

SALARIES OF THE HIGHER PROFESSIONAL OFFICERS.

The maximum salary in the scale provided for officers of the Professional Division is £608 3s. per annum.

An officer may, with the approval of the Public Service Commissioner, be paid a salary in excess of this maximum salary subject to provision being made in the annual estimates and the amount being appropriated by Parliament.

What has been said in regard to officers of the Administrative Division largely applies to the higher professional officers, and it is desirable that some improvement in their salaries should be effected.

A comparison of the salaries paid to engineers of the Public Works Department, medical officers of the Health Department, and others with those paid to members of local-body staffs is definitely unfavourable to the officers of the Public Service, taking into consideration their relative responsibilities.

SALARY ADJUSTMENTS.

The question of restoration of salary reductions has been prominently before the public during the past two years. It is proposed to review briefly the various salary adjustments that have taken place since 1929.

In April, 1931, the Finance Act (No. 1), 1931, was passed. This Act made provision for the adjustment of public expenditure by reducing the rates of salary, wages, and emoluments of all State employees as from 1st April, 1931, by an amount equal to 10 per cent. of the rate at which such employees were paid on the 31st March, 1931. Provision was also made that all scales of salaries and increments should be correspondingly reduced. The estimated amount of the annual saving in salaries of permanent officers under the control of the Public Service Commissioner due to the operation of this reduction was £246,690. In addition, all allowances—*e.g.*, travelling, overtime, relieving, special, or higher duties, &c.—were reduced by 10 per cent.

The National Expenditure Adjustment Act, 1932, made provision for the further adjustment of public expenditure by reducing the rates of wages, salaries, and emoluments of all State employees as from 1st April, 1932, by an amount varying from 5 per cent. to 12½ per cent. of the rate at which such employees were paid on 31st March, 1932. The reductions were on the following basis:—

- (a) Where the rate of salary did not exceed £225 or its equivalent, 5 per cent.
- (b) Where the rate of salary exceeded £225 but did not exceed £720 or its equivalent, 10 per cent.
- (c) Where the rate exceeded £720 or its equivalent, 12½ per cent.

Provision was also made that all scales of salaries and increments should be correspondingly reduced. The estimated annual saving in salaries of permanent officers of the Public Service by reduction in terms of this Act was £185,710.

As from the 1st April, 1934, the salaries, wages, and emoluments of State employees were increased by 5 per cent. on the passing of the Finance Act (No. 2), 1934. This resulted in an increased annual charge of £96,350 in respect of the salaries of permanent officers under the control of the Public Service Commissioner.

The net result of the operation of the above Acts on the salaries of Public Servants has been as under:—

Salaries of £680 8s. and over are still approximately 17·3 per cent. below pre-reduction rates.

Salaries exceeding £224 9s. per annum but not exceeding £680 8s. are still approximately 14·9 per cent. below pre-reduction rates.

Salaries of £224 9s. and under are still 10·2 per cent. below pre-reduction rates.

A further general increase of 7½ per cent., as is now proposed, would bring these percentages to 11·1, 8·5, and 3·5 respectively below 1929 rates, or, in other words, omitting any allowance for the proposed increase, an officer in receipt of a salary of £680 8s. and over needed an increase of 21 per cent., an officer in receipt of a