

It is to be regretted that it appears to be no longer possible to secure Actuaries for the Public Service within the Dominion. Vacancies occur so infrequently that it is difficult to offer encouragement to officers to study for the difficult examination required.

The school for shorthand-writers and typists has been carried on during the year, and is proving its value; but it is still difficult to supply the wants of Departments for this class of worker, partly, no doubt, on account of the general prosperity of the Dominion, but probably also on account of the increasing demand for women clerks and typists in offices outside the Public Service.

With a view to enabling officers to acquire a knowledge of the best system of records, Departments were invited to send their Record Clerks to a demonstration of the series system at the Defence Headquarters. It was arranged that, in the event of any particular Department requiring a further opportunity of obtaining knowledge of the practical working of the system on a large scale, this could be provided by arrangement with the Defence Headquarters.

Opportunities have also been taken of inviting officers concerned to demonstrations of modern book-keeping appliances in the Public Trust Department, and to an exhibition of touch typewriting by an expert from America.

#### HOSTELS.

Reference is made in the report of the Lady Medical Officer to the provision of hostel accommodation for girls. Hostel accommodation is now being arranged for seventy-five boys in Wellington. Owing to the present housing difficulties and the increase in the cost of board and lodging for young people in Wellington, it may be found necessary to take up the question of hostels in an extended way. The present arrangements provide for accommodation for boys in hostels at a rate of £1 2s. per week, and for girls in hostels at a rate of £1 per week. It is understood that the Education Department is endeavouring to arrange hostel accommodation for student teachers who are not under the Public Service Act.

#### EVASIONS OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE ACT.

No evasions of the Act have come under notice during the past year.

#### TEMPORARY OFFICERS.

Of the 1,250 temporary clerks employed at the 1st April, 1919, 713 of whom were engaged on war work, there remained at the 1st April, 1920, 958. Of this number, 674 were employed in War Departments.

There are 284 temporary clerks in established Departments, as against 537 last year.

There are also 156 shorthand-writers and typists, who are on the temporary staff of the established Departments, but the majority of these will be required, and will be retained if they are able to pass the necessary tests.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS.

Reference has been made in previous reports to the desirability of classifying administrative officers. While this is not yet settled, it is satisfactory to be able to report that Government, on the recommendation of the Commissioner, tentatively agreed to a scale of classification, which it is hoped may be made complete during the current year.

Increases of salary to Permanent Heads last year were granted on the basis of the proposed scale.

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS.

While the Commissioners are pleased to observe an increase in the number of suggestions of value made by officers, they are still of opinion that the following list might have been longer, especially in view of the high prices of material of all kinds. Even a small percentage of saving in material owing to improved methods would at the present time show satisfactory results.