

A point not generally realized is that most Acts passed by the Legislature directly or indirectly add to the number of public servants.

COST-OF-LIVING FIGURES AND SALARY SCALES.

The following table shows the variation in cost-of-living figures and the salary scale for Class VII officers—*i.e.*, the lowest grade of clerical employee. The cost-of-living figures are those of the Government Statistician (all groups combined—food groups, rent, fuel and light, clothing, drapery and footwear, and miscellaneous).

Year.					Increase per Cent. over July, 1914.	Maximum of Class VII. £
1920	..	..	..	..	.. 62·3	320
1921	..	..	..	..	.. 64·6	320
1922	..	..	..	..	.. 51·6	295
1923	..	..	..	..	.. 52·7	295
1924	..	..	..	..	.. 56·7	295
1925	..	..	..	..	.. 59·9	295
1926	..	..	..	..	.. 60·8	295
1927	..	..	..	..	.. 59·4	295
1928	..	..	..	..	.. 60·2	295
1929	..	..	..	..	.. 59·9	295
1930	..	..	..	..	.. 56·2	295
1931	..	..	..	..	.. 44·3	265
1932	..	..	..	..	.. 33·4	239
1933	..	..	..	..	.. 26·6	239
1934	..	..	..	..	.. 28·7	251
1935	..	..	..	..	.. 33·3	270
1936	..	..	..	..	.. 37·6	295
1937	..	..	..	..	.. 47·0	305
1938	..	..	..	..	.. 51·4	305
1939 (April)	..	..	..	..	.. 54·8	305

It cannot be said that the cost-of-living figures at present justify any alteration in this salary scale, particularly when it is realized that under the present policy efficient Class VII officers after two years' service on £305 are permitted to proceed to the next class (salary £320) with maximum salary of £335.

One matter in this connection, however, that is giving the Commissioner cause for concern is the difficulty in securing housing accommodation. This has always been difficult in Wellington, and the matter has not been improved by the approach of the Centennial Exhibition and the consequent influx of people to the capital city. Public servants at present stationed in district offices view with considerable alarm any prospect of transfer to Head Office. When an officer is transferred to a new centre and is unable to obtain housing accommodation it is the practice to pay, for a limited time, an allowance based on the difference between actual expenses and 60 per cent. of the officer's salary.

TRAINING AND TESTING OF OFFICERS.

Latterly much thought has been given to the matter of training of officers in the Public Service with the object of improving the methods which have hitherto obtained in some Departments and of expanding the scope and purpose of training.

It has now become possible to embark upon what may yet prove to be one of the most important departures since the Public Service Act of 1912 formulated the basis for the present organization of the Service. As a preliminary step a senior officer has been appointed as Superintendent of Staff Training, and he will co-ordinate the efforts in the various Departments. Certain fundamental principles have been propounded, and these will be observed in the future programme of staff training and testing.

The first principle that has been enunciated is that the training of every entrant to the Public Service will be supervised from this office, and every officer will be given equal opportunity of displaying his capacity of mind and character. The responsibility of training within each Department will be in the hands of a personnel officer under the jurisdiction of his Permanent Head, and in most cases with the general guidance of a staff committee. In the capacity of personnel