

Thus some 9,900 positions previously held on a temporary basis have been filled by permanent appointments.

All positions still occupied by temporary employees as at 31st March, 1948, are being reviewed. Suitable employees will be permanently appointed, and only the following will remain on the temporary staff:—

- (a) Those whose positions are clearly temporary.
- (b) Those who, although doing useful work, are unsuitable for permanent appointment. This is a small class.
- (c) Those who are over sixty years of age and who are therefore by statute not eligible for permanent appointment.
- (d) Those who are working part-time.

There is a large number of temporary employees under the control of the Commission who are not referred to as such, but who are termed "Regulation 150 employees." They are discussed under the heading of "Employment of Workmen." Some of the positions occupied by these employees will also be filled on a permanent basis.

The appointment of the bulk of the temporary employees to the permanent staff will improve the efficiency of the Public Service. To fill positions temporarily causes dissatisfaction among permanent officers because they have no right of appeal against temporary appointments. Temporary employees become dissatisfied because they have no right of appeal against permanent officers and do not have opportunities for promotion. The uncertainty which temporary employees felt about their future, and the concern of permanent officers at the increasing number of temporary employees, did not make for efficiency. The change to permanence should have a stimulating effect in the Service, especially as former temporary employees and permanent officers will compete for positions knowing that the Commission desires to appoint the most suitable and efficient officer available.

DECENTRALIZATION AND DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

As for some years it may not be possible to recruit sufficient staff, work of lesser importance will fall into arrears, and otherwise desirable proposals must remain in abeyance. Frequently relief can be obtained by sending typing and routine work to branch offices. For its part the Commission attempts to place staff where the need is greatest. Not only because of the staff shortage, but also because it is administratively sound, much more work should be sent to offices outside Wellington. There seems to be a universal tendency to concentrate work in one centre, a stubborn if understandable reluctance to delegate authority. "A democratic people," it has been said, "tends towards centralization, as it were, by instinct"; and "Centralization is the natural condition. The administrator, when found in the wild state, and especially when caught young, will exhibit the characteristic marks of the centralizer, while those of the decentralizer must be sought amongst the older individuals, and, may we perhaps say, the more cultivated strains." It is encouraging at least to note that disbelievers are often converted by experience. Decentralization, opposed at the outset, is, we find, welcomed once it has been achieved. The procedure, if carried out to its fullest extent, would relieve the office and housing accommodation problem in Wellington, would allow officers to be transferred away from Wellington, and should result in more efficient administration.

Frequently because everything has to be submitted to Head Office, Controlling Officers become unwilling to accept responsibility, and decentralization, to be really effective, must be accompanied by delegation of authority. Officers authorized to make decisions on the spot develop responsibility, and often their judgment is sounder than when they can merely recommend. Prompt decisions should be given to the public, and the larger the Department the greater will be the delay if everything has to be referred to the Head Office. An objection is that delegation of authority means lack