

APPEALS AND THE GENERAL REGRADING.

It will be noticed that out of a total of 656 appeals against the 1937 regrading coming before the Board of Appeal in only 43 cases (including 5 cases where the Commissioners consented to allow the appeal prior to hearing) did the Board consider a better grading justified than that allotted by the Commissioners. The task of regrading a Public Service of approximately ten thousand officers whose activities, widely varying in nature, are divided among more than forty separate Departments is one of considerable magnitude. The fact that comparatively few appeals were allowed would tend to show that the Board of Appeal appreciated that the claims of officers for higher gradings had, generally speaking, been given very careful consideration by the Commissioners. It is inevitable that in a few cases certain circumstances, possibly not fully represented to the Commissioners or their Inspectors prior to regrading, on consideration justify better grading than that allotted.

During the course of the regrading inspections and the hearing of the resultant appeals one of the most outstanding features coming under the Commissioners' notice was the keenness all officers without exception showed as regards their positions. In all cases it could be said that their positions were more to them than just a "job." The duties may have varied from those of a gardener trimming hedges to those of an engineer controlling and directing the efforts of hundreds of men, but the enthusiasm and interest were the same throughout.

UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE EXAMINATION.

Prominence has lately been given to the possibility of abolishing the University Entrance Examination and substituting an accrediting system in lieu thereof. At the present time the University Entrance Examination is the recognized examination in the Public Service for qualifying an officer for advancement beyond Class VI—i.e., beyond £335 per annum. It has been pointed out to the New Zealand University that the Commissioner would be unable to accept a qualification awarded on an accrediting system either for admission to the Service or for promotion purposes. Hitherto the majority of recruits to the Clerical Division of the Public Service have passed the University Entrance Examination. If this examination is largely abolished, the main qualifications for entrance will be the School Certificate and the Public Service Entrance Examinations. The School Certificate is almost equal in standard to the University Entrance Examination, but unless it is accepted by the University for matriculation purposes the result will be that fewer Public Service officers will be eligible to attend University, and ultimately there will be fewer officers with degree qualifications.

FORMATION OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY DEPARTMENT.

The launching of the Social Security Department as a going concern from 1st April, 1939, was a task of considerable magnitude from the staff organization point of view. Approximately ninety positions graded from Class VI upwards required to be filled, and for these positions it was necessary to invite applications throughout the Public Service. Nearly 8,500 applications were received, and to build up a competent and efficient staff it was necessary to select promising officers from practically all Departments of the Service. Although many appeals were received against the appointments made, in only one case was the appeal allowed. This is a cause for congratulation to the advisory Committee appointed by the Commissioner to consider all the applications received.

Although the framework of the new Department came from the Pensions Department and the Employment Division of the Labour Department, many vacancies were filled by transfer without promotion from other Departments.