

O AND M

The O and M movement (for improved organization and methods) was referred to in our last report. Progress since then has been maintained through the agency of O and M Committees in all but a few small Departments. Part-time Committees, however, have limited scope, and it may be better in the long-run to have a full-time specialist on O and M work in each major Department. At present the only Department with an O and M officer on the staff is the Department of Agriculture, and the savings achieved there in time, money, and staff have been gratifying. The Commission's encouragement of O and M in all Departments has stimulated suggestions from the rank and file.

STAFF TRAINING

With the experience gained from organized staff training in New Zealand, plus the cumulative experience of overseas training organizations, we now have a well-tried scheme suited to the needs of the Public Service. In Departments, where the great bulk of training is done, the programmes are closely related to current work, although some attention is given to background. More stress is being laid on the importance of training supervisors and on the need for methodical instruction on the job. T.W.I. (Training Within Industry) methods are being extended. The Commission recognizes that its essential function in staff training lies in planning staff-training policy, in passing on information on developments in methods here and overseas, and in stimulating interest in Departments. This activity is supplemented by a number of training projects that can best be carried out by a central agency. We have continued with our usual programme of courses: some are complete in themselves, and others, like the course in supervision, are designed to provide Departments with a framework on which to build suitable short courses of their own.

EDUCATION

The policy of encouraging officers to improve their education has been continued, and, in addition to awards of bursaries, referred to elsewhere in this report, students taking approved courses are allowed leave to attend lectures (a maximum of three hours per week—five hours in the case of ex-servicemen—being allowed on pay); in some cases leave without pay for the University session is granted to those wishing to study full-time.

The Commission conducts two examinations for the Clerical Division—the Qualifying Examination for employees who have no entrance qualification to the Clerical Division, and the Senior Examination, which until last year was the basic requirement for promotion beyond Class V. Although the salary bar has been removed, this examination is continued as a desirable qualification with a decided Public Service bias. Tuition is provided by the Commission with substantial help from the Education Department's Correspondence School.

BURSARIES

Bursaries in science and engineering were again made available on a competitive basis. Primarily because the fields were smaller, but partly because a higher standard was set, only fourteen awards were made, compared with forty-two in 1949. Internal bursaries in science, engineering, and architecture were also awarded to outstanding technical trainees and engineering and architectural cadets. The progress of all 1949 bursars was critically examined. With few exceptions their selection promise was maintained, and the awards clearly justified. Three bursaries were cancelled and three deferred for a year. Five bursaries were also awarded to officers to complete Honours degrees, and eight officers were sent on full-time bursaries to Victoria University College to take the Diploma course in the newly created social science department of that college.