

interesting commentary upon the association of Mr. Boyes and Mr. Mark that not only was there no occasion when recourse was had to this expediency, but there was never at any time any suggestion that such a step need be contemplated.

Upon Mr. Boyes' resignation as Joint Commissioner the control of the Service has reverted to a sole Commissioner, and Mr. Mark's appointment in that capacity was made by the Governor-General in terms of section 7 of the Public Service Act, 1912, and thereby was terminated an interesting and valuable experiment in joint management.

It will not be inappropriate at this juncture to express some views on this system of control. Primarily and obviously it depends for success upon compatibility of personalities. If the two Commissioners are incapable of co-existing in personal harmony, then that method is not feasible. As in marriage, so in the jointure of two persons holding office, performing duties and having responsibilities devolving upon them in common, there must exist personal conditions under which they can associate without friction. Fortunately, this was the case in the highest sense in the relationship of the two Commissioners. It is not difficult to conceive the untoward consequences if it had been otherwise.

If this mutual goodwill does in fact exist, then Joint Commissioner control has several advantages. It enables a sharing of work and responsibility. It gives opportunities of consultation that cannot be enjoyed in other circumstances. It permits one Commissioner to travel, investigating and inspecting, while the normal work of the central office proceeds unhindered under the control of the other. This latter arrangement is difficult under one Commissioner because of the powers that are vested in the Commissioner alone and of which delegation is not permitted.

EFFICIENCY OF THE SERVICE.

The general inspection of Departments made by the Public Service Inspectors has continued during the year. It is noticeable that as a result of the number of vacancies the interchange between Departments has increased considerably. This is all for the good of the Service. Not only do officers realize that all Departments under the Commissioner constitute one Service, but in addition they widen their experience, broaden their outlook, and increase their general utility. Frequently, too, they take with them to new Departments fresh ideas for the betterment of procedure. Opportunity is thus given for those attached to smaller Departments or Departments where there is comparatively little staff movement, to gain promotion much sooner than would be possible if they were restricted to the Departments to which they were originally recruited. It is also apparent that in quite a number of cases officers, who previously were content to remain in one centre and take a chance for vacancies arising in that centre, have been stimulated to apply for positions, by the accelerated promotion being given to those prepared to transfer notwithstanding that it would mean moving. This is all for their good and the benefit of the Service. As a general rule the usefulness of an officer is improved by an occasional change of environment. It prevents him from stagnating and developing what is commonly described as a "one-track mind."

With the changes taking place there is a breaking-down of the tendency which has existed in some Departments to adhere rigidly to established procedure in spite of developments which call for considerable alteration in practice. The responsibilities cast on most Departments by legislative changes and the breadth of the field covered by departmental activities necessitate that departmental procedure shall be constantly reviewed in order to evolve the system best suited to the Departments' requirements both from an economical and practical standpoint. It is very gratifying to note that most Departments are adapting themselves to the altered conditions, but there is still room for improvement in one or two quarters where the desirability of amendment has not yet been recognized.

It has been necessary during the year to extend to all Departments the requirement that copies of Inspectors' reports shall be furnished to this office. Much valuable work is performed by the departmental Inspectors, and a review of their reports enables the Commissioner to assist in the establishment of a greater degree of uniformity throughout all Departments.