

large, judging from the published figures. In 1902-03, the administrative expenses of the Local Government Board were estimated at £220,323, of the Home Office £152,356, of the General Register Office £54,524, of the Privy Council Office at £23,390, and a grant of £15,300 was made to the Meteorological Office; or nearly half a million yearly; and this is only a portion of the Civil Service Estimates.

Such disbursement has grown naturally in the evolution of state affairs, and has long ago been recognized as wise. It cannot be denied, even closely studying economy by the redistribution of the duties of the departments, with due regard to their best interests, that the creation of such an official and staff would entail considerable further expenditure of public money. A Minister of Public Health would receive a salary of three to five thousand a year, and from a business point of view would deserve and earn it well, and the necessary and adequate expansion of his staff would undoubtedly call for many thousands more. It must be remembered, however, that such a Ministry would consist largely of already existing officers, who would be now attached to the Health Department. One cannot but be impressed with the annual payment of a grant of £15,300 to the Meteorological Office, and one feels that a country which can afford this can pay also for an improved health service.

The Imperial Vaccination League made the remarkable statement that in London, in the recent epidemic of smallpox, the cost of attempting to isolate the sufferers had been £500,000. Indeed, we may legitimately claim that this half-million of money might never have been expended with a Minister at the head of affairs with proper powers, and in any case it would have been far better utilized in the support of an enlarged Department of Preventive Medicine.

Many years ago Dr. Farr calculated that the average value for all ages of a life was £150. The sum of £150 is too low an estimate of the value of each person restored to working capacity from disablement or death from phthisis. In England deaths from phthisis amount to 60,000 per annum. Lower this mortality by one per cent. per annum only, as a minimum result of increased efficiency, and £90,000, or the cost of your department, is paid for by one small economic gain from the diminution of a single disease. But are not pounds, shillings and pence after all a fictitious estimate of an improved national or even individual standard of health.