

ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS.

The usual annual Public Service Entrance Examination for admission to cadetships in the Public Service was held in November, 1927, when 2,362 candidates, including boys and girls, entered for the examination, as compared with 2,096 in the previous November. Of the number presented, 1,117 candidates passed the examination, 1,171 failed, and 74 absented themselves from the examination. The examination was conducted at sixty-seven centres, including Suva (Fiji).

In addition, in November last Senior and Junior Entrance Examinations were held in twenty-six centres for shorthand-typists, for which there were 504 entries, an increase of 112 over the previous year: 377 of the candidates were successful in passing the examinations, and of the remainder 119 failed and 8 did not present themselves.

The Senior Examination consists of a speed test in shorthand at the rate of 110 words a minute, and in typewriting at the rate of forty words a minute; and the Junior Examination is at the rate of eighty words a minute in shorthand and thirty words a minute in typewriting. Candidates are also required to pass a prescribed test in English.

RECOGNITION OF SPECIAL EXAMINATIONS.

It is the practice in the Public Service to grant double increments on the passing of such examinations as the Law Professional, the Accountants' Professional, or a University degree, provided the officer is in a class not higher than Class VI. No such provision exists in the Railway or in the Post and Telegraph Departments, although clerical cadets of the Railway Department already in the Service are granted seniority on passing certain examinations, as follows: Matriculation, twelve months; Public Service Entrance, six months; shorthand-typing, nine months.

While the practice of granting seniority or double increments affords encouragement to an officer to pass an examination, experience has shown that the practice is not altogether a satisfactory one.

It is at present under consideration that the granting of seniority or double increments for the passing of examinations should be done away with, and instead a provision be made to grant a payment in addition to salary to officers who are considered to be of outstanding merit and ability, the passing of the examinations referred to to be taken into consideration in deciding the question of merit and ability.

APPOINTMENTS TO CADETSHIPS.

The regulations under the Public Service Act provide for a Public Service Entrance Examination for admission to cadetships in the Public Service. The syllabus for this examination is based on a two years' course at a secondary school.

By arrangement with the Education Department, the examination is conducted by that Department in conjunction with other public examinations. For some time past it has been the practice to hold two examinations in each year, the principal examination being held in November and a supplementary examination in June.

As mentioned in last year's report, more candidates are now available for appointment than are likely to be required, and it has therefore been decided for the present to discontinue the usual mid-year examination.

The regulations further provide that lads who have gained a higher leaving-certificate or who have matriculated take precedence over those who have passed only the Entrance Examination. A large number of matriculated lads have been offering for cadetships during the year, with the result that a smaller number of appointments are being made from the Entrance Examination pass-list. As indicative of the keen competition for cadetships, it is noteworthy that, of the lads offered appointment fifty-nine had gained a higher leaving-certificate and 219 had matriculated. To enable matriculated lads to be placed on a footing equal to Public Service candidates, the entry age is extended to nineteen.

As referred to in last year's report, it has been arranged with the Permanent Heads of the Post and Telegraph and New Zealand Government Railways Departments that, as far as practicable, appointments to cadetships in those Departments