

and Mr. D. Scannell to a similar position at Hamilton. Mr. F. W. Browne was appointed Assistant Controller of the Mortgage Division in Head Office. I regret to have to record the death of Mr. M. B. Rudd, a member of the staff of the Auckland Branch.

The following tables indicate the number of staff engaged in Head Office and branches on 31st March, 1926, and on 31st March, 1927 :—

*Head Office—*

ON 31ST MARCH, 1926.				ON 31ST MARCH, 1927—			
	Male.	Female.	Total.		Male.	Female.	Total.
Permanent ..	109	33	142	Permanent ..	101	27	128
Temporary ..	23	7	30	Temporary ..	15	7	22
			— 172				— 150

*District Offices—*

Permanent ..	421	46	467	Permanent ..	420	37	457
Temporary ..	21	69	90	Temporary ..	9	77	86
			— 557				— 543
			729				693

It will be seen that the staff decreased by thirty-six during the year.

#### TRAINING OF JUNIOR OFFICERS.

37. On the occasion of my last report I referred at some length to the system which had been established for the training of junior officers in the work of the Department. The training is done by means of special classes in theoretical and practical work. For a time these classes were carried on in Head Office, but owing to lack of space it was found necessary in 1926 to have them transferred to Christchurch, where ample accommodation was available in the new building there. The class does not, however, form part of the organization of the Christchurch office, being carried on independently of that branch under the control of the Head Office. An experienced administration officer with legal experience is the Director, and he has associated with him a qualified estates-administration clerk and an experienced accountant. Details of the scheme were outlined in my last report, and it is therefore unnecessary to deal at length with it again.

The results of the last year's training were highly satisfactory, and a number of junior officers who passed through the class are showing themselves to have profited by the course of training undergone by them. At the expiration of the training-class in December these trained juniors were allocated to the various branches.

Early in the new year a fresh selection of twenty-eight cadets was made, and these are now actively undergoing a course of training. In making the selection cadets of from one and a half to two years' service, who had given indications of developing into useful officers, were chosen. With experience the scheme is being gradually improved, and in time it is hoped to make it even more useful than it is at present. I may state that considerable interest had been evinced in this scheme by business and public men both in New Zealand and elsewhere. Inquiries concerning the scheme have been received from Great Britain, Canada, and the United States.

#### RECORDS.

38. The record system in operation in the Office is a simple but effective one. In the Head Office the record work is centralized and the staff segregated on one floor in a specially equipped portion of the office. By this means the work can be promptly and economically carried out. With such a large number of estates the recording of the correspondence in connection with them involves a great deal of work and attention. A separate file is kept for each estate, and in estates with numerous assets and other matters involving a considerable amount of correspondence separate special files are made for such special matters. It will be realized that many of the estate and other transactions are carried on over extended periods, and therefore the correspondence in connection with them becomes bulky. A system of removing the dead matter and filing it away for ready reference is in force, thus leaving only active matters on the current file. So many have been the estates which have been dealt with and the administration of which is now closed that the accommodation of the estate, accountancy, and other records is becoming an