

CLERICAL CADETS AND CADETTES.

As from the 1st April, 1920, it has been decided that the commencing salary for Clerical Cadets and Cadettes fifteen years of age or older, with the Public Service Entrance or equivalent Junior Examination, shall be £65 per annum; and for Clerical Cadets and Cadettes eighteen years of age, with the Matriculation or equivalent Senior Examination, £80 per annum.

IMPROVEMENTS IN CONDITIONS OF NIGHT-WATCHMEN, MESSENGERS, ETC.

Night-watchmen.—The conditions of night-watchmen have been improved from the 1st April, 1919, without any reduction in the annual leave, by the men being granted a day off in each week, instead of a day off fortnightly as obtained previously.

Messengers.—Time off for Sunday and holiday work has been discontinued, and overtime at the rate of 2s. an hour substituted.

OVERTIME.

Overtime, which attained considerable proportions during the war, particularly in the War Departments, has been materially reduced, and it should be possible for Departments to make further reductions. Overtime work is sometimes regarded as an exhibition of zeal, but the Commissioners consider that under normal conditions expenditure for overtime is often the result of faulty management. If reasonable foresight is exercised, and officers are required to work diligently during their hours of duty, there should not, except under special circumstances, be any difficulty in officers performing their work within the official hours. The matter is one which requires careful watching, particularly to see that arrears of work are not allowed to accumulate.

OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION.

The Officers' Association has during the year brought many matters under the notice of the Commissioners, and by its temperate attitude has been of material assistance when it was necessary for the Commissioner to ascertain the views of the staff.

ACCOMMODATION.

The expansion of the Service as the result of the creation of new Departments and extension otherwise has necessitated the provision of additional office accommodation, which is at a premium in the principal cities at present. Unfortunately, the building programme for Departments in Wellington was abandoned at the beginning of the war, and Departments, instead of being brought closer together, are being more widely separated. From the point of view of both efficiency and economy, the question of accommodation is one which should receive early attention.

It is satisfactory to note that in some cases there has been an endeavour to fit up offices in accord with modern practice, but it is most desirable that in any new building the multiplication of small rooms should be absolutely forbidden.

Owing to the number of Public Service Commissioners having been reduced to two during the greater portion of the war period, the Buildings Accommodation Board was one member short. When the number of Commissioners is brought to full strength, one of them should, it is suggested, be appointed by Government to the Buildings Accommodation Board, and the Board should be given much wider powers than it has at present. Necessary rearrangements recommended by the Board are too easily defeated or delayed by the opposition of Departments to the Board's proposals.

LEGISLATION AFFECTING THE PUBLIC SERVICE ACT.

Section 23 of the Finance Act, 1919, made special provisions for the temporary extension of the term of office of the Public Service Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner.

Under the Samoan Constitution Order, 1919, officers of the Samoan Administration were exempted from the provisions of the Public Service Act, 1912.