

COMPARATIVE RETURN OF PERSONS EMPLOYED IN THE DEPARTMENT.

Details of the personnel of the Department on the 1st April, 1937, compared with the position on the same date last year, are as under:—

					1st April, 1936.	1st April, 1937.
Permanent Staff—						
Administration	..	..	..	..	10	10
First Division	..	..	..	..	3,813	4,042
Second Division	..	..	..	..	4,745	5,353
Message-boys	..	..	..	..	730	807
					9,298	10,212
Temporary Staff	..	..	..	..	132	229
Casual Staff	..	..	..	..	164	350
					9,594	10,791
Non-permanent Staff—						
Country Postmasters and Telephonists	..	..	..	..	1,669	1,668
Postmasters who are Railway officers	..	..	..	..	85	84
					11,348	12,543

HEALTH OF PERMANENT STAFF.

The following table shows, in comparison with the figures for the preceding year, the average number of days on which officers were absent on sick leave during the year:—

				Number on Staff.	Average Absence per Sick Officer.	Average Absence for each Officer employed.
Year ended 31st March, 1937—						
Men	..	..	..	9,470	11.48	4.57
Women	..	..	..	742	10.97	5.88
Year ended 31st March, 1936—						
Men	..	..	..	8,659	9.52	3.78
Women	..	..	..	639	11.2	6.81

Twenty officers died during the year. One death was the result of an accident on duty.

PERSONAL.

Mr. G. McNamara, C.B.E., Director-General of the Department, left New Zealand on the 23rd March, 1937, to attend a conference at London in connection with Imperial Communications. During his absence Mr. F. J. Shanks, Deputy Director-General, is in charge of the Department. Mr. Shanks is being relieved by Mr. J. G. Young, Deputy Chief Inspector.

MINIMUM WAGE FOR MALE OFFICERS OF ADULT AGE.

During the years of depression the advancement of junior officers was unavoidably retarded, with the result that many of them on reaching adult age were still in receipt of a comparatively low rate of remuneration. Government appreciated the unfortunate position of these officers, and on the 1st November effected an adjustment of salaries on the basis of age and length of service, the minimum amount payable to an officer at twenty-one years of age being £155 per annum. For each year of service this sum is increased by £10 up to £200 per annum, which is the amount paid at the end of the fifth year. The amounts in excess of scale salary are paid by way of allowance.

FORTY-HOUR WEEK.

The forty-hour week has been applied to all branches of the Department, and the change-over effected without any curtailment of facilities to the public.

Owing to the nature of the services rendered by the Department it is not practicable to eliminate Saturday work altogether, but, wherever possible, arrangements have been made for officers to enjoy the benefits of a five-day working-week. The introduction of the forty-hour week necessitated an increase of approximately three hundred in the numerical strength of the staff.

RESTORATION OF SALARIES.

From the 1st July, 1936, the salaries and wages of all officers and full-time employees were restored to the 1931 level.

REGRADEING OF SERVICE.

The regrading of the Service, which has been held over since the 1st April, 1934, has been fixed by Order in Council to take effect as from the 1st April, 1937.

AMENDMENTS TO THE STAFF REGULATIONS.

On the 23rd December amendments to the Staff Regulations dealing with annual leave and sick leave were made to provide for more liberal treatment of employees. The amendments make provision for the granting of one week's annual leave to temporary workmen after one year's continuous service and two weeks' leave on completion of two years' continuous service. Previously temporary workmen did not receive annual leave until they had completed two years' service.

A change was made also in the basis on which deductions are made from the annual leave of all officers on account of sick-leave and special leave taken in the preceding year, the principal advantage