

During the year 114 new telegraph-offices were opened.

The great importance of wireless telegraphy warrants the exertion of special efforts to complete the system in this Dominion. The station in the Post Office tower at Wellington has been doing excellent work. The permanent station on the Tinakori Hills will be ready immediately. It is expected that when it is in operation the facilities for communications between ship and shore will be considerably improved.

The experience gained in wireless telegraphy has satisfied the Postmaster-General that a wireless station with a radius of about 250 miles during the day and 500 miles at night can be erected on the roof of the Auckland new post-office. The work is now in hand, and the station should be in working-order by September.

The contractors for the high-power station at Awanui, near Doubtless Bay, which is to have a daylight range of 1,250 miles, have been at work for some time upon the erection of the masts and apparatus, and no great time should elapse before the station is ready for trial.

The site of the high-power station at the Bluff has been chosen and surveyed for foundations and buildings, which will be begun soon. It is expected that the contractor will commence the installation of the Bluff Station on completion of the work at Awanui. The remaining stations to be considered are one at Westport or Greymouth, one at the Chatham Islands, and a medium-power station at Rarotonga, to work in conjunction with the stations at Fiji and with one to be erected by the French Government at Tahiti.

With a view to a practical solution of the difficulty which exists in providing telephone-offices for country settlers, it has been decided that in future the Post Office will bear two-thirds, instead of one-half, of the annual loss on lines subsidized by settlers.

PUBLIC SERVICE REFORM.

The state of the Public Service demands the careful consideration of Parliament. The Dominion is fortunate in possessing many public officers of superior talent who in serving the State are actuated by a high sense of duty. Nevertheless it is well known that many appointments have been made to Departments without due consideration being given to the merits of applicants. Any system which gives to members of the Executive the power of selecting many of those who are to occupy posts in the Public Service tends to produce inefficiency, a lack of uniformity and of discipline, as well as discontent in the ranks of the employees of the State.

Legislation will be introduced which aims at the destruction of political patronage. It will provide for the adoption of the principle embodied in the laws which regulate the Public Service of the Commonwealth of Australia and of some of the Australian States. A Commissioner will be appointed who, with his assistants, will be responsible to Parliament for appointments to the Service, for promotions in the Service, and for the general organization of the various departmental staffs.

Provision will be made for the encouragement of merit, and for the introduction of some uniform principles governing promotions, increases of salary, holiday and sick leave, and other matters pertaining to the good government of the Service.

The opportunities of advancement for young men of ability will be multiplied by extending the sphere within which promotions may take place. For instance, instead of an officer's prospect of promotion being limited to his own Department, he will be given greater facilities for becoming a candidate for advancement in other branches of the Service.

The alterations which will be made by the proposed legislation will not necessitate either dismissals from the Service or reductions in pay, but they will have the effect of making it more attractive to the youth of the Dominion, and of enabling the State to retain the services of many men who are tempted to leave because of superior attractions offered by a professional and mercantile life outside.

In the meantime the Government has found itself compelled immediately to make provision for an increased supply of cadets. The Civil Service Act requires that persons appointed to the Civil Service shall enter the service as cadets, only after competitive examination as provided by the Act—such appointments to be