

STAFF.

The total number of officers on the staff on the 31st March was as under:—

	31st March, 1906.
Postmaster-General	1
Classified staff:—	
First Division	3
Clerical Division	1,893
Non-clerical Division	471
Telegraph messengers	555
Total, classified staff	2,923
Employees not on permanent staff:—	
Country Postmasters and Postmistresses	1,829
Nightwatchmen	2
Mail-cart drivers	4
Postmasters and telegraphists or telephonists who are Railway officers	171
Total	4,929

COMPARATIVE Return of Officers of the Post and Telegraph Department for the Years ended 31st March, 1905, and 31st March, 1906.

	Mar. 31, 1905.	Mar. 31, 1906.		Mar. 31, 1905.	Mar. 31, 1906.
Postmaster-General	1	1	Brought forward	130	140
Secretary	1	1	Assistant Inspectors of Post-offices	4	4
Superintendent of Electric Lines	1	1	Chief Postmasters	17	17
Assistant Secretary and Inspector	1	1	Postmasters and Officers in Charge on permanent staff	114	118
Controller of Money-orders and Savings-banks and Accountant	1	1	Clerks (including Telephone Exchange cadettes and cadets in post-offices) Operators (including cadets in telegraph-offices) }	1,466	1,618
Chief Clerk	1	1	Post Office Sorters	18	19
Assistant Controller of Money-orders and Savings-banks and Accountant	1	1	Letter-carriers	285	303
Clerks in General Post Office—			Messengers (Post Office)	77	75
Secretary's Office	19	19	Linemen	69	74
Inspector's and Dead-letter Branch	8	8	Telegraph message-boys	525	555
Controller of Money-orders and Savings-banks and Accountant's Branch	73	82	Nightwatchmen	2	2
Storekeeper and assistants	10	10	Mail-cart drivers	4	4
Electrician	1	1	Postmasters and telegraphists or telephonists who are Railway officers	168	171
Assistant Electrician	1	3	Country Postmasters, Postmistresses, and telephonists	1,760	1,829
Mechanicians and cadets	6	5			
Telegraph Inspectors	5	5			
Carried forward	130	140	Totals	4,639	4,929

With the exception of a regrettable breach of duty on the part of three officers, the conduct of the staff as a whole was good.

The rapid expansion of the telegraph business made it necessary to open a school for learners. As there was sufficient spare accommodation at Oamaru that office was selected, and a class of twenty-four lads commenced on the 19th February, 1906. A second class is now in course of tuition.

The principle of filling all clerical positions by promotion from the non-clerical division will have to be restricted to some extent. While promoted non-clerical officers give satisfaction in certain positions in the clerical division, it is becoming daily more evident that the performance of non-clerical work during the more plastic years of a young man's life seriously handicaps him against purely clerical work, such as that of the money-order and savings-bank and other similar branches of chief post-office work. A scheme has been approved under which periodical examinations will be held for vacant cadetships.

His Majesty the King was pleased on the 1st July, 1905, to confer upon Mr. William Gray, Secretary of the Post and Telegraph Department, the Companionship of the Imperial Service Order, a well-deserved recognition of long and faithful public service.

The regulations under "The Post and Telegraph Classification and Regulation Act, 1890," have been amended as regards letter-carriers of the second grade, who are now required to have ten years' service in the Department or class before they are eligible for promotion to the first grade. Such eligibility is also subject to the officer being favourably reported upon as regards competency, conduct, and merit.

Telephone-exchange cadettes with ten years' service or over have been placed in the class of cadettes with a maximum salary of £100 by four annual increments of £5.

To conform with the provisions of "The Education Act, 1904," the regulations issued under "The Post and Telegraph Classification and Regulation Act, 1890," were altered in the direction of requiring that an appointee to a telegraph messengership shall possess a Fifth Standard pass or its equivalent.

No person is now eligible for appointment to the Department if two or more persons belonging to his family are already officers of the Department. The expression "family" includes father, mother, and their children. Not more than one daughter in a family is eligible for appointment as a telephone-exchange cadette.