## EXPANSION OF SERVICE.

Reference has been made in previous reports to the growth of the Public Service, and, in view of the present financial stringency and the consequent necessity to take careful stock of affairs, it is proposed briefly to review the various activities of Government, in order to show whether such have developed beyond the bounds of legitimate necessity, and, having due regard for the social and economic welfare of the Dominion, whether any of the services now provided could with wisdom be eliminated or curtailed. There is a tendency for "short-run" political considerations and the immediate effect from a fiscal point of view to eclipse all other considerations, entirely obscuring the far-reaching social and economic advantages of the services rendered.

In order to understand intelligently the reasons for the expansion of the Public Service it is necessary to have some appreciation of the various functions of the State. The protection from foreign foes, the aiding of the development of the natural resources of the land, the maintenance of law and order, and a due regard for the social welfare of its citizens are the recognized functions of the State. These may be classified under the following main headings: Defence; Transport; Development; Justice (law and order); Social Service; Administration and Trading. It will be seen from the very nature of these services that expansion is a necessary concomitant of the normal development of the Dominion.

Omitting consideration of the first two services mentioned above—viz., Defence and Transport, embracing Navål, Military, Railways, and Post Office—the staffing of which does not come under the control of the Commissioner, it is interesting to note the development as reflected by increased staff that has taken place during the last decade and a half since the Commissioner system of control has been in operation.

Taking first those Departments which may be grouped under the heading of Social Service—viz., Health, Mental Hospitals, Labour, Education and Child Welfare, National Provident and Friendly Societies—the following table illustrates the extent of the growth of the permanent staff:—

|  |              |            | Social    | l Servic | E. |  |       |       |       |
|--|--------------|------------|-----------|----------|----|--|-------|-------|-------|
| Department.                                      |              |            |           |          |    |  | 1913. | 1923. | 1928. |
| $\mathbf{Health}$                                |              |            |           |          |    |  | 54    | 323   | 406   |
| Mental Hospi                                     | tals         |            |           |          |    |  | 413   | 671   | 857   |
| Education and Child Welfare (excluding teachers) |              |            |           |          |    |  | 237   | 287   | 338   |
| National Pro                                     | vident and l | Friendly S | Societies |          |    |  | 11    | 36    | 38    |
| Pensions   |              |            |           |          |    |  | 26    | 97    | 112   |
| Labour   |              |            |           |          |    |  | 68    | 90    | 102   |

It is obvious that unless there is a radical change in policy the staffs of the above Departments must expand with the increase of activities consequent upon the growth of population.

A further analysis of the staffs relating to the Departments included in the above table indicates the direction in which the main increases have taken place. The two principal factors causing the enlargement of staffs as above, in addition to natural development in sympathy with the growth in population of the Dominion, are the increase in the number of patients in Mental Hospitals, and the extension of the activities of the Health Department relating to dental work and school hygiene, &c. The figures may be summarized as follows:—

| EXPANSION OF SERVICE CAUSING INCREAS | OF | STAFF. |
|--------------------------------------|----|--------|
|--------------------------------------|----|--------|

| Department.              |          |     |            |       |  | 1913.     | 1923. | 1928.        |
|--------------------------|----------|-----|------------|-------|--|-----------|-------|--------------|
| (1) Health—              | -        |     |            |       |  |           |       |              |
| Dental nurses .          |          |     |            |       |  | <br>      | 44    | 155          |
| School nurses .          |          |     | • •        |       |  | <br>      | 24    | <b>3</b> 0 : |
| Health Inspectors        |          |     |            |       |  | <br>- 6   | 52    | 49           |
| Professional Division    | n        |     |            |       |  | <br>7     | 46    | 47           |
| (2) Mental Hospitals—Inc | rease ir | num | ber of pat | ients |  | <br>3.983 | 5.120 | 6.160        |

- (3) Education and Child Welfare—Increase due to extension of child-welfare activities, and nationalization of Inspectors of Schools—previously under Education Boards.
- (4) National Provident Fund and Friendly Societies-Increase due to extension of facilities to public.
- (5) Pensions—Increase due to war pensions and natural growth of population.
- (6) Labour Department—Increased industrial development of Dominion necessitating increased inspectorial staff.