

It is regretted that it must be stated that the staff records of several Departments appear to have been kept in an unsatisfactory condition. This gave a maximum of trouble while the classification was being framed, and even now that the list has been issued many officers are directing attention to omissions and errors which would have been avoided if Departments had given proper information in the first instance. It is intended to place all staff records of Departments on a uniform footing forthwith.

The report of the committee is contained in Appendix A to this report.

REGULATIONS.

A distinct want in the Public Service for many years had been regulations adapted to present conditions; and, as it was impossible to conduct the Service without these, it was considered necessary to devote a considerable portion of the time between the beginning of January and the 1st April, when the main provisions of the Act came into force, to the preparation of regulations.

The Public Service had been working on the regulations of 1873, to which few amendments had been made, except as regards travelling-allowances. While these regulations, no doubt, met the requirements of forty years ago, the conditions of employment had changed enormously, and the expansion of Government business in directions at that time undreamed-of had the effect of rendering the regulations more or less a dead-letter so far as officers were concerned. The regulations which were issued on the 27th March, 1913, were the outcome of a careful study of the Public Service Regulations of Australia and elsewhere, and were finally settled after conference with heads of Departments.

Further special regulations applicable to special Departments have also been drafted, and are under consideration.

The main point which has been kept in view has been the principle of obtaining, as far as possible, uniformity of practice in the different Departments, and it is hoped that Departments will encourage this to the fullest extent. Very great assistance was given by the committee of heads of Departments who reviewed the draft regulations, and whose experience enabled them to suggest valuable improvements and additions. One of the many points dealt with in the regulations was the placing of sick and other leave on a reasonable footing. It is said that in the past the treatment of this matter varied considerably.

Prior to the 1st April last no officer could in theory receive a salary higher than £200 until he passed the Senior Examination. As explained elsewhere, this applied only to men who had entered the Service by competitive examination, while officers who had entered as temporary clerks were not barred.

It was considered necessary to provide special increments for passing examinations such as the Civil Service Senior, the Solicitors' Examination, the Accountants' Examination, &c. In addition to this, it has been provided that officers who reach the top of Class VII (£220), and for whom no promotion is available, are, if they have passed all examinations required for promotion beyond the class above, allowed to proceed to £245 without promotion.

The provision for special payment to officers temporarily performing higher duty than their ordinary work removes a long-standing grievance.

Owing to the increased cost of living, it was necessary to provide for lodging-allowances on a more liberal basis than heretofore. Clerical cadets living from home receive £28 per annum in addition to their salary of £50. This is not too much for a lad to maintain himself upon respectably in the larger cities. Following the example of the Post and Telegraph Department, provision was made for a grant to officers of the General Division who had been in the Service fifteen years or more, and whose salaries do not exceed £180 per annum, of long-service pay of £9 per annum.

A section of the regulations provides for the conduct of the election of members of the Board of Appeal, and it is satisfactory to know that in the election recently held the provisions were found to be sufficient.

OFFICERS' ASSOCIATIONS.

Since the coming into force of the Public Service Act official recognition has been granted to the New Zealand Civil Service Association and the Post and Telegraph Officers' Association.