

## PROMOTIONS AND SALARY INCREASES.

The question of further improving the position of officers who received an intermediate salary increase at the 1937 reclassification was considered by Government during the year, and it was found practicable to place a number of such officers on the maximum salary of their respective grades of classification. Consideration was also accorded to a number of Overseers of the Construction and Maintenance Branch and Senior Mechanics graded in the Electrical and Workshops Section. In addition, a review was made of Class VII officers in receipt of the maximum salary of £305 per annum, and authority given for a further group to be advanced to Class VI at a salary of £320 per annum. The total number of the salary increases and promotions authorized on this occasion was not far short of seven hundred, the majority being effective as from the 1st April, 1938.

## MINIMUM REMUNERATION FOR ADULT MARRIED OFFICERS.

In order that there should be uniformity throughout all branches of the Public Service in the amount paid as the minimum remuneration for a married officer of adult age, the rate from the 1st September, 1938, was fixed by Order in Council at £210 8s. 1d. per annum.

## APPEAL BOARD.

Mr. H. A. Young, Stipendiary Magistrate, Christchurch, was appointed Chairman of the Post and Telegraph Appeal Board on the 20th June, as successor to Mr. E. D. Mosley, who tendered his resignation on account of ill health. It was with regret that the Department learned of Mr. Mosley's death not long after he had severed his connection with the Appeal Board.

The Board, in one session during the year, handled an unusually large volume of work. Appeals totalling 892 (received from 873 officers) were adjudicated upon, with the following results: Allowed, 15; conceded by the Department, 16; withdrawn, 102; did not lie, 134; disallowed, 625.

The large number of appeals lodged as a result of the reclassification of the Service in the preceding year necessitated the Board's remaining in session for over four months. Although the work of the Board was a good deal more onerous than usual, the appeals were dealt with efficiently and expeditiously, each individual case being accorded careful consideration.

Sittings of the Board were held not only at the main centres, Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin, but also at other places at which the number of appellants warranted local hearings—namely, Whangarei, Hamilton, Thames, Rotorua, New Plymouth, Wanganui, Palmerston North, Napier, Gisborne, Nelson, Blenheim, Greymouth, Timaru, and Invercargill. This arrangement reduced to a minimum the travelling-time of appellants as well as the period of their absence from official duties, and enabled the itineraries of the Board to be planned well ahead in such a manner as not to disorganize the normal working-arrangements of any office or branch. It also gave to the Board the distinct advantage of having within easy call any witnesses who were required to give evidence during the hearings.

## REPORTS ON OFFICERS.

With the object of improving the system of reporting on officers of the Department, a new form of personal report was introduced during the year. The form, while retaining a number of the features of the previous system, was altered considerably. A change of importance was the provision made on form Staff 33 (form of report on senior officers) for intermediate markings to be allotted between the "satisfactory" and "superior" standards. The new form thus permits of a somewhat finer discrimination of the relative degrees of merit of officers. The headings on the reports were rearranged, with the object of grouping separately those which refer to the officer's performance of the duties he is actually engaged upon and those which apply to his potentiality and suitability for increased responsibilities. Provision was also made for the reporting officer to indicate the higher-graded positions in which the officer reported upon could be expected to meet fully the requirements of the Department.

In the case of junior officers of the Second Division who are qualified or partly qualified for promotion, there is now provision for the reporting officer to express his opinion as to the degree of suitability of such officers for employment on First Division duties. The end of the period covered by the new reports was altered from the 31st December to the 30th September. To synchronize with this change, the date of the half-yearly reports on junior officers, previously the end of June, was brought forward to the end of March.

The changes made to the reporting forms necessitated a complete revision of the instructions issued to reporting officers in connection with the preparation of reports. The new instructions set out clearly for the guidance of reporting officers what was required of them, how the markings should be allotted, and the significance, from the point of view of the promotion of officers, of the various reporting terms. The Department in framing its reporting system has always aimed at simplicity, and it can be said that the changes made have not complicated in any way the preparation of reports. In point of fact, reporting officers have a wider marking-scope with the new forms than they had under the old system.

It is hoped that the new form of report will result in a truer differentiation of the respective merits of officers who are in competition with one another for advancement, and that a careful and intelligent study of the comprehensive instructions will bring about a more uniform standard of marking by reporting officers.