

I have already mentioned that the Commission on the British Civil Service, which has just finished its sittings, has made a recommendation that the system of interchange of officers between Departments should be carried out in Great Britain. The system has, of course, its limitations; but these are limitations of age, rather than anything else. Without being dogmatic, I think it may be said that unless an officer qualifies for promotion before the age of thirty it is doubtful whether he is likely to do so in work other than that in which he has been trained. It is needless to say there are brilliant exceptions to this; but the gap between brilliancy and mediocrity is a wide one in the Public Service, as in other walks of life.

#### SENDING OFFICERS BEYOND NEW ZEALAND.

This matter was referred to last year, and it was suggested that officers in the Public Service might with advantage be sent abroad to obtain a knowledge of the practices relating to their Departments as followed in other countries. During the year facilities have been given to the following officers for this purpose:—

- T. W. Lonsdale, Manager Moumahaki Experimental Farm; to enable him to visit Australia, with a view to making himself conversant with agricultural operations there.
- W. K. Dallas, Assistant Orchardist, Weraroa Experimental Farm; to pursue his studies in Australia and California.
- J. L. Bruce, Assistant Director Live-stock and Meat Division, Agricultural Department; to inquire into the position regarding manure-sterilizing in India.
- H. J. H. Blow, Permanent Head, Mines Department; to visit the Mines Conference at Broken Hill.
- R. G. Robinson, Forestry Division, Lands Department; to attend the Foresters' Conference in Scotland.
- C. E. Adams, Government Astronomer; to proceed to United States for further study. Mr. Adams has been awarded, by the University of California, the Martin Kellogg Fellowship of the Lick Observatory, which is regarded as a distinguished honour.
- C. E. Matthews, Inspector of Prisons; to inquire into prisons systems in Australia.

#### UTILIZATION OF SURPLUS CLERICAL OFFICERS.

By utilizing the services of officers found to be surplus during the year in Departments where changes of practice or rearrangement of the staff were carried out, it has been found possible to almost entirely avoid the necessity of employing temporary assistance from outside the Service. When it is taken into account that on an average from eighteen to twenty officers have been available for taking up temporary duty, the economy realized in this way is considerable, approaching any sum between £3,000 and £4,000 per annum.

#### HISTORY OF CLASSIFICATION.

In my First Report it was stated that although provision was made in the Civil Service Act of 1866 for the classifying of the Service, yet no action was understood to have been taken in the matter until 1885. It has since come under my notice that a classification was in operation in the Customs Department in the early "seventies," and that a list of classified officers in the Department was published in the *New Zealand Gazette* of the 5th April, 1871, in accordance with the provision in the Appropriation Act, 1870, whereby a single Department could be classified by Order in Council. No further information can now be obtained in regard to the matter, but apparently nothing was done beyond the publication of the list referred to.

#### CLASSIFICATION OF PERMANENT HEADS.

The Public Service Act provides for an Administrative Division, the first members to be appointed by the Governor. The Commissioner thereafter has power to certify at any time that offices in the Administrative Division should be added or abolished. As a commencement, the Governor decided to appoint to the Adminis-