

of this Department, and the only way to effect this is by curtailment of services. In a Department such as this there are no means whereby such reduction can be brought about except by way of a decrease in staff.

997. The numerical strength of the staff has been quoted above as 727. This figure has been taken from the appropriations for 1931–32, but it should be stated that there have been certain reductions in staff since last year, and credit must be given for this.

998. We propose to consider each subdivision of the vote for 1931–32, and to indicate what economies we think should be aimed at.

SUBDIVISION I.—HEAD OFFICE.

Item—Salaries, £30,050.

999. Head Office salaries have increased at least in proportion to the general growth of the Department, although here particularly a reliable comparison with 1914–15 is not available because of the inclusion in that year of the Industries and Commerce Section, the expenditure in respect of which is not separately allocated.

1000. There is now a large staff in the Head Office, and **with a curtailment of services which should be possible without destroying the essential organization of the Department, a saving of at least 25 per centum in the Head Office staff should be effected.**

1001. It is noted that the Permanent Head of the Department has reached the retiring-age, and this provides the opportunity for a general reorganization of the Department. While not wishing to detract in the slightest degree from the valuable services rendered by the present Permanent Head, **we consider it desirable that a non-professional and non-technical administrative officer should be appointed.**

Saving by means of staff reduction, £7,500.

Other Charges for and Incidental to.

1002. There will be corresponding reductions in various miscellaneous items in this subdivision consequent upon a reduction in staff. These, together with other recommendations, are detailed hereunder.

Item—Advertising, Photographs, Books, Newspapers, and other Publications, £300.

1003. This item should be reduced by £75.

Saving, £75.

Item—Board of Agriculture, Expenses of, £150.

1004. In view of its limited functions, we consider that **the Board of Agriculture as at present constituted is ineffectual and should be abolished**, but a Board consisting of three, or, at most, five, members clothed with wider powers might be desirable.

Saving, £150.

Item—Expenses of New Zealand Wool Committee, £70.

1005. This expenditure is non-recurrent.

Saving, £70.

Item—Experimental and Instructional Farm, Ruakura, £7,750.

1006. The continuation of the farming and educational work at Ruakura appears to be unnecessary in view of the operations of Massey Agricultural College and Lincoln College. The accounts disclose that the operations carried on at Ruakura have resulted in considerable losses to the Crown, taking all charges into account, and, as agricultural instruction is now being given at both Massey and Lincoln Colleges, there appears to be little reason why Ruakura should be continued. **We recommend that the educational work should cease at the end of the present term, and that the property be subdivided and offered for settlement at the earliest practicable opportunity.** It may perhaps be necessary to continue the purely farming operations until a favourable opportunity for disposing of the property presents itself. In any case, there should be a reduction of £1,000 on next year's expenditure.

Saving in 1932–33, £1,000 ; ultimate saving, £7,800.

Item—Fuel, Light, Water, Furniture, Office Requisites, &c., £1,400.

1007. This item should be reduced by £200.

Saving, £200.

Item—Laboratory (Chemical), £1,000.

1008. **The Department maintains a chemical laboratory in Wellington, and this appears to be unnecessary duplication, as the Dominion Laboratory should be capable of carrying out the work required by the Department of Agriculture.** The work performed by the chemical laboratory (which costs in salaries and overhead expenses £5,400) should be co-ordinated with the work of the Dominion Laboratory. This should effect considerable savings. A definite saving of £350 for 1932–33 and ultimately larger savings as a result of amalgamation with the Dominion Laboratory should be possible.

Saving, £350.