

By section 41 of the Finance Act, 1936, provision was made for the appointment of two Public Service Commissioners to hold office jointly. The section reads as follows :—

41. *Providing for Appointment of Two Public Service Commissioners to hold Office jointly.*—(1) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the Public Service Act, 1912, there may from time to time be appointed under that Act two persons to hold office jointly as Public Service Commissioners. Every person appointed under this section shall be appointed for a term not exceeding three years, and shall be eligible for reappointment.

(2) Every person so appointed shall, without further appropriation than this Act, be paid a salary at the rate of one thousand two hundred and fifty pounds a year.

(3) Where there are two Commissioners in office and they differ in opinion on any question relating to the administration of the Public Service Act, 1912, or to the powers, authorities, duties, or functions of the Commissioners, they shall report the matter to the Governor-General, and the Governor-General may by Order in Council appoint a person to consider and settle the question in dispute. In any such case the joint Commissioners shall act in accordance with the determination of the person so appointed. Except as provided in this subsection, each of the joint Commissioners may exercise any of the powers conferred upon the Commissioner by the Public Service Act, 1912, or any other Act.

(4) The fact that any joint Commissioner exercises any power conferred upon the Commissioner as aforesaid shall be conclusive evidence of his authority so to do.

Mr. J. H. Boyes, Commissioner of Pensions, and Mr. T. Mark, Acting Public Service Commissioner, were appointed Commissioners in accordance with the foregoing provisions for a term of three years commencing on the 15th August, 1936.

The delay in filling the vacancy for Public Service Commissioner was unfortunate, as the work connected with the general regrading of the Service could not well be taken in hand until a permanent appointment was made. The result will be that the regrading will not be finalized as early as might be desired.

Mr. G. T. Bolt, Chief Clerk, Public Service Commissioners' Office, was appointed Secretary, Public Service Commissioners' Office, and Mr. S. Roberts, Accountant, Wellington District Office, Lands and Survey Department, and Mr. J. E. Engel, Accountant, Marine Department, were appointed Public Service Inspectors.

GENERAL REGRADING OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE.

Reference was made in last year's report to the fact that a general regrading of the Public Service was pending. By Order in Council dated 23rd September, 1936, the necessary authority was given to proceed with this regrading as from 1st April, 1937, and from the beginning of the present year the Commissioners and the Public Service Inspectors have been interviewing all officers desirous of making personal representations, and investigating their claims. This has been a task of considerable magnitude, but is now practically completed. It was necessary for the Commissioners and Inspectors to cover both Islands extensively, but it can now be said that all officers anxious to place personally their views before the Commissioners have had that opportunity. The visits to outlying districts have served to remove a feeling that officers located at places remote from Wellington are overlooked when promotions and regradings are pending. Although many officers took the opportunity of making personal representations, generally speaking the Service was found to be contented.

One prolific source of representation is from officers or groups of officers who have reached their maximum salary and can see little or no opportunity for advancement. While their point of view can be appreciated, it must not be overlooked that the basic principle of regrading is the value of the work performed. The fact that an officer has reached his maximum and may have been on the same salary-step for a number of years is not of itself a justification for higher grading. In such cases an officer would require to show that the responsibility of his position had materially increased before he could reasonably expect an increment in salary, or he should fit himself for promotion to a more important position.

SALARY SCALES.

As from 1st July, 1936, salary scales were restored to the rates in force on 31st March, 1931. The movement of salaries during the past few years has been as under :—

1st April, 1931 : All salaries and allowances reduced by 10 per cent. by the Finance Act (No. 1), 1931.