

The figures below show a saving of, say, £20,000, in addition to that estimated in August last, namely :—

	£
Positions not required to be filled	8,000
Temporary staff not required	3,000
Economies underestimated—	
Department of Internal Affairs	1,200
New record system	500
Improved methods of performing work	1,500
Unseen economies owing to better disposition of staff, say ..	2,000
State Coal-mines—Reorganization	800*
Electoral—Improved method of purging rolls	3,000†

If expectations are realized under all headings, the annual economy should be £67,000, instead of £47,000 as estimated last year. In addition, a further £4,500 is in sight on account of improved methods of working in the Post and Telegraph Department. To avoid the risk of overlapping items, I think it may safely be said that within a couple of years a full annual saving of at least £65,000 will be apparent.

A growing difficulty is the fact that too many of the officers released by Departments are drawing such salaries that it will take time to find them work which is worth the salary paid.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS.

Regulation No. 17, which invites officers to submit suggestions having for their object improvements in the method of working which will tend to increased efficiency or economy, has met with gratifying response, many valuable ideas having been submitted during the past year. This is evidence of the interest which some officers are taking in the work of their Departments. Several of these suggestions have been approved, and are now in operation, with satisfactory results; and others are under consideration. In some cases, although the suggestions have not themselves been adopted, they have led to distinct improvements and economies in departmental practices. Other suggestions, which would have proved of value had the existing methods been continued, have been superseded by a complete change in the procedure of the Departments concerned. In addition to the above, suggestions to the number of 109 have been forwarded to the Commissioner, but, for various reasons, have not been adopted.

It has been frequently stated by officers that there has been such great objection in some Departments to receive suggestions for improvements that the officers have felt it to be useless to attempt to make further suggestions. Having in mind a proved case in which a suggestion by an officer was deliberately withheld from the Commissioners by a Department, I am reluctantly compelled to conclude that there must be good ground for the general feeling in the Service of the inutility of officers approaching their Departments with suggestions. While it must happen that suggestions are sometimes impracticable or have been forestalled, officers should be encouraged to bring forward anything which they consider to be new and worthy of adoption.

In accordance with the intimation conveyed in my First Report I append the names of the officers whose suggestions have been adopted, together with brief particulars of their schemes :—

Mr. W. H. Frethey, Tourist Department, Wellington, suggested the establishment of a general-messenger service to serve all the Departments, in lieu of the former system by which individual Departments provided their own messengers, as it was found that messengers attached to some offices had really insufficient work to keep them occupied at all times. The suggestion was that messengers should be despatched from the general-messenger staff at regular intervals to the different Departments for the delivery and posting of correspondence and despatch of telegrams. The whole question was referred to and dealt with by the Permanent Head of the Internal Affairs Department; and, as a result, the control of the service

* Not effective for some months.

† Triennially.