

APPENDIX H.

MODERN METHODS IN OFFICE-WORK: EXTRACTS FROM DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS SHOWING THE EXTENT TO WHICH ADOPTED AND THE ECONOMY RESULTING THEREFROM.

[NOTE.—The Permanent Heads were asked to supply brief particulars of the machines introduced, and of the work undertaken by them, during the year ended 31st March, 1914, together with the economy, if any, which has been effected as the result of their introduction, and the estimated economy likely to arise during the year ending the 31st March, 1915.]

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, INDUSTRIES, AND COMMERCE.

The following machines were introduced for the year ended 1913-14: One combined typing and adding machine, and one adding and listing machine with electric drive.

The machines are used to type out the salary abstracts, vouchers (both ordinary and travelling expenses); to total all the Accountant's books; to type accounts issued by the Accountant; to type and total the register of compensation paid for stock condemned under the Stock Act and the Slaughtering and Inspection Act; to total up the annual sheep returns, statistics for Department's annual report, fortnightly produce-export leaflet, &c.

Through being able to have the books added up by the machines it has been possible to arrange the work so as to leave the services of one clerk (salary, £210) free for other work.

I cannot say as yet what economy is likely to arise during the year ending 31/3/15, but it may be possible, in addition to the above, to relieve another clerk when the proposed new system of book-keeping is inaugurated.

THE AUDIT OFFICE.

Two adding non-listing machines and one computing-machine are used in checking the computations incidental to the work of the office. They were in use in the office at the time of the advent of the Commissioners.

There is no information available as to the economy effected during the year ended 31/3/14, or as to the economy likely to arise during the year ending 31/3/15.

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND CUSTOMS.

One adding and listing machine was introduced in April, 1912, for statistical work, and since used upon that work and for checking beer-transcripts. One adding and listing machine introduced in January, 1914, for new statistical system; and also one adding non-listing machine.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

No new machine has been purchased since the 31st March, 1913, but an up-to-date adding and listing machine has been ordered, though it has not yet been supplied to the office. In the meantime, however, this office has on loan a similar machine (without some of the attachments), with the result that considerable time has been saved in doing work which was formerly done on the older machine.

NATIONAL PROVIDENT FUND AND FRIENDLY SOCIETIES DEPARTMENT.

A computing-machine and an adding non-listing machine were introduced in June, 1912, and are performing work in respect of actuarial computations and accounting. One adding and listing machine has recently been placed on loan to the Department, but it is too soon to speak of the result.

The economy during 1913-14 was restricted owing to circumstances of office-accommodation interfering with their full use.

Estimated economy during the year ending 31/3/15, say, one-fourth of one clerk's (at £150) time.

GOVERNMENT INSURANCE DEPARTMENT.

Two combined typing and adding machines have been introduced for the purpose of writing renewal receipts and notices by carbon process.

It is probable that without these machines the growth of business would have warranted some increase in the staff, and I think it may therefore be assumed that the introduction of the machines will be worth about £100 a year to the Department.

PUBLIC HEALTH, HOSPITALS, AND CHARITABLE AID DEPARTMENT.

One computing non-listing machine was brought into use on the 24th July, 1913. Its features are multiplication and division in decimal notation. The machine has been used for taking out average cost in hospital expenditure, the checking of hospital statistics, apportionment of Board's expenditure to levy and subsidy, and to a small extent apportionment of representation.