

I am confident great benefit will accrue equally to New Zealand and our island dependencies from this visit. In fact, if we are to successfully govern these tropical lands it is essential that members of the Legislature should occasionally visit them, not only for the purpose of studying on the spot the effect of our laws and administration, but—what is equally important—of giving the governed an opportunity to represent their wants, ventilate their grievances, and generally to come into closer personal touch with their Government.

HIGH COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE.

The Hon. Sir Thomas Mackenzie, K.C.M.G., retires from office on the 31st instant after eight years of most useful service to the Dominion. His responsibilities were largely added to by the war, and the valuable work performed by him on behalf of New Zealand is highly appreciated by the Government and the people alike. Sir Thomas Mackenzie is succeeded by the Hon. Sir James Allen, K.C.B., whose close acquaintance with the financial and commercial needs of the Dominion will prove of great value not only to New Zealand, but also in the contemplated reorganization of the High Commissioner's Office.

Complaints have been made that it is difficult to obtain information about New Zealand from the Office. To remedy this defect it has been decided to reorganize the staff and arrange for an interchange of officers between New Zealand and the London Office. Already two New-Zealanders have been selected, one of whom is now in London, and who will take charge of the Inquiry and Emigration Department. This Department will keep the advantages of emigration to New Zealand prominently before the class of people who will assist in the development of the Dominion, and he will be instructed to discourage the emigration of any but those prepared to take up country life.

The office of the High Commissioner will be made a centre from which not only information about New Zealand may be obtained by the people of Great Britain, but also from which the business men of New Zealand may obtain information regarding their requirements.

THE PUBLIC SERVICE.

The cost of living has affected members of the Public Service in common with other sections of the community, and the Government, with a view to affording a measure of relief, granted a bonus of £15 to married and £7 10s. to single employees on salaries up to £500 per annum, with effect from 1st January, 1920, but you will also be asked to make further substantial provision for bringing the wages and salaries of public servants, including school-teachers, into line with the increased cost of living. For this increase additional revenue will be provided in the case of the Railways by increased fares and freights, and the Post and Telegraph Department by increased rates for postage and telegrams; the charge for the rest of the Service being met out of ordinary revenues. Such increased payments will, however, be subject to revision as the cost of living rises or falls.

Owing to the retirement of Mr. Donald Robertson, I.S.O., Public Service Commissioner, on the completion of an extended term of office, Mr. W. R. Morris, C.M.G., I.S.O., has been appointed Public Service Commissioner.

The appointment of Mr. Robertson as Public Service Commissioner in 1912 marked the inauguration of the system of non-political control of the Public Service, and it has been due to his ripe experience and sound judgment that the many difficulties connected with the introduction of the Public Service Act and its subsequent administration have been successfully overcome. Mr. Robertson's services to the State have been of great value, and the present efficiency of the Service is a testimony to his administration.