

It might here be pointed out that in this estimate no allowance has been made for the work done in connection with the Dreadnought cruiser, nor does the amount cover the work carried out for local bodies, on which certainly a charge could be made for credit of the High Commissioner's Department. It is not proposed to suggest that any charge be made on such sums as loans, receipts, &c., which during the year amounted to £11,500,000.

During my period of office here I have been impressed by the volume and variety of the work performed, which is much greater than realized by the people in New Zealand. Comparisons have from time to time been made regarding the staffing and cost of the New Zealand High Commissioner's Office with other offices doing similar work, but investigation made has shown that the result is not to the disadvantage of the New Zealand office. It has to be borne in mind that most of the Government Departments in the Dominion, in a greater or lesser degree, each send their quota of work to be done, the whole aggregating to large dimensions. In addition various New Zealand local bodies and individuals freely use the resources of the Department to obtain goods and information of all descriptions, thus considerably adding to the work.

The work rendered is of a highly general nature, yet requiring expert experience, as the subjects dealt with, being so many and varied, considerably increase the arduousness of the duties of those officers responsible for the proper carrying-out of the work, and throws upon them duties not shared to an equal extent by any other Department of the Government.

The High Commissioner's Department is now entrusted with much more work than formerly, due both to the growth of the Dominion's trade and to new work originating with myself. It should be mentioned that no increase to the number of the staff has been made, although the work has been so much enlarged and is still growing. It remains to be seen whether the staff will be equal to bearing the increased work.

As already stated, Mr. Crabb, F.R.C.V.S., takes over the entire handling of meat both technically and commercially, Mr. Wright acting in a like capacity in regard to dairy-produce, whilst Mr. Cameron continues in charge of all other produce in which New Zealand is concerned. The rearrangement will also enable the office to avail itself of Mr. Cameron's experience of New Zealand to assist in securing the right type of emigrants to the Dominion. Mr. Knowles has been promoted to the position of Private Secretary to the High Commissioner, and some other improvements have been made by concentrating in this office some of the work done in outside buildings—viz., by having Messrs. Crabb and Wright attached to this office. The average rate of pay for the clerks is not high, being under £125 per annum.

I am of opinion—and the experience gained during the last few months has confirmed it—that it is incumbent upon the High Commissioner to take every opportunity of bringing the Dominion still more prominently before the people of this country with a view to strengthening our position both commercially and financially. And it might be mentioned in this connection that the expenditure on exhibitions is at present less than that which formerly obtained, whilst the rivalry with other overseas possessions is increasing enormously.

In conclusion, I beg to state that I have endeavoured to place before the Government the particulars and statistical information relating to the Dominion's work here. I deem it right to place on record that the officers, from Mr. C. Wray Palliser downwards, whose duty it is to carry into effect the instructions of the Government and myself do so loyally and efficiently, notwithstanding the inconvenience experienced in these offices.

The many letters received from all sources containing expressions of thanks and appreciation for the information and assistance afforded bear testimony to the excellent services rendered by these officers.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS MACKENZIE.

The Hon. the Prime Minister, Wellington, New Zealand.