

REPORT.

The Hon. the Minister of Internal Affairs.

SIR,—

Wellington, 5th June, 1914.

I have the honour to forward, for the information of His Excellency the Governor, my Second Report on the Public Service.

My First Report, dated the 27th August, 1913, was written only eight months after the Public Service Commissioners assumed office. The extensive ramifications of the Service and the diversity of professional and other work necessarily precluded an exhaustive inquiry. I therefore preferred to obtain fuller information before referring to much that I include in this report.

WORK OF COMMISSIONERS.

This report as a whole will give some indication of the mass of work which has fallen upon the Commissioners during the past year. In addition, it may be mentioned that one or other of the Commissioners has visited the following places for the purpose of inspection, or to give officers an opportunity of bringing their cases under notice—namely, Auckland, Hamilton, Cambridge, Thames, Te Aroha, Rotorua, New Plymouth, Wanganui, Palmerston North, Napier, Gisborne, Porirua, Blenheim, Picton, Nelson, Stoke, Reefton, Westport, Hokitika, Greymouth, Kumara, Christchurch, Oamaru, Timaru, Otekaike, Dunedin, Gore, Queenstown, Cromwell, Clyde, and Invercargill.

One of the Commissioners has been engaged almost entirely on work in connection with the sittings of the Board of Appeal for some months; and the current work of selecting staff, holding inquiries, and the other manifold duties in connection with eleven thousand officers has been by no means light.

The classification of the Service was completed within eight months of the Commissioners assuming office, although similar work elsewhere in connection with an equal number of officers has often taken from eighteen months to two years. A great deal of time has been given to hearing and considering the representations of officers' associations.

It is to be hoped that when the Board of Appeal has heard the appeals in connection with the first classification the work of the Commissioners will become sufficiently normal to enable them to carry out a further inspection of offices throughout the Dominion.

EFFICIENCY AND CONDITION OF THE SERVICE.

I stated eight months ago that the Service was not, broadly speaking, found to be in so efficient a state as it should have been, but that there was a marked improvement and an enthusiasm on the part of members of the Service, and a desire to improve the working-methods, which was not before known. I am glad to be able to say that the improvement has been continuous, as will be seen from the following pages, but there is still much to be done. As was to be expected among a body of eleven thousand officers, there has been a good deal of passive resistance shown by a few officers to the operations of the Commissioners; but, on the other hand, it is difficult to praise too highly the enthusiasm with which new ideas have been supported by others. That an aversion to improvements should be natural in men of mature years is not surprising; it is still less surprising when the necessity for innovation is the result of slavishly following the methods of the past.