

ANNUAL EXAMINATIONS.

The annual examinations were conducted by the Department as usual for the various purposes of Junior National Scholarships; Education Board Scholarships; Junior Free Places in secondary schools, district high schools, and technical schools; Senior Free Places in secondary schools and district high schools; for pupil-teachers; for admission to or promotion in the public service; and for teachers' certificates. The examinations were held in December, 1908, and January, 1909, at forty-seven centres.

The total number of candidates entering for the December and January tests jointly was 6,117, or 573 more than in the preceding year. Of this total the number actually present at examination was 5,519, the difference (598) being accounted for partly on the usual grounds, and partly by the operation of a new clause in the Regulations for Senior Free Places, under which a number of candidates recommended on an accrediting principle therein embodied were exempted from examination, and accordingly did not present themselves. In the several examinations the following were the numbers present: For the Junior National Scholarship and Junior Free Place Examination, 1,765; for the Civil Service Junior and allied examinations, 2,158; for the Civil Service Senior Examination, 373; for Certificate Examinations, 1,223. It may further be noted that thirty-eight of the candidates so recorded were candidates for both Senior and Junior Civil Service Examinations, and that one of the candidates for a teacher's certificate was also a candidate for the Civil Service Senior.

The Department's examination for Junior National Scholarships is now used by all the Education Boards of the Dominion for the award of their Junior Scholarships, superseding thus without exception any examination locally conducted in earlier years for this purpose. For the award of their Senior Scholarships the Boards commonly, but not exclusively, use the Civil Service Junior Examination. Apart from this extension of its functions, the Civil Service Junior Examination is employed for a variety of purposes. Either in its proper competitive form, or with certain modifications in selected subjects to meet the needs of a non-competitive qualification, it is thus used not only as an entrance examination for the Civil Service of the Dominion, but as a scholarship examination, an examination for the Senior Free Place qualification in secondary schools and district high schools, an examination for pupil-teachers of the second or third years, and a qualifying examination for the probationer appointments recently instituted under an amendment of the Education Act.

The following table gives a comparative statement of the number of candidates examined under the principal groupings during the past four years:—

	1905-6.	1906-7.	1907-8.	1908-9.
Junior National and Education Board Scholarships and Junior Free Places ..	790	1,458	1,475	1,765
Civil Service Junior, Senior Free Places, Education Board Senior Scholarships, First Pupil-teachers	1,305	2,123	2,173	2,158
Teachers D and C	749	1,051	1,184	1,223
Civil Service Senior	141	183	231	373
	<hr/> 2,985	<hr/> 4,815	<hr/> 5,063	<hr/> 5,519

Further particulars are given in E.-8.

TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION FUND.

The Teachers' Superannuation Act, which was passed by Parliament on the 31st October, 1905, and came into force on the 1st January, 1906, was amended by a supplementary Act on the 29th October, 1906.

Every person who at the date of the coming into operation of the principal Act was permanently employed for not less than twenty hours a week in the Education service had the option of becoming a contributor to the fund. Such contributors are "original members," and, as such, are entitled to special benefits. Every person so employed subsequently had the option of electing within six months to become a contributor; but all teachers in public schools and in Native and other schools under the control of the Education Department who were subsequently