

ELECTORAL WORK.

During the year the Registrar-General was, through illness, relieved at his own request of the control of the Electoral Branch, and the Permanent Head of the Department of Internal Affairs was placed in charge. This sub-department is now part of the Head Office, which will result in a saving in salaries alone of £325 per annum. During past election years (1908 excepted) the services of a large number of casual clerks were utilized by the Electoral Department in the purging of the electoral rolls and the enrolment of electors. This system was found to be an exceedingly expensive one. This year a complete departure is being made in respect to the whole of the field-work connected with the coming general election, by utilizing the services of Postmasters, Letter-carriers, and Police officers. The carrying-out of this work by Government officers will, it is confidently believed, result in its being more efficiently done than was the case when it was undertaken by persons outside the Public Service, and at a greatly reduced cost. The visible saving in this direction alone is £3,000. Other economies will reach a considerable sum, which will be stated in my next report.

CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, I beg leave to say that the advantages of the Public Service Act, which were summarized in my First Report, have been fully maintained. There is no doubt whatever that the Act is working smoothly and well, and that the Service generally is realizing that the scope for meritorious and able officers has been widely extended. While it has been necessary to speak plainly about defects in the Public Service system, it is realized by the Commissioners that a remedy was impossible until central control was established. The past few years have been notable in the history of the Public Services of the British Dominions for the number of Commissions which have inquired into them. That Sir George Murray in his recent report on the Canadian Service and Lord MacDonnell's Commission on the British Service should each have arrived at the conclusion that a system of central control was necessary is a remarkable testimony to the trend of public opinion. So far as concerns this Dominion, I venture to say that it has now been placed beyond doubt that the continuance of central control will provide an outlook for public servants which was wanting in the past, and will at the same time ensure efficiency and economy in the truest sense.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

D. ROBERTSON,

Commissioner.
