

I have no hesitation in saying that the method of examination is far before the old one, being thorough and searching.

It may on some applications seem hard, but no genuine applicant has anything to fear from the inquiries that are made. It has everything to recommend it.

Yours, &c.,

A. McARTHUR, Stipendiary Magistrate.

*The New Pensions Regulations.*

The Magistrate's Office, Wanganui.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 24th ultimo, No. 03/2352.

I have no hesitation in saying that the new regulations are a vast improvement on the old ones, and that they are an effectual bar against fraud. I really have no amendments to offer at the present time. I think that the new regulations have, *inter alia*, this great merit—viz., that they establish a *uniform method of examination*; thus the "personal equation" of the Magistrate (his tendency to be lax or over-strict) is got rid of, to the great advantage of the public, and of the pensioners themselves.

H. EYRE-KENNY, Stipendiary Magistrate.

The Magistrate's Court, Invercargill, 7th August, 1903.

I AM in receipt of your letter *re* working of the present system of making inquiries. I have to report that it brings to light attempts at defrauding the Government.

S. E. McCARTHY, Stipendiary Magistrate.

The Magistrate's Office, Greymouth, 13th August, 1903.

I THINK your forms very proper, and I think that without them, or something very like them, it is impossible to protect the colony from imposition.

R. S. HAWKINS, S.M.

SIR,—

The Magistrate's Office, Auckland, 21st August, 1903.

In reply to your letter of the 24th July last, asking for my opinion upon the working of the new method of examination as compared with the old under the Pensions Act, I have to say the cardinal principle of the new regulations seems to be in the making of the preliminary inquiries of the Deputy Registrar less perfunctory and more exhaustive.

The practical working of the system lies with the departmental officers, but the result to the Magistrate is certainly satisfactory.

Unsatisfactory claims have now little chance of getting before the Court. Formerly claims which ought never to have been made were found to be bad only after long and laborious investigation in Court. Now, before a claimant is brought to Court, his claim is *prima facie* established.

I do not suppose that any system could be devised which fraud might not find a way of evading on occasion, but your present methods appear to me to make the chances of a fraudulent claim being established very slight.

I have, &c.,

T. HUTCHISON, S.M.

SIR,—

Magistrate's Court, Masterton, 30th July, 1903.

In reply to your memorandum of the 24th instant, in which you state you would be obliged if I would give you my opinion upon the working of the new method of examination as compared with the old one under the Old-age Pensions Regulations, I have the honour to state that the new regulations, in my opinion, are a vast improvement upon the old, and make the duties of the Magistrate very simple.

One can see at a glance the position of the applicant, and most of the statements are verified by outside inquiries.

I have, &c.,

W. P. JAMES, Stipendiary Magistrate.

SIR,—

Lawrence, 30th July, 1903.

In reply to your memorandum asking my opinion upon the working of the new regulations, I can only say that they seem to me to be working well.

Personally, I like them, as the duties and responsibilities of the Deputy Registrars are clearly defined, and the work of the Magistrate kept within the proper sphere of a Judge to decide upon the evidence brought before him.

With a good Deputy who makes all the statutory inquiries, including the police report, and makes recommendations to the Magistrate which the latter knows can be relied on, the work of the Magistrate is made much easier and more satisfactory.

I have, &c.,

G. CRUICKSHANK, S.M.

SIR,—

Magistrate's Office, Dunedin, 31st August, 1903.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of number and date as per margin [03/2753, 20/8/03], and, in reply, beg to state that I find the new method of examination by the Deputy Registrars into applications for old-age pensions and renewals far in advance of the old system.

The Magistrate receives much more assistance than formerly, and there is far less chance of a dishonest applicant succeeding in hiding the true particulars as to his property and income.

I have, &c.,

E. H. CAREW, Stipendiary Magistrate.