

## ECONOMIES IN PUBLIC SERVICE.

	Number of Officers.	Saving, 1930-31.	Saving, 1931-32.	Annual Rate of Saving.
(a) Officers who have left or are leaving the Service without replacement—		£	£	£
Permanent .. .. .	303	17,772	76,974	93,618
Temporary .. .. .	247	6,838	45,878	48,315
Sub-total .. .. .	550	24,610	122,852	141,933
(b) Other savings (by reduction in salaries and allowances, staff adjustments, &c.)—				
Sub-total .. .. .	..	6,351	20,964	17,782
Gross total of (a) and (b) ..	550	30,961	143,816	159,715

Reference has already been made to the great expansion that has taken place in the functions of Government in recent years, and it is proposed to review the growth of staff departmentally to show where this development has been most pronounced. It is Parliament that determines the functions of the State, and it is for Parliament to state whether these have developed beyond the bounds of necessity or, having regard to the social and economic welfare of the Dominion, whether any of the services now provided could with wisdom be eliminated or curtailed.

To obtain an intelligent appreciation of the position it is necessary to classify the various services broadly in conformity with the elemental functions of Government—namely, national safety, transport, development, justice, social service, administrative, and trading. From the very nature of these services it will be fairly obvious that in a young and only partially developed country their expansion is a natural concomitant of the normal growth of the Dominion.

Safety and transport—which include the Navy Office, Military, Police, Railways, and Post-office—are not included herein, as the staffing of these Departments does not come within the scope of the Public Service Act; but hereunder are set out, for purposes of comparison, the figures relating to the growth of staff that has taken place since the year immediately preceding the war and for the current year.

Taking first those Departments which may be grouped under the heading of “Social Service”—namely, Health, Mental Hospitals, Labour, Education and Child Welfare, Pensions, and Provident Funds—the following illustrates the extent of the growth of the permanent staff:—

SOCIAL SERVICE.					1st April, 1914.	1st April, 1931.
Department.						
Health .. .. .	..	..	..	..	66	438
Mental Hospitals .. .. .	..	..	..	..	632	1,093
Education and Child Welfare (excluding teachers) .. .. .	..	..	..	..	248	292
National Provident Fund and Friendly Societies .. .. .	..	..	..	..	18	34
Pensions .. .. .	..	..	..	..	27	104
Labour .. .. .	..	..	..	..	66	96

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, but in most cases circumstances beyond departmental control have necessitated an increase greater than the ratio to the increase in population. For example, it will be observed that the Mental Hospital staffs have increased from 632 in 1914 to 1,093 for last year. During this selfsame period the number of patients in mental hospitals increased from 3,983 to 6,293; but, in addition to this, other factors have necessitated an increase in the staff—for instance, the improvement in the standard of treatment of patients in conformity with the development of humanitarian methods and advanced socio-medicological ideas, and closer personal attention to the patients. Further, increases both in the number of personnel and the total staff salaries are more apparent than real, firstly, because the later figures include a large number of temporary officers made permanent, and, secondly, because a considerable value in emoluments in kind is now shown as salary but did not so appear in 1914. This also applies to many other Departments.