

in hand, some Departments were able to effect an improvement. It is hoped that further progress in this direction will be noticeable in the reports on the past year's operations.

With a desire to further reduce elaborate detail, the Commissioners suggested that economy would result from the elimination of such details as shillings and pence and fractional measurements in returns, tables, &c.

That the attention which has been directed to these matters would appear to be amply justified may be judged from the fact that in one Department alone it has been reported that a conference of departmental officers recommended that the annual returns prepared for printing in the report be reduced from fifty to twenty-four.

MODERN METHODS, MULTIPLE SCHEMES, AND COMPOUND PROCESSES.

Multiple schemes are now in operation in the following Departments: Land and Income Tax, Lands and Survey, State Fire Insurance, State Advances, Machinery, Mines, Valuation, Government Insurance, Public Trust Office, Public Works, Justice, Internal Affairs, and Stamps, bringing into effect greater efficiency, despatch, and economy than formerly.

In one Department, where the balancing of fifty-five thousand personal accounts last year required the services of four operators, this year, with a greater volume of work, fifty-nine thousand accounts were balanced by one operator. Again, in another large Department, the balance this year (as a result of the new methods adopted and the use of the machines) was arrived at in much shorter time and at less expense than has ever been the case formerly. These are by no means isolated instances.

It will be of interest to quote here the opinion of the Permanent Head of one of the largest revenue Departments after two years' experience of the modern processes. He says,—

“With the greater knowledge of the machines and their capacity, and the better preparation of forms, the cost of the work in this Department has now been reduced to a minimum, and the economy which was anticipated has been fully realized.”

The anticipated economy in this Department was £3,890, whilst the actual saving in salaries amounts to £4,428 per annum, in addition to which it is stated that the Department has benefited to the extent of £1,430, being additional revenue collected owing to the additional time at the disposal of the departmental officers.

Another Permanent Head says,—

“The purchase of the machines has been amply justified by the results obtained.

. . . The economic effect of new system for the year is £1,002.”

Owing to the demand for operators for working the mechanical office appliances, classes of instruction have been continued throughout the year and have been well attended.

Four examinations in the use of mechanical office appliances have been held—viz., three at Wellington and one at Auckland—and forty candidates were successful in passing. These officers are now all employed as machinists throughout the Service.

During the year the Inspector has visited the more important centres of the Dominion for the purpose of extending the use of new mechanical processes in local offices, and also of supervising the operations where they had already been introduced.

The first of a series of detailed inspections, which the Commissioners intend to make of the work of every Department where the new methods and processes have been introduced, has been completed, and many matters brought under the notice of the Permanent Head, which, when given effect to, will be of material benefit.

During the year the adoption of carbon processes and the use of “card” systems, in some instances extending throughout the whole of the Department in various parts of the Dominion, have resulted in an appreciable saving of labour and consequent economy.

In previous years the work of recording deeds in the Land and Deeds Department was done mainly by temporary clerks, and paid for at contract rates. As these officers find permanent employment it is proposed from time to time to gradually reduce the number employed and arrange for the duplicate copies to be