

the control of the Service should change from political to non-political by the appointment of Commissioners by the Governor-General.

The Royal Commission attributed most of the defects in the Public Service to a lack of uniformity, and, in order to achieve a unified and central control, declared that the first duties should be :—

- (1) To prevent irregular methods of entry into the Public Service.
- (2) To promote officers within the Service and transfer them freely between Department and Department.
- (3) To value every position and pay officers salaries commensurate with their responsibilities.

On the appointment of the Commissioners their attention was immediately directed to giving effect to the principles established by the Commission and adopted by the Act of 1912. In the first few years they were able to eliminate almost entirely the main causes of unrest and inefficiency. No longer did a group of officers in one Department observe with irritation that a group of similar status, and performing similar work in another Department, was receiving considerably more by way of remuneration than was the former. No longer did they find their hopes and ambitions of promotion cut off by the introduction of strangers from outside the Service. The practice by which they were debarred from entering any Department other than the one to which they had committed themselves as boys when they left school was abolished. Their positions were classified, they knew exactly where they stood in the Service in relation to others, and they saw the way along which they might earn their promotion. In a brief summary we can say that the main advantages that have accrued to the Public Service and directly to the State as a result of the enactment of the Public Service Act and the appointment of Commissioners have been as follows :—

- (1) The grading of the Public Service has been placed on a basis which has resulted in a higher standard of efficiency. Examination status determines the right of entry, which gives an equal opportunity to all to enter and to proceed from the lowest to the highest positions by merit and ability.
- (2) It opens the avenues of promotion by enabling the interchange of officers between one Department and another, and thereby creates a healthy rivalry among officers of the whole Service.
- (3) A regular system of classification of officers is instituted which fixes their salaries in accordance with the value of the duties they perform and gives them regular increments of salary up to the determined maximum, subject to their good conduct and efficient service.
- (4) The revaluation of positions that have increased or decreased in value is allowed, and a general regrading of the whole service at intervals of not more than five years is provided for by the legislation.
- (5) Vacancies within the Service are notified to officers, thus affording them the opportunity of applying if they so desire.
- (6) What is exceedingly important to every officer in the Service is the protection afforded by right of appeal to an independent tribunal in respect of the grading of his position or against his non-promotion, and also against any penalty that may have been imposed upon him.
- (7) The Commissioners are able to ensure that measures for economy and efficiency are applied to the Service as a whole, or to any section of it.

A very definite advancement was made in the administration of the Public Service by the passing of the Public Service Amendment Act of 1927. This Act was brought into force after fourteen years of experience of the operation of the original Act and after very careful consideration of the principles embodied therein. The outstanding feature of the amending Act was section 8, whereby the principle was enunciated that promotion of officers in the Service should be determined primarily by their relative suitability and efficiency. So important is this principle that we have taken the opportunity later in this report to enlarge upon it at some length.

REGRAIDING OF PUBLIC SERVICE.

Since control of the Public Service by Commissioners was instituted in 1913 the Service has been regraded five times. The last regrading, which was in process when we last reported, was one of unusual magnitude. In the first place, the quinquennial interval had been extended to eight years; and, again, during that period there had occurred remarkable changes and expansion in the Public Service