

SALARIES OF MENTAL HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES, PRISONS OFFICERS, ETC.

Statutory provision was made in the Finance Act, 1925, for the recognition for superannuation purposes of the total gross salaries paid to these employees.

The effect of the statute was far-reaching, involving as it did a review of all cases of retirement since the inception of the Superannuation Act. The recognition by Government of the claims of these officers was received with keen appreciation by the Service.

MINIMUM WAGE.

The amount of £209 5s. per annum has remained during the year as the minimum payment to be granted to married male employees of the Service engaged on duties requiring the services of an able-bodied man.

BOARD OF APPEAL.

There were two sittings of the Board of Appeal for the year ended 31st March, 1926. One hundred and eight appeals were dealt with. The result of the appeals was as follows: Allowed, 4; disallowed, 77; allowed by consent, 0; withdrawn, 17; did not lie, 10.

ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS.

The principal examination held in 1925 to test candidates for admission to the Public Service was that of November, when 1,830 candidates, including both boys and girls, entered for examination, as compared with 1,633 in the previous November. Of the number presented, the large total of 1,167 candidates passed the examination, while 622 failed and 41 absented themselves from examination.

The intention of holding a mid-year examination (in June, 1925) had been announced early in the year. The late reopening of the schools, however, consequent upon the infantile-paralysis epidemic, made it necessary to postpone the examination, and arrangements were finally made to hold it in conjunction with the Teachers' Certificate Examination of the Education Department in August. The postponement of the examination and the dislocation of school and class work resulted in a falling-off in the number of candidates. The candidature was restricted to boys only, and 127 entered, of whom 73 passed and 48 failed.

For a recent mid-year examination (held in July, 1926) the number of boys entered increased to 223, and the results recently announced showed that 140 of these passed the examination and 79 failed. By special arrangement, all of these examinations were conducted by the Education Department, in most cases in conjunction with other public examinations, and with consequent saving in the cost of holding them.

The number of centres for the special examinations were as follows: August, 1925, twenty-two centres; July, 1926, twenty-one centres. The November, 1925, examinations were held at sixty-seven centres throughout New Zealand and in two of the Pacific Islands—viz., Suva (Fiji) and Apia (Western Samoa).

A noticeable feature in connection with the candidates for Public Service Entrance, in addition to the large numbers presenting themselves, is the high quality of the applicants, who, speaking generally, are of a more suitable type than those offering a few years ago. It must be remembered that, in addition to those boys who enter for the Public Service Entrance Examinations, many well-qualified students from secondary schools and technical high schools take the Matriculation Examination of the University of New Zealand without sitting for Public Service Entrance, and upon the pass qualification obtained are admitted to the Public Service as cadets, provided that they are not over the age-limit. Lads who have matriculated take precedence over those who have passed the Entrance Examination only. For the first time in several years, more candidates are available for appointment than are immediately required.

In order to give schools which are preparing candidates for examinations sufficient notice of a change in the regulations, an announcement has been made of the intention to amend the Public Service Entrance Examination Regulations, and also those governing the Senior National Scholarship and Intermediate