

A certain amount of the practice-time of the typistes learning the newer processes has been devoted to actual departmental work. As an illustration, one parliamentary return which was formerly prepared at a cost of £40 was completed by the machine process in the school at a cost of £6; and if the data for the return had been received from the Department in good shape it could have been prepared for 50 per cent. less.

In Auckland it has been found necessary to form a similar class. It is being conducted by one of the successful candidates at the first examination held in Wellington, and is being attended by eighteen typistes and Telephone cadettes. It will be periodically supervised by the Instructor, who will hold an examination in due course. The establishing of a class at Christchurch is under consideration.

Throughout the year the Instructor has continued to visit the Departments in Wellington in which the new appliances have been installed and the new processes adopted, and has instructed the operators and supervised the work of adapting the machines to the particular requirements of each Department. In addition to this branch of the work, the services of the Instructor have been very largely availed of by the Departments in the compilation of new forms and for the more efficient and economical handling of the work, and in other ways have been of assistance in dealing with the many questions of detail that necessarily arise in connection with the adoption by the Service of new systems and practices.

The inexperience of the operators in the initial stage of the use of these appliances has in some cases raised a doubt as to the suitability of a machine for particular work; but in every case, after the Instructor has supervised and advised the operator during the progress of the work in an office, the results have been satisfactory.

Many economies have been effected in regard to supplies. Details of this kind are apt to be regarded as of trivial importance; but, in view of the waste which has undoubtedly occurred in the past in the matter of stationery and supplies generally, these savings, though small in themselves, will in the aggregate represent a substantial economy.

All requisitions for mechanical office-appliances have been submitted to the expert attached to the Commissioner's office, who has gone carefully into the work on which it has been proposed to use the machines. In this way a large amount of unnecessary expenditure has been avoided in the purchase of machines that on investigation have been shown to be unsuitable for the wants of the Department. On the other hand, it is also necessary to state that several machines have been purchased by more than one Department without the approval of the Commissioner, and therefore without any advantage having been taken of the advice of the expert. It has been found that in some instances the machines so acquired are not at all suited to the work proposed to be done on them, and that their purchase will result in no economy.

It is proposed to extend the visits of the Instructor to the offices throughout the Dominion, in order to ascertain in what further manner mechanical processes and modern methods can be applied to local work. By means of their general application wherever practicable throughout the Service it is confidently anticipated that it will be possible, in Departments where the business is expanding at a rapid rate, to handle the increase in the work without any marked addition to the existing staffs. This has already been the experience in the offices where the new methods are in operation, as will be seen by reference to Appendix H, which comprises excerpts from the reports of the Departments that have adopted the improved methods.

These reports show clearly that the introduction of modern processes in the Public Service has already been attended with most satisfactory results in regard to the vital essentials of efficiency and economy, and fully justify the prediction to which I gave expression in my First Report. Even in the short time that has elapsed since their introduction, together with the use of the new forms, multiple and compound schemes, the economy arising therefrom has been demonstrated to be £15,800 per annum. It will be obvious, of course, that it is still not possible to estimate the full economic effect of installing the machines, as so much depends on the skill and efficiency of the operators; but as the latter become more expert, so too will the beneficial results be more apparent.