

REHABILITATION

Although rehabilitation is not complete, considerable progress has been made, and this has been greatly assisted by the attitude of the ex-servicemen themselves. With few exceptions they have quickly overcome any difficulty they had in attuning themselves to civilian life and work, and have displayed a keenness to make good their loss of experience. The energy they have shown in pursuing educational courses and the results already achieved have been impressive. For many ex-servicemen, war service has hastened the uncovering and development of latent capacity. This, coupled with their keenness to make full use of educational facilities, is proving most beneficial to the men and to the Public Service. Grievances relating to promotion and other conditions of employment have been adjusted where it has been established that an ex-serviceman has been prejudiced by his absence from the Department. In some cases it has been difficult to determine what would have been the position of the officer had he not entered the Armed Forces, but the policy has been to give ex-servicemen the benefit of the doubt in the marginal cases. For those ex-servicemen who are obliged to take sick-leave because of disabilities arising from military service, the leave is granted on two-thirds pay for a total period of two years. This should provide for most ex-servicemen in this category, but the exceptional case will be given sympathetic consideration.

SHORTHAND-TYPISTS

There is a great need for shorthand-typists. In some Departments, especially in Wellington, the shortage is very acute. This shortage is not confined to the Public Service, and there is no immediate solution to the problem. Office assistants and other employees in the Public Service have been encouraged to attend a training school establishment in Wellington so that they may become efficient typists, and hostel accommodation has been provided to encourage experienced shorthand-typists to come to Wellington. The Commission is employing every possible device for making the best use of a shorthand-typist's time, and where they can be efficiently used, dictaphones and other suitable machines will be installed to alleviate the position.

TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES

One of the major problems facing the administration during recent years has been that of bringing temporary employees on to the permanent staff. It has been clear that the services of a large number of them would be required indefinitely, and that many of them were fully qualified for appointment to the permanent staff. Others who did not have an examination qualification were anxious to pass one. During the war it would have been impossible to bring these temporary employees on to the permanent staff without doing an injustice to men overseas.

The Public Service Amendment Act, 1946, in addition to providing for the administration of the Service by a Commission, also provided the machinery whereby temporary employees who were occupying permanent positions as at 1st November, 1946, became eligible for appointment to the permanent staff. The legislation had the approval of the Public Service Association, the rights of permanent officers were safeguarded, and rights of appeal are given both to permanent officers and to temporary employees. The task is an immense one, involving policy decisions by the Commission. A large number of above-basic-grade positions will be advertised about the middle of the year. There are also many temporary employees who will be appointed to positions in the basic grade. The intention is that this work should be completed during 1947. The placing of temporary employees on the permanent staff should solve a number of administrative difficulties and improve the efficiency of the Public Service.