

Agricultural Bursaries.

Towards the end of the year 1916 arrangements were made in co-operation with the Agricultural Department for the granting of agricultural bursaries to qualified candidates in order to enable them to obtain the necessary practical training for positions as teachers or agricultural instructors, as officers of the Department of Agriculture, or as farmers. After completion of their training the bursars will be under a legal obligation to serve for a term of three years in one or other of these capacities.

Bursaries will be tenable at an experimental farm or other approved institution for two years, with a possible extension to a third year. The qualification for a bursary will be Matriculation or a higher or lower leaving-certificate, and the bursars will, if possible, be required to have received agricultural instruction during their secondary-school course.

Provision will also be made in connection with the agricultural-bursary scheme for selected ex-students of training colleges to receive training, if they desire, along with the other agricultural bursars, but for somewhat shorter periods.

The proposed payment to bursars is £20 per annum, with free tuition and, if the bursar is obliged to live away from home, a lodging-allowance of £30 per annum. The bursaries will be first awarded in 1917.

THE WORKERS' EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

In the distribution to University colleges of the moneys received by the University from the National Endowment Fund, £300 was allocated in each case for the establishment and maintenance of the Workers' Educational Association tutorial or University extension classes. Branches of this association have been established in six of the larger towns, and tutorial classes in such subjects as economics, history, industrial law, English, electricity, debating, and chairmanship, conducted in some cases by University-college professors or lecturers, are in operation for the better education of working men and women.

GENERAL.**ANNUAL EXAMINATIONS.**

The annual examinations were conducted by the Education Department as usual for the various purposes of Junior and Senior National Scholarships, junior and senior free places in secondary schools, district high schools, and technical schools, and teachers' certificates. Also, by arrangement with the Public Service Commissioner, examinations were held for admission to and promotion in the Public Service. The examinations were held from the 22nd November to the 1st December, 1916, and from the 5th to the 19th January, 1917, at sixty-four centres.

The following table shows collectively, in comparison with the preceding year, the number who entered for the various examinations above enumerated, the number present, and the number of absentees :—

	1915-16.	1916-17.
Number who entered	10,978	11,858
Number who actually sat for examination	9,453	10,894
Number of absentees	1,525	964

The changes of most importance last year in the circumstances connected with the examinations were :—

- (1.) The suspension for the year of the practice of granting senior free places to approved candidates without special examination on the recommendation of the Principals of the secondary schools attended by them, or, in the case of district-high-school pupils, of Inspectors of Schools. It is hoped that the Department will be in a position to revert to the accrediting system this year and to grant exemptions from examination to pupils satisfactorily completing approved courses.