

however, subsequently asked that the appointment be held over. The matter still remains in the same unsatisfactory condition. It is needless to say that the stores transactions of the Dominion cannot be placed on a satisfactory footing until a proper system of audit has been instituted.

AMENDMENTS TO GENERAL REGULATIONS.

59. During the year the principal amendments made were as follows :—

Regulation 160 (3) (b) provides that officers promoted in the same financial year shall retain the same relative positions as they had before such promotion.

Regulation 173 was amended in the direction of requiring candidates for the Public Service Entrance Examination to pay an entrance fee, which would be refunded to the candidate on his accepting appointment in a Department of the Public Service.

Regulation 201 was amended to enable an officer with not less than twelve years' continuous service on the 31st March, 1913, and who was on that date engaged on clerical duties, to receive a salary of more than £260 per annum. This amendment also enables an officer with the required service to receive special promotion under Regulation 207.

Regulation 215 (a) provides for the payment of lodging-allowance in such cases where an officer is living with a widowed mother whose circumstances are not such as to allow of her giving any financial assistance to the officer.

60. Special regulations were made regarding the training required in connection with the staff in the Dominion Laboratory, Department of Internal Affairs, enabling the officers to attend science lectures at Victoria College.

EXAMINATIONS.

61. The question of establishing special efficiency tests for officers in all Departments, analogous to those which exist in the Post and Telegraph Department, has been under consideration during the year. The present practice, under which the Public Service Senior Examination covers all requirements for promotion, has not proved satisfactory. The examination, in its present form, had to be continued in order to keep faith with officers who had been studying for it, but it is becoming apparent that instead of the examination covering so many subjects, it would be of advantage to substitute the University Matriculation Examination for the purpose of enabling officers to qualify for promotion beyond £260 per annum, and to institute departmental examinations for promotions to higher grades. The question is now under consideration, and will be finally dealt with as early as possible.

Examinations held during the Year.

62. The examinations conducted during the year under the Public Service Regulations have been the Public Service Entrance Examination, the Public Service Senior Examination, the efficiency examinations in the Post and Telegraph Department, efficiency examinations in connection with mechanical appliances, and examinations for admission of shorthand-writers and typists.

Senior and Entrance Examinations.

62. The Public Service Senior Examination, held between the 5th and 19th January last, was conducted under regulations which came into force on the 1st April, 1915, but a last opportunity was given to those candidates who had previously obtained partial success in the examination to complete their passes under the previously existing regulation. The number of entrants was 876, as compared with 989 for the previous year. The fall in the number of candidates was no doubt due in part to the provision in the regulation requiring certificates of practical work in science subjects. There was thus applied to the Senior Examination for the first time a provision which has for some time been in operation in connection with other examinations. Of the 876 admitted at the last examination, 675 actually presented themselves in the examination-room, and 455 were successful in improving