

from junior rank through all the offices to that of Commissioner. During his comparatively short term of office he participated in the most comprehensive reclassification of the Public Service that has ever been undertaken. The general satisfaction with which this work was received was in itself a testimony to his exact and various knowledge not only of the functions of the Public Service, but also of the personnel. In his desire to acquaint himself with officers and employees and with their duties, he penetrated into the remotest locations at which the public servants are stationed. His memory of individuals never ceased to astonish. Mr. Mark was intent always upon any progressive measures that tended to make the Public Service more efficient and better fitted to discharge its functions in the State. He believed in the need for better-qualified and better-trained personnel, and sought every means to secure these ends. Much of his planning was seriously hampered by the outbreak of war, but one of his insistent aims was to push on with these measures with even greater determination. He perceived that there would be a tendency to slacken in endeavours of this nature in face of the great difficulties arising out of war. His firm dictum was that efforts along these lines were even more necessary than in times of peace. During Mr. Mark's regime, many advances had been brought about in methods of management and systems of work, particularly since the war began. He devoted untiring efforts towards better ways of doing work and towards saving staff and equipment. The heavy burdens placed upon the Public Service Commissioner by the organization of war Departments and heavy staff losses, with consequent adjustments and temporary additions, imposed great strain upon Mr. Mark. To all of this work he gave his whole-hearted and devoted service. His death would have been a severe blow at any time, but at this particular juncture, when so many matters of high importance were in train, his passing was a serious loss both to the Public Service and to the State.

INSPECTION OF DEPARTMENTS.

A certain amount of inspectional work has been carried out during the year, but it has been impossible to adhere to the programme of intensive inspection originally contemplated owing to increasing difficulties caused by the war. The major problems as to staffing and organization of work arise in Wellington or can be more effectively dealt with here in collaboration with the administrative and senior executive officers of Departments.

What inspection work has been done has proved to be of considerable value both to this Office and to the staffs concerned. It has provided a better knowledge of officers and groups of employees, particularly those located in country districts, their work, their conditions of employment, and, in consequence, a clearer understanding of their problems. It has also enabled suitable selections to be made at short notice of officers required for special positions demanding particular personal and other qualifications. Many such positions arise in the war Departments or in Departments involved in war work. Another important phase of inspectional activities has been to ascertain to what extent women can be substituted for men for the duration of the war and to survey the state of the market for female clerical workers in various towns throughout the Dominion.

It has been possible to effect staff savings in some of the smaller country towns by arranging for clerical and typing staffs to service two or more Departments. This question is, of course, bound up with that of office accommodation. To achieve satisfactory results it is necessary that the Departments involved be located in the same building or at least in close proximity to one another.

Other benefits which have accrued from departmental inspections are the improvement and standardization of office systems and methods. It is sometimes found that there is lack of uniformity in this respect, even in the district offices of the same Department, and in such circumstances immediate steps have been taken to effect the requisite improvements for the purpose of increasing efficiency and preventing waste of time and labour.

One of the greatest advantages of departmental inspections from the viewpoint of staff is the opportunity afforded them of full and free discussion of their individual cases.