

As stated by the Superintendent in the last report, "this employment being special in its nature, and needing a special apprenticeship, and being one which in many respects does not afford a good introduction to other lines of business, persons who join this office are liable to leave it even for lower salaries, where the new employment offers prospects of greater permanence and future advancement." Much time has thus been spent in the past, in instructing those joining the office.

The work in this office comprises:—

(1.) General superintendence and inspection of the stations in connection with the service; and the fixing of times and methods of observations.

(2.) Testing all instruments and apparatus before issue, supplying the same to the stations and keeping a record of the character, errors and destination of each instrument.

(3.) Supplying forms, tables, instruments, &c., in connection with the registration of observations.

(4.) Examining, reducing, and compiling for publication and reference, the returns from the various observers throughout the Dominion.

(5.) Prognostication of the weather, comprising the issue of daily probabilities and occasional storm warnings.

(6.) Ascertaining the extent of verification of the probabilities, and receiving and recording the reports of storms.

The work has been considerably increased in (3) and (4) by the introduction of new forms to secure greater accuracy, and through the large addition to the number of stations from which reports are received; (5) and (6), with the exception of recording reports of storms, were undertaken by this office during the past year for the first time.

*Inspecting Stations.*—The Superintendent, in former reports, has urged the necessity for the inspection of stations.

During the past year only 24 stations have been inspected. In several cases instrumental errors were found and corrected.

The necessity for more frequent inspection is urgent. In many cases systematic errors have been committed which were detected on the station being inspected, and their occurrence prevented for the future, but which have, in several instances, made the past observations entirely useless and in others seriously impaired the value.

The number of applications from various parts of the Dominion for information with regard to past and probable weather has considerably increased. Some of these enquiries were of a statistical nature, and had for their object the removal of false impressions as to the climate of certain localities, with a view to the increase of immigration and of trade; others again, had reference to the facilities for agriculture, shewing the necessity for obtaining and diffusing an accurate knowledge of the climate of all parts of the Dominion.

There were also numerous enquiries as to probable weather from those connected with shipping, and others whose trade would have been affected by sudden changes in the weather.

Applications having been received asking for daily weather maps with probabilities, it is very desirable that a map similar to those published in other countries should be furnished daily by the Central Office to subscribers for a small yearly or quarterly subscription. It is probable that there would be a sufficient number of subscriptions to pay for the greater part, if not the whole, of the cost of such a publication.

I cannot close this report without expressing my strong sense of the great obligations under which the Meteorological Service lies, to the fidelity and skill evinced by the numerous observers in correspondence with this office.

That portion of the subjoined list which contains the name of the *ordinary stations*, shews how much the service is indebted to unpaid, *voluntary labour*.

In estimating the results achieved by means of the appropriation, it is right to take into account the large amount of information which, through the spirit of the