

The Commissioners are appreciative of the assistance rendered by Departments in the matter of undertaking supervision and arranging accommodation for the proper conduct of these examinations. The examinations will be held again this year.

#### PUBLIC SERVICE EXAMINATIONS FOR SHORTHAND-TYPISTS.

The usual examinations for shorthand-typists were held in November of last year.

The Junior and Senior Entrance Examinations were held in forty-one centres, and there were 1,764 entries, an increase of 125 over the previous year. One thousand and twenty-one candidates were successful in passing the examinations, 724 failed, and 19 did not present themselves.

These examinations are competitive. An order-of-merit list of the successful candidates is prepared for each examining-centre, and appointments to the Service are, as far as possible, made from the local pass-list, candidates who have passed the senior examination being given preference.

The junior examination requires a speed of 80 words a minute in shorthand and 30 words a minute in typewriting, while the senior speeds are 110 words a minute in shorthand and 40 words a minute in typewriting.

There were 236 entries for the Intermediate and Special Examinations; 95 of the candidates were successful, 137 failed, and 4 candidates absented themselves from the examination.

The requirements of the Intermediate Examination are 130 words a minute in shorthand and 50 words a minute in typewriting, and of the Special Examination, 150 words a minute in shorthand and 50 words a minute in typewriting.

One entry was received this year for the Shorthand Reporters' Examination, but the candidate was not successful in passing. This examination requires a speed of 150 to 180 words a minute in shorthand, with not more than 1 per cent. of error in transcription.

The latter three examinations are used for promotion purposes.

The difficulty referred to last year in supplying Departments with efficient shorthand-typing assistance still exists. The position is particularly acute in Wellington.

#### INCENTIVE.

Section 8 of the Public Service Amendment Act, 1927, which enables the Commissioners to promote officers, irrespective of every other consideration save merit, is generally looked upon as being written into the law of the country for the sheer purpose of ensuring that its most capable officers shall come to the top and thereby ultimately lift the efficiency of the Service to greater heights than ever before.

While that is a true interpretation, it is not the whole truth. There is a far deeper and more vital purpose underlying this statute.

As an organization of such ramifications and complexities as the Public Service grows in size, as it is made more secure as a career for its component officers, the greater becomes the tendency towards a deterioration in incentive. The greater the numbers, the vaster is the amount of routine work and more numerous the officers engaged therein; consequently the more acute becomes the peril of destroying the incentive of men to develop their talents and capabilities in the service of the State.

We conceive it to be a very important function of ours, as Commissioners, to keep alive and vital the incentive of the officers under our control. For this reason we would like to vividly bring to the notice of the Service the underlying value of the statute which declares merit to be the true test for advancement.

It must always be our concern to see that there are wholesome incentives to induce officers to give of their best in the interests of the State. One of the chief motives that keeps an ordinary man working diligently is fear—fear of losing his job. That incentive does not operate with any strength in the Public Service. There is an idea that men work for money alone. That is so false that it need not be discussed. A variety of motives may influence a man—ambition, self-assertion, desire for power, service, and good craftsmanship may all be springs of endeavour.