of the accompanying statements. The registration of three trade-marks was refused on account of similarity to other trade-marks already registered and in one case, because the trade-mark merely consisted of the name of the applicant, which is prohibited by law.

OLD ARCHIVES.

The work of classifying and indexing the documents existing in the archives of the Spanish régime is still going forward. It is not possible to make rapid progress in this undertaking with the two or three employees devoted to this purpose, especially taking into consideration the fact that some of them are very often needed for other clerical office work.

In spite of the several recommendations made and steps taken by this department in the past to have these old archives in quarters adequate for their accommodation, well cared for, and all the papers therein so arranged as to make them promptly accessible to students and inquirers, no substantial measure has ever been adopted by the legislature to protect them against the action of time and to make them available for immediate use.

These official archives were ceded by Spain to the United States under the stipulations of the treaty of peace, signed at Paris on December 10, 1898. Article VIII of said treaty prescribes that the archives and registers so ceded shall be carefully preserved, and establishes the obligation on the part of the United States to furnish to the Government of Spain and to any private person, without distinction, copies of the documents forming part of said archives, whenever they may be applied for.

Notwithstanding the existence of that obligation, the question of the preservation and availability of said archives has been for a long while disregarded.

The archives in total comprise about 8,400 bundles of papers, containing more than 400,000 expedientes and documents and more than 2,200 books and registers, proceed-

ing from the offices of the governor general, public finance, provincial assembly, courts of justice, and other branches of the Government.

They are legally under the custody of the commissioner of the interior, but at the end of the year 1907, and with the purpose of providing quarters for them better than those in which they were placed in the office of the said commissioner, the governor ordered their transfer to this department, which was done at once. A bill was introduced in the session held by the legislative assembly in the year 1910 to make the secretary of Porto Rico the legal custodian of said archives, but it failed to pass, and no other action has since been taken to legalize the above-mentioned transfer.

Several rooms of the ground floor of the executive mansion were assigned for the keeping of said books and documents, and some wooden shelves were erected therein for the purpose, but those rooms are really inadequate for the preservation of papers. They are not sufficient in size to have all the books and documents properly accommodated, and the darkness and dampness make them a very suitable place for the breeding of destructive insects, such as the moth and the "comején," which multiply themselves with a marvelous fecundity and rapidly destroy every kind of paper and soft wood found within their reach. Unless a proper remedy is promptly applied to avoid such a peril the books and documents of the old archives will be all destroyed in a relatively short time, which will constitute a great loss, taking into account that many of said books and documents are of considerable value, at least for the history of the events which happened in this island during the last centuries of the Spanish sovereignty, and for all comparative statistical works that may be made in the future.

In 1913 a last attempt was made to secure from the legislature a remedy by the creation of a bureau of archives, with sufficient and competent personnel to go ahead with the work of classification and indexing up to its completion, and by the making of an appropriation large enough to put the quarters where the archives are now stored in the necessary condition to make them completely free from insects and adequate to preserve such valuable public records; but the bill introduced to that effect did not become a law, and the lamentable condition in which these important documents are still continues.

Said condition is becoming worse from day to day, and I would recommend that a new effort be made at the next session of the legislature to obtain the establishment of the aforementioned bureau with sufficient personnel and ample and suitable quarters, and to legally place the documents under the actual custodian thereof.

As among the 400,000 expedientes and documents there are many of trifling importance, which are of no use to-day nor will be in the future, I would consider it advisable if that can be lawfully done by the insular government, that the chief of said bureau be duly authorized to set aside all papers of that kind, while the work of assortment is being accomplished, with the idea of submitting them to a board of competent persons, which might determine as to the usefulness thereof, and direct their destruction or preservation, as the case might be. In that way the number of books, expedientes, and papers to be preserved and cared for will be considerably diminished, and the work of the bureau could be carried out on a more efficient and economical basis.

NEW FILES.

These files—without including the corporation, trade-mark, franchise, and pardon files, which are kept separately—are composed of 38,185 cases, 31,945 record cards, and 68,210 indexes, and are divided as follows: Records of military government (1898-1900); records of executive mansion; general file of secretary's office; records of municipalities, covering annual reports, budgets, insular advances and ordinances, bureau of insular affairs file, and others of minor importance.

It is estimated that in the last fiscal year about 32,000 papers were received and filed, and more than 20,000 index cards were made.

ELECTIONS.

In accordance with the provisions of the election law the names of all candidates nominated by any political party for offices to be filled at the general elections are to be filed with the secretary of Porto Rico. Nominations may be made in two ways—by duly called conventions, in the case of political parties which shall have cast 20 per cent of the total vote of the island for commissioner to Washington at the last previous elections, or by petitions signed by electors qualified to vote for the candidates named therein.

As there will be a general election this year to fill the position of commissioner of Porto Rico at Washington, D. C., members of the house of delegates, mayors, and members of municipal councils and school boards, eight petitions had already been