

Wellington), Public Health, Hospitals and Charitable Aid, Tourist and Health Resorts, and Treasury, and in the Public Service Commissioner's Office.

As was anticipated, no great difficulty has been experienced in applying the general system to Departments in which it has so far been installed. A report upon the working of the system in these Departments will be found in Appendix C.

The savings already made exceed £2,000 per annum, in addition to which further savings are in view.

The suitability of the system to meet the requirements of all Government Departments has now been placed beyond question.

It is of interest to note that requests for information in regard to the system have been received not only from local bodies in the Dominion, but also from authorities abroad.

#### FURLOUGH.

Under Acts which were repealed by the Public Service Act it was provided that officers of at least ten years' continuous service might be granted twelve months' leave of absence, and officers of a lesser period of service, any time not exceeding six months' leave of absence—in each case on half-pay. For some years this had remained more or less in abeyance.

The matter of furlough was made the subject of a regulation of the Public Service Commissioner when control of the Service was assumed, and the former statutory provision was accepted as a basis for the regulation. It was felt at the time that this might be subject to modification when more experience had been gained. At present a public servant can, if convenient, be granted six months' leave of absence on half-pay after long service, and later on he is granted three months' leave of absence prior to retirement. As many officers are unable to take advantage of six months' leave on half-pay, it is considered that in justice to officers of long service the present regulation on the subject of furlough should be reviewed and an arrangement made similar to that in the Commonwealth, under which officers of, say, twenty years' service would be entitled to six months' leave of absence on full pay, which, if not taken previously, would be granted before retirement. It may also be proposed that if an officer about to retire preferred not to take the leave, he be granted the equivalent in money. This, however, would require legislation.

#### OFFICERS' LEAVE.

Some instances have been brought under notice in which officers have taken leave at times which are seriously inconvenient to their Departments. A case has come under notice in which a controlling officer left his office for annual leave when two of his junior officers were absent, and without making proper provision for the conduct of his duties. This is a matter which requires the strict attention of the Permanent Heads.

Since the centralization of control of the messenger services of Departments was effected, the staff has been placed on such a footing as to be able to provide from within its own ranks for temporary absences of officers on sick-leave or annual leave. It should be mentioned that though messengers are excluded from the operation of Part IV of the regulations, they are being granted the leave provided under these regulations.

The question of leave for the masseurs and masseuses of the Tourist Department was recently considered, and it was decided to grant an additional week to those engaged on wet massage and to the head masseuse, on account of the special nature of their duties.

An all-round addition of a week has also been made to the leave of light-keepers of the Marine Department.

The subject of special holidays has also been considered. Frequently Departments are notified that "such officers as can be spared" may be allowed a particular day or half-day, with the result that some get the holiday and others do not. It is a question whether, in order to secure some uniformity throughout the Service, it is not desirable that a specified number of days that will be granted as special holidays during any one year should be stated, any days received by an officer beyond that number to be deducted from his annual leave.