

returned-soldier members of a special class at that College. Thirty-two candidates presented themselves for examination, and of these twenty-nine obtained passes.

In conjunction with the ordinary Public Service Entrance Examination in November, 1920, a special examination for returned soldiers was held at thirteen centres. Seventy-five candidates entered for this examination, and all except two presented themselves for examination. Of the seventy-three candidates thus examined forty-six passed the examination.

SUGGESTIONS OF OFFICERS.

Public Service Regulation 17 invites officers to submit suggestions having for their object improvements in the methods of work which will tend to increased efficiency and economy.

During the past year very few suggestions of practical value have been received. It is somewhat surprising in a permanent staff of over seven thousand officers that during the past year only two suggestions (both from the Printing and Stationery Department) were received by the Commissioner which were considered worthy of adoption.

Of the number of suggestions received, a large proportion, though of merit, and in some cases quite ingenious, were found quite impracticable. It is felt that in some cases officers defer to making suggestions in view of the possible unfavourable view likely to be taken of same by their controlling officers, particularly in those cases where the suggestions are in the nature of improved or more economical or efficient working of Departments. Every encouragement, however, is given by the Commissioner to suggestions of merit, and officers submitting suggestions which will prove of benefit in improved organization or efficiency will be specially noted for consideration when promotion is offering.

CERTIFICATES OF CHARACTER.

Certificates of character are of importance in enabling the Commissioners to arrive at an applicant's suitability for employment, and it has been requisite for an applicant to supply at least one testimonial from a reputable citizen.

Cases have recently come under notice where unqualified certificates have been given by prominent citizens—in one case the Mayor of an important borough, and a clergyman in the same town—notwithstanding that the candidates had served terms of imprisonment within the knowledge of the persons giving the testimonials.

While testimonials are not regarded at their face value in determining an applicant's fitness for a position, it will be seen that difficulties are encountered when reputable citizens act as above indicated.

DRAWING DIAGRAMS ON TITLES.

It was brought under notice that under the system obtaining in the Land Transfer Office certain contract workers (female) had earned as much as £65 in one month for drawing diagrams on titles. It was pointed out to the Department that it would appear that the rate authorized was in excess of the value of the services rendered, and it was subsequently arranged that the system of contract work, which was not a matter which had been approved by the Commissioner (contract work is not subject to the Commissioner's control), should be abolished, and that junior Draughting Cadets should be appointed to undertake the work. This will result not only in a considerable saving, but also provide suitable work for training junior officers.

REPLACING OF HAND RECORDERS, LAND AND DEEDS DEPARTMENT, BY TYPISTS.

During the year the practice of replacing hand recorders who were employed on a contract basis by permanent typists has been extended throughout the Dominion. The Permanent Head of the Department has co-operated fully with the Commissioners in this matter, and reports that not only is the work being better and more expeditiously performed, but will effect a large annual saving.

Attention is directed to the fact that this is an instance where, although the permanent personnel of the Department is increased, more efficient and economical working has resulted.