

officer he will be the liaison officer acting between his Department and the Commissioner's Office in all matters pertaining to the training of staff. It is pertinent to observe that such an officer will have to bring to his task a considerable fund of personal enthusiasm, for no good qualities will accomplish the objective unless the personnel officer has a sincere interest in the welfare and careers of the young men who are committed to his guidance.

Throughout the whole training process the aptitudes and the progress of each officer will be observed and everything possible will be done to faithfully notice deserving officers. My Inspectors have just completed a visit to every centre to ascertain the merits of all junior officers, particularly those who joined the Service later than the average joining age because of the restrictions imposed during the depression upon recruitment to the Public Service. It is my intention to specially reward those among them, who by reason of special merit or previous experience or because of their advanced age, are giving service of greater value than is to be expected from officers with their short service. In a wider and more detailed manner the career of each officer will be in future placed under observation. In other words, a new purpose will be implied in the probation system that has always been a part of the modern Public Service. The system has been directed chiefly to the elimination of the unfit and the ascertainment of the misfits. It will also assist to reveal the best fitted.

It is apparent to the most casual student of affairs that the problems and responsibilities of administration are ever becoming more complex and various. When the foundations of the New Zealand Public Service as we know it were laid in 1912, its administrative functions, regarded comparatively with those of to-day, were elementary. Since that time the front has widened and the functions have been multiplied. The whole conception of the Public Service has been radically altered in the last twenty-five years, and it needs no prophetic genius to anticipate even greater changes in the next twenty-five years. We have therefore to commence now to build anew if we are to meet the situation that is developing for the Public Service of the future.

It has been pleasing to receive and hear the commendation of senior officers of the Public Service and of educational authorities with whom the kernel of the scheme has been discussed. The text of the resolution adopted spontaneously by the advisory committee is printed here as showing the keenness of the members of the committee to be associated with the formulation of the details of the scheme :—

The Committee desires to inform the Commissioner that his action in instituting a scheme for staff training is in its opinion a most valuable and statesmanlike advance towards the improvement of the Public Service and towards establishing the Public Service as a career. The committee is in hearty accord with the Commissioner's project and will do everything possible to co-operate in carrying it into execution.

It is to be hoped that similar goodwill will be experienced everywhere when the practical co-operation of Departments is being sought.

The second matter to which I propose to give systematic and close attention is that of testing the efficiency of officers. Legislative and regulatory powers were provided in the Public Service Act, 1912, to enable the Commissioner to test officers for efficiency and promotion purposes. The powers that are given are illustrated by Public Service Regulation 196 which is quoted hereunder :—

The efficiency tests or examinations referred to in sections 20 and 21 of the said Act shall be held at such times and places as the Commissioner shall from time to time prescribe. They shall be mainly in the class of work performed in the Department or branch of Department in which the officer is employed, and shall be of such a nature as shall from time to time be prescribed by the Commissioner.

These provisions, however, have not been exercised except in isolated cases, but I have now decided to institute a series of efficiency tests that will apply throughout the Service at appropriate stages of an officer's career.

It has always been a matter of profound satisfaction to observe the steadily increasing tendency of officers of the Public Service to obtain academic qualifications. When the régime of Commissioner control of the Service began there were but 241 holders of degrees and diplomas in the Service ; to-day there are above two