

extended application, and sums of money were paid in addition to the salaries provided by the Public Service Act to certain officers who were subject to the provisions of that Act.

41. In February last a circular was sent to Departments inviting recommendations for grants for special services. As might have been expected, a number of applications was made, and the whole were referred to a Committee consisting of three Permanent Heads of the Public Service, who made recommendations direct to Government. On hearing of this the Commissioner protested to Government against the proposals as being contrary to the spirit of the Public Service Act.

42. In the Commissioner's opinion, any arrangement under which officers of the Public Service are granted payments not provided by the Public Service Act or the Regulations is liable to lead to the establishment of dangerous precedents, and to seriously interfere with the statutory authority of the Public Service Commissioner.

43. It was pointed out that the Public Service Act contemplated that officers of the Public Service were to be paid one salary for all duties performed, and it was provided by regulation that the Commissioner might pay overtime under specified conditions, and make payment for special duties, the latter being generally interpreted as duties performed for another Department.

44. Eventually the whole of the papers were referred to the Commissioner with a request that he would advise. In some special cases it appeared that the recommendations of the Permanent Heads could not reasonably be taken exception to, the work done being more or less of the nature of war work. In other cases, however, it was shown that the Public Service Act made full provision; that the regrading under action should reasonably meet the case; that any proposals on account of overtime should be dealt with under the Public Service Regulations; that several of the officers had been regraded last year, and so on. At least three officers were already receiving allowances under the Public Service Regulations for the same work for which the special payment, irrespective of the provisions of the Public Service Act, was recommended.

45. It was also pointed out that the Commissioner could not see how the regrading of officers could be effected if they received payments from other sources than those provided by the Act. As a decision was not arrived at by Government when the regrading was being finally completed, the Permanent Heads who had made the recommendations were informed of the position, and of the difficulty in regrading the officers who had been recommended for special payments. On consideration the Permanent Heads, practically without exception, decided to withdraw their original recommendations for the special payment.

TEMPORARY OFFICERS.

46. Owing to the absence of officers on military duty, the creation of Military Departments, and the expansion of business in some of the more important Departments, a large number of temporary clerks has had to be employed. On the 1st April, 1919, there remained 502 male and 748 female temporary clerks, of whom 215 males and 498 females were employed in the War Departments, which, from now onwards, should show a progressive reduction of staff.

There are thus 287 male and 250 female temporary clerks in established Departments, but these, it is anticipated, will be considerably reduced when all officers absent with the Expeditionary Forces have resumed duty. There are also 118 shorthand-writers and typists who are on the temporary staff of the established Departments, but the majority of these will be required, and will be retained if they are able to pass the necessary tests.

47. On the whole, it may be regarded as very satisfactory that the number of temporary officers in the established Departments is, after over four years of war, so small in comparison with the number of permanent officers. As it happens, the business in several Departments has been extended since the Armistice, so that it may be some time before any perceptible reduction in the number of temporary employees can take place. Every consideration will be given to these officers, many of whom have been employed for a considerable portion of the war period and have given excellent service.