

It is recognized that in many cases mistakes are made by members through errors of judgment arising not from any want of care or wilful wrongdoing, but from want of knowledge or lack of confidence in themselves. In such cases friendly advice will be given, and steps taken by means of efficient instruction to ensure proper performance of duties.

In addition to the above-mentioned changes, the Department is at present in consultation with the Public Service Commissioner and the Secretary, Post and Telegraph Department, with the object of considering whether the system of promotion, filling vacancies, staff recording, classification, &c., in use in other sections of the Service could with advantage be adopted by the Railways Department.

SUGGESTIONS AND INVENTIONS COMMITTEE.

In order to encourage the staff to take an active interest in the Department's operations, and with the object of securing the greatest efficiency by the co-operation of the employees in the various branches, it was decided recently to set up a Suggestions and Inventions Committee, and invite suggestions in connection with any section of the Department's operations. There has been a very good response, and already a large number of suggestions have been dealt with by the committee.

The names of those making suggestions or submitting inventions are not disclosed to the committee, so that the staff may be assured of equal consideration being accorded any proposals put forward.

GENERAL.

Summarized briefly, the following are some of the more important measures recently brought into operation:—

- (1.) Complete reorganization of administration of Department: Board of Management, divisional control, and decentralization; reduction in districts.
- (2.) Reorganization of financial, statistical, and accounting methods on up-to-date commercial lines.
- (3.) Tariff revision.
- (4.) Reduction of excursion fares; institution of liberal family tickets.
- (5.) Complete programme of improvements and new works—ten-years programme of £1,000,000 expenditure per annum.
- (6.) Workshops and equipment: Concentration on four shops; new shops at Auckland and Wellington—total expenditure, £1,500,000; three-years programme.
- (7.) Complete overhaul of time-tables to accelerate the trains, reduce mixed trains, and provide more convenient services.
- (8.) Inauguration of Commercial Branch, and bringing the Department into close personal contact with its customers.
- (9.) Sending officers abroad to study at first hand the methods applied to the solution of railway problems in other countries.
- (10.) Availability of tickets extended.
- (11.) Booking-time extended for reservations of seats and sleeping-berths.
- (12.) Limited expresses.
- (13.) Rail motor-trains in operation or on order.
- (14.) Reports on electrification of railway sections.
- (15.) Board of Inquiry into extended use of New Zealand coals on railways.
- (16.) Through booking of passengers, luggage, parcels, and goods between North and South Islands.
- (17.) Arrangements being completed for the transport of goods to and from the railway.
- (18.) Hutt Valley settlement scheme.
- (19.) Construction of new lines policy, providing for departmental committees investigating the facts regarding proposals for new lines.
- (20.) Publicity work, and co-ordination of the efforts of the various Departments interested therein.
- (21.) Stores Branch reorganized after the Comptroller had been sent to Australia to study the reorganized systems that have been adopted on the railways in that country.
- (22.) Improved methods of staff administration.