

SUGGESTIONS BY OFFICERS.

100. The encouragement given to officers to make suggestions likely to be of value in their Department is not bearing the fruit expected. During the past year, however, Messrs. J. F. McKenna and T. N. Price (deceased), of the Valuation Office at Auckland, made a valuable suggestion for applying the photographic process as one of the steps in the preparation of enlarged maps to enable subdivisions of properties to be recorded thereon. The process has been given a trial, with satisfactory results. Other Departments either report that there have been no suggestions worthy of mention or that suggestions have been made which are not defined. It is hoped, now that conditions are becoming normal, that a more extended list may be announced in the next report.

RETIREMENT OF A PRINCIPAL OFFICER.

101. Mr. G. G. Bridges, Registrar-General of Land, retired from the Public Service on the 31st May, 1919. After filling several high positions he was, on the 10th August, 1911, appointed Registrar-General of Land, District Land Registrar, and Registrar of Deeds at Wellington, positions which he occupied with much credit to himself and satisfaction to his Department and the public until his retirement.

INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC.

102. The Public Service suffered severely from the epidemic of 1918. In addition to the large number of absentees, which in more than one Department was as high as 60 per cent. of the total staff at a time, there were 114 deaths. Government treated the dependants of these officers generously by paying compassionate allowance amounting to £9,686.

The large number of deaths outside the Service immediately threw a great deal of work on several Departments, particularly those dealing with deceased persons' estates, such as the Public Trust, Stamp, Government Life Insurance, and Land and Deeds Departments.

The absence of so many of the staff for short or long periods threw the work of most Departments in arrear. This necessitated a considerable amount of overtime work, which was paid for on the basis of hours worked in excess of thirty-eight weekly instead of forty-four. Most Departments were fairly clear of arrears by the end of February, or about three months after the height of the epidemic wave.

EXAMINATIONS HELD DURING THE YEAR.

103. The examinations conducted during the year under the Public Service Regulations have been the usual Entrance Examination, a special examination for Public Service Entrance, the Public Service Senior Examination, the efficiency examinations in the Post and Telegraph Department, a qualifying examination for promotion to first-grade typists, and examinations for admission of shorthand-writers and typists.

Senior and Entrance Examinations.

The Public Service Senior Examination, held between the 6th and 18th January last, was conducted under regulations which came into force on the 1st April, 1915. The only candidates admitted were those who, having entered for the examination in the previous year, had partial passes to complete. Of the 91 candidates thus admitted, 78 actually presented themselves in the examination-room, and 53 were successful in improving their status, and are now recorded, in conjunction with earlier successes (if any), as having passed as follows: Passed the whole examination, 36; gained further success in two or more subjects, 17.

Only returned soldiers will be permitted to enter for the Senior Examination of January, 1920.

The Public Service Entrance Examination was conducted at fifty-two centres between the 6th and 14th January, 1919, having been postponed from November,