

Now that the regrading appeals are disposed of it is opportune to refer to the general question of appeals. After a long experience of Appeal Board matters, one is constrained to the opinion that the constitution of the Board should be amended. In last year's report it was suggested that the present constitution should be altered by providing for a Board with a Chairman and two members only, one to be nominated by Government and one to be elected by the Service. Instead of having two Service members as at present, the Government member and the Service representative would each have a deputy who would act in cases of absence, illness, &c., and on appeals affecting officers in the respective Department with which either of the members was connected. It would require to be laid down that a deputy should have no standing with the Board except when actually functioning as a member of the Board.

The reasons underlying this suggestion are obvious, as circumstances may arise that would prejudice an appeal, or, as experience has proved, cause some embarrassment to both an appellant and a member of the Board.

There is also the consideration of the inconvenience and expense of two Service representatives being away from duty with the Appeal Board during the whole time the Board is sitting; and, further, it is desirable that only one Service member should participate in the Board's deliberations.

It is considered that the Government nominee should be the Commissioner's representative on the Board, just as the elected member represents the Service. This arrangement is analogous to the constitution of the Arbitration Court, which is comprised of a President and two members, one representing the employers and the other the employees. The fact of one member being recognized as the Commissioner's representative would impart to the Board a measure of responsibility, which at present rests exclusively with the Commissioner.

PRIVATE EMPLOYMENT OUTSIDE OFFICIAL HOURS.

Occasionally requests are made by members of the Service for permission to engage in private employment or to carry on some business enterprise in their spare time. From time to time also complaints are received from the public to the effect that certain persons in the employ of the State are engaging in some competitive business on an unfair plane of competition.

As a general principle, it is unfair that a Government employee, who is remunerated from funds obtained by means of taxation, should be permitted to enter into competition to the detriment of his employers, the public. It is also unfair that an officer receiving substantial and regular remuneration should be permitted to engage in outside work in the performance of which he may be depriving less fortunate competitors of the means of livelihood.

It is also quite possible that the carrying-on of private business may be inimical to the interests of the State, in that it may lend itself to fraudulent practices, or impair an officer's efficiency in his public duties.

Section 59 of the Act provides that, except with the express permission of the Commissioner, no officer shall engage in the conduct of any commercial undertaking. This discretionary power has been very sparingly exercised.

CO-ORDINATION AND CO-OPERATION OF DEPARTMENTS.

The Public Service Act contemplates a free interchange of officers between Departments, and this means that the advancement of a promising officer is not confined to the Department through which he happens to enter the Service. This practice allows greater scope to officers of ambition and ability.

Experience has shown that in an organization comprised of many separate Departments, co-ordination and co-operation are essential to prevent overlapping and duplication and to conserve the public funds. The harmonious working-together of Departments is one of vital importance to efficient administration.

It is satisfactory to note the marked improvement that has taken place. As an illustration the position regarding departmental accounts in 1913 is con-