

PUBLIC SERVANTS

Statistic of Employees in the Executive Civil Service.

THE ADVANCED AGE PERIODS

The Figures Show That the Government Employs in the Civil Service 4364 Persons From 65 to 69 Years of Age and 137 at Least 80 Years.

WASHINGTON, D. C., April 14.—The employees in the executive civil service are the subjects of a statistical inquiry which has just been completed by the Bureau of the Census. The results of this inquiry are published in Census Bulletin 94, which was prepared by Lewis Meriam, acting chief of the division of revision and results.

On July 1, 1907, according to this bulletin, the total number of employees in the executive civil service, exclusive of persons in the consular and diplomatic service, was 286,902; and of this number 29,103—practically one-tenth—were employed at the national capital.

In the detailed statistical tables it was considered impracticable to include all these employees, in a few cases because the returns were too incomplete, but more often because certain classes are so peculiar in respect to the way they are appointed, or the basis on which they are paid, that their inclusion would have impaired the value of the statistics for the remaining classes. The most important classes omitted for this latter reason include 62,663 postmasters, 18,376 mechanics and laborers in navy yards and naval stations, 12,850 clerks in post offices not having free delivery, and 1,031 occasional employees of the Weather Bureau. Data for 4,584 employees of the Isthmian Canal Commission employed on the Isthmus were too incomplete to be included. As the net results of all omissions, the total number of persons treated by the Bureau of the Census as employees in the executive civil service is 185,874.

Of these 185,874 persons, 25,351 are employed in the District of Columbia, while 160,523 are employed elsewhere. Although the total number of employees in the District is thus less than one-sixth of the total number elsewhere, the number of women in the District exceeds the number elsewhere by 895. Of the employees in the District 7,358 are women, or almost 3 to 10, while of the employees elsewhere but 6,463 women, or 1 in 25. This difference is mainly to be attributed to the fact that in the District a far larger proportion of the positions are suitable for women than is the case elsewhere.

Of the total number of Government employees, 156,021, or 83.9 per cent, are native whites; 18,525, or 10 per cent, foreign born whites; and 11,328, or 6.1 per cent, colored. Of the colored, 8,352 are negroes, 1,725 Indians, 1,047 Filipinos, 142 Chinese, and 62 Japanese. In the District of Columbia, 2,785 of the employees are negroes. That is to say, at the national capital 1 Government employee in 9 is a negro.

One of the most interesting questions considered in the bulletin is that of the age of the employees. One-half of them are under 36.5 years of age. In the District the median age is slightly higher, being 38.8 years, while elsewhere it is but 36.2.

The advanced age periods are, however, more interesting than the medians. The figures show that the Government employs in the civil service 4,364 persons from 65 to 69 years of age; 1,557 from 70 to 74 years; 465 from 75 to 79 years; and 137 at least 80 years of age. These figures give a total of 6,523 employees in the executive civil service who are 65 years or over. Of this number, 1852 are employed in the District of Columbia and 4,671 elsewhere. Although less numerous in the District than elsewhere, employees of advanced age form a much larger proportion of the force in the District than they do of the force elsewhere. In the District practically 1 Government employee in 14 is at least 65 years of age, while elsewhere the corresponding figures are but about 1 in 34.

In an effort to determine whether these figures represent any special tendency for Government employees to remain in service after persons in other walks of life would have retired the Census bulletin compares the ages of the Government employees with the ages of all breadwinners

at the census of 1900, and reaches the conclusion that the tendency to remain in the Government service after reaching advanced age is not unusual, except, perhaps, among the male employees in the District of Columbia.

NEED OF MORE RAILROADS.

The country's need of more railroads, of the double-tracking of present lines, of more rolling stock, is in no wise changed by present financial conditions. Even if there should be a slight let-up in traffic, this would not change the fact that our transportation facilities are wholly inadequate to the volume of our trade and that the country is rapidly growing while the railroads are not. The late Senator Gorman of Maryland, 10 or 15 years ago, very wisely said that "the greatest problem before the people of America is that of distribution." Distribution, of course, implies transportation. Every day since then has emphasized the correctness of Senator Gorman's judgment. Under such conditions the cost of transportation is of far less importance, than the question of securing the facilities needed. We already have, by far the cheapest railroad freight rates in the world—rates that are the marvel of the people of European countries. What we need now is not low rates, freight or passenger, but a vast increase in facilities for handling business. Of all the absurd movements of the last 12 months in the railroad and political worlds nothing else quite equals the effort to force down railroad rates. It is almost puerile in its shortsightedness. It has cost our country billions of dollars without a redeeming thing to the credit side. Money for railroad expansion cannot possibly be had under present conditions. Infinitely better would it be for the whole country if the people would recognize that, instead of reducing rates, the railroads must be given full authority to make a general advance in rates commensurate with the increased cost of doing business. The railroad business must be given an opportunity to make profits large enough to tempt capital from everywhere to seek investment in railroad securities. Men are not going to put their money into such enterprises subject to the dangers of legislation—and they would be foolish if they did so—unless the profit is great enough to justify such risks. To attempt to limit the earnings to 6 per cent, or even 10 per cent, or to any fixed amount, is not only absurd, but economically false, for any attempt to limit the earnings of legitimate business undertakings will inevitably react and cost the country far more than the difference between a fixed income and the profit which might otherwise be made. There own preservation would necessarily require of the railroads as favorable rates as could be given with safety for themselves and their future.

Of recent years the public seems to have come to the conclusion that men with bulging bank accounts are waiting eagerly for an opportunity to put money into railroad securities, though the control of the railroads is taken from them, and though other people who have no interest in them are given authority to fix the rates at which they can do business. The idea is very fallacious. The capital needed for railroad expansion is not going to seek railroad investment, but railroad men must seek the capital with diligence. It must be presented in such a way as to indicate profits large enough to justify the risk, or otherwise those who have the bulging bank accounts will keep their money themselves or else put it in securities over which they do have some control. As a field for investment the railroad is no longer an attractive proposition, and this, too, comes at a time when never in our history do we so much need money for railroad expansion. It is quite within bounds to say that during the next five or six years this country ought to spend \$1,500,000,000 a year in the enlargement of railroad facilities. We ought within the next five or ten years to put one-half as much money into the enlargement of railroad facilities as the total amount now represented in all the stocks and bonds of the railroad of country. Where is so vast a sum to come from? If it should not come, then business will be halted, railroad facilities will grow steadily worse instead of better, and the country will suffer as it has suffered for the last few years because the railroads are unequal to the volume of traffic. The country holds its hands up in horror, and justly so, at the disastrous railroad wrecks, but railroad wrecks happen to a considerable extent because the volume of traffic is large beyond the facilities of the railroads, and partly, too, because men have been taught during



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the last few years to seek to get as much as possible and gave as little of faithful work in return as possible. While railroad employees generally are faithful to their trust, some inefficient men, without a sense of their responsibility, have eagerly grasped at this teaching and feel that the railroads and the world at large owe them a living whether they earn it or not, and the anti-railroad agitation is largely responsible for this. Until these two things have been changed the railroads must labor under tremendous disadvantages. Railroads must be enabled by large earnings to practically rebuild the whole railroad system of the country. They must be made so profitable that money will find in railroad construction a most attractive field for investment, for until this condition prevails it will be impossible to secure the capital needed for the expansion of railroad facilities, so essential, so supremely essential, to the best interests of the country.

The politicians and the agitators, as well as the people of the country at large, may as well see the situation and meet it squarely with full recog-

inition of this condition of affairs, for until they do there can be no thorough marked revival in railroad construction on a scale commensurate with the needs of the country. People may theorize as much as they please; they may say that railroads must be forced to expand, that they must be capitalized at exact cost; that the promoter's and the banker's profits must be eliminated; but they will wait till doomsday before they secure railroads on these conditions. The only possible chance for railroad construction on a large scale is to make investment in railroad enterprises and railroad securities more attractive than can be found by large capitalists anywhere else in the world.—Manufacturers' Record, December 26, 1907.

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