

ABOLITION OF FINAL RECEIPTS.

The practice of sending out final receipts from the Head Office, in addition to the provisional receipts issued by the Post Office or the Branch Offices of the Public Trust Office, as the case might be, has been discontinued, with the concurrence of the Controller and Auditor-General.

No statutory requirement exists for the despatch of the receipts, and it can only be surmised that the system was adopted as a safeguard against misappropriation of moneys after lodgment at the Branch Offices.

Practical experience of the working of the system showed that it was ineffective. Misappropriations have occurred from time to time, but in no single case did the final-receipt system serve to detect the offender. The system had grown to large proportions, the number of receipts issued annually being between 60,000 and 70,000. The work occupied a portion of the time of a large number of officers on the various Divisions of the Head Office, and there was a large expenditure for stationery and postage.

The saving resulting from the abolition of the receipts is estimated at £720 per annum.

LEDGER-POSTING MACHINE.

During the year the Board has taken the opportunity of introducing modern methods with regard to the posting of the ledgers, and in future all the ledgers of the Office, both in the Head Office and at District Offices, will be posted by means of machines.

The first of the machines has become available, and a commencement has been made with the new system on the accounts of the Soldiers' Division. The transfer from the old to the new ledgers was effected without difficulty.

The new system will be extended to the remaining Divisions of the Head Office and to the District Offices as additional machines become available.

The cumbersome and expensive ledger-covers at present in use will be discarded. The ledger-leaves will be kept in locked cabinets.

So far as can be determined at this early stage, the economies resulting from the machines will greatly exceed those originally anticipated.

Upon the complete installation of the system the whole of the ledger-posting work in the Head Office, which now occupies the time of a large staff of male and female officers, will be performed with two, or at the most three, women officers provided with machines. Corresponding savings will be effected at the District Offices.

RECURRING CLAIMS AND PAYMENTS.

For some time the Board has felt some concern regarding the large amount of work involved in the preparation of the debit and credit notices, many thousands of which have to be prepared periodically throughout the year. Arrangements have now been made by the Board for the introduction of a machine by which such notices and vouchers can be prepared with the greatest ease, speed, and accuracy.

The total number of notices to be dealt with is 75,000 to 100,000 per annum.

Sample forms for use in connection with the machine have already been drafted. No difficulty will be experienced in bringing the system into use forthwith.

The introduction of the machine will enable the checking of the notices after preparation to be safely dispensed with.

Large economies will be effected by the new system, and it is anticipated that the machine may be available for the work of other Government Departments if it is so desired.

The uses to which the machine can be put are almost unlimited.

STATISTICAL SECTION.

The Board is of opinion that a Statistical Section should be established at the earliest opportunity, in order that reliable data may be available for the Board's information when required. It has frequently happened during the Board's term of office that the absence of such data has been a source of embarrassment.