

The following heads comprise the main alterations and improvements :—

- (1.) Introduction of a modified form of the series record system in all offices.
- (2.) Recasting and remodelling of the monthly, quarterly, and annual returns from District Offices, and the adoption of compound forms wherever possible. In one instance, where three returns were previously compiled, the same returns are now undertaken by carbon process in one operation. All unnecessary information has been eliminated by merging of information under main headings. The methods of the compilation of the returns in District Offices have been remodelled and standardized by the introduction of Returns Journals.
- (3.) Confirmation of multiple system of land-revenue collection and accounting, and use of adding-machines, &c., introduced by the Commissioners, and revision of all forms of cash-books, &c.
- (4.) Land Board Procedure: A revision of the method of Land Board minutes whereby a simple uniform system has been adopted for preparation of order paper and minutes.
- (5.) Forms and books have undergone a complete revision. In all, 527 forms were submitted, 226 being standard and the remainder local forms. The majority of these have been rejected, and so far 172 forms have been standardized to take the place of the above. There are yet a few to be revised as required.
- (6.) Rangers' Inspections: A system of recording Rangers' inspections of Crown holdings has been devised. The particulars of selections are recorded in loose-leaf field-books, and reports are made by carbon process at the time of original entry of details of inspections. Full instructions have also been issued to the Rangers relating to their duties.

A committee consisting of the Secretary of the Public Trust Office, the Staff Clerk of the Post and Telegraph Department, and the Inspector of the Lands and Survey Department was also appointed by the Commissioners to consider and report on suggestions made to improve the methods of the Correspondence Branch.

OVERTIME.

Regulations governing the conditions under which overtime may be worked, and the rate of payment to be made in such cases, were gazetted on the 10th September last. These regulations were the outcome of conferences with officers of the Public Service, and largely follow the practices adopted in the Commonwealth of Australia. Briefly, the regulations provide,—

- (1.) For a fixed scale of payment in cases where the working of overtime has been authorized :
- (2.) Payment at the fixed rate in cases where the weekly hours worked are in excess of forty-four :
- (3.) For overtime to be worked under direct supervision of a senior officer who has no monetary interest in the working of overtime.

The Commissioners have no desire that members of the Service should be required to work excessively long hours, even with adequate remuneration, and prefer, both in the interests of the Department and the officers themselves, that in cases where extra work is to be coped with temporary assistance should, where practicable, be given.

The question of payment for overtime does not on the whole work satisfactorily. The regulations issued by the Commissioners are not always observed, the tendency being in many cases to take advantage of the regulations to a point beyond what was expected. In some Departments, under slight pretext, applications are received to work overtime on the part of the staff. The statement in the First Report that "experience has proved that specified conditions under which overtime may be earned do not conduce to the diminution of expenditure on this account" has been fully borne out. The Commissioners are continually receiving applications for authority to work overtime in order to overtake arrears. They can only conclude