

1938.

NEW ZEALAND.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONERS

(TWENTY-SIXTH REPORT OF THE).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

To His Excellency the Right Honourable George Vere Arundell, Viscount Galway, Member of His Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Companion of the Distinguished Service Order, Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief in and over His Majesty's Dominion of New Zealand and its Dependencies.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

As Commissioners under the Public Service Act, 1912, appointed in terms of section 41 of the Finance Act, 1936, we have the honour to submit the following report as required by section 15 of the Public Service Act.

REPORT.

THE Public Service Act, 1912, came into operation on the 1st April, 1913, so that the year covered in this report is the twenty-fifth since the Public Service of New Zealand was given into the control of Commissioners. A quarter of a century has therefore passed since, what was then, a radical alteration in the method of administration was brought about. There is now nothing tentative or experimental about Commissioners' control. We believe that the system has been completely justified by the improvement it has wrought in the Public Service, improvement that is now scarcely realized except by keen students of administrative problems, because the change has come about over a period of years. A new generation of public servant has arisen, grown up, and been developed under the present system, largely insensible of the fundamental changes that have come to the Public Service since a unified control was instituted.

The justification of the change does not rest alone upon the greatly improved effectiveness of the Service, but upon the comparative contentment that reigns throughout the whole organization. If we are to believe, as we are entitled to, the accredited representatives of the personnel of the Service—the Public Service Association—the system of Commissioner control is firmly entrenched, and their only concern is lest it should in any way be disturbed or interfered with or weakened. During our extensive tour throughout the country last year, when we met hundreds of individual public servants, their representatives, and their organizations, we could not fail to observe and be impressed by the deep and unrestricted confidence that is reposed in the controlling authority. If this feeling is displayed more in one class than in another it is shown among the older officers who had experience of the more or less chaotic state of affairs that ruled in the Public Service before the Royal Commission in 1912 investigated the causes of unrest and dissatisfaction of the officers themselves and the defects in the administration of the Service.

The occasion of this twenty-sixth annual report is therefore an appropriate one in which to recapitulate briefly the principal advantages that have accrued to the State and Service alike since the Act of 1912, which ordained that from thence forward