

(2) It is pleasing to record that staffs in the districts and in Head Office have combined very smoothly and have settled down well to their joint responsibilities. District Controlling Officers and their assistants, appointed from different Departments, have co-operated fully with one another and have assisted staff to gain a measure of knowledge of both sides of the Department's work. This has been aided by courses of lectures given in district offices, by notes supplied by Head Office on the administration of various phases of the Department's activities, and by short courses of instruction conducted in Head Office for Controlling and Sub-controlling Officers, most of whom have come from district offices. Other training measures for junior staff have been undertaken by the Personnel and Staff Training Officer, who has also visited every centre to discuss and assist in meeting personnel problems.

(b) Inspection Staff

Part of the purpose underlying the amalgamation of the two Departments was the desire to combine, as far as practicable, the activities of Contact Officers of the National Employment Service with the work of the Inspectors of Factories of the Labour Department. Since inspection work had the most pressing demands, the first step in almost every district has been to transfer Contact Officers (either wholly or part-time) to inspection work, and particular attention has been given to their training as Factory Inspectors by formal lectures on industrial legislation and awards and by actual inspection assignments. The necessity to divert experienced Inspectors to undertake this training programme and the inexperience of staff new to the work has temporarily affected the number of inspections carried out to some extent, but it is expected that the wisdom of this policy will shortly be evident.

(c) Other Staff Developments

(1) There has been a transfer of 261 temporary officers to the permanent staff in accordance with the new policy of the Public Service Commission. This leaves only 75 temporary officers as at 31st March, 1948, compared with 346 at 1st April, 1947. This number will be further reduced as from 1st April, 1948.

(2) The decision to set up a Personnel Advisory Service and the appointment from overseas of a well-qualified officer to develop this is referred to elsewhere. Staff requirements for such a Service are under consideration.

(3) The extension of immigration activities has made necessary the increase of staff seconded to London from New Zealand from 2 to 10, an expansion of the Head Office immigration staff, and the setting-up of small immigration sections in the four principal district offices.

(4) The increase in the number of hostels and camps administered by the Department has required an increase in the hostels' staff (supervisory and domestic) from 44 to 137, an addition of 93.

(5) The strength of the Home Aid Service has risen slightly from 59 to 60, and has been kept at this figure only by the recruitment of immigrant Aids from Britain. It is a matter for regret that the Department's endeavours to extend the operation of the Service beyond the four main centres has not met with the success hoped for. The turnover of Aids has continued to be high, the appointments for the year totalling 67 and the resignations 66.

(6) Notwithstanding these developments, the staff of the Department has increased by only 98, from 799 in the two Departments as at 1st April, 1947, to 897 in the combined Department at 31st March, 1948.