

PROMOTION BOARD.

Mr. S. A. Ogilvie, Divisional Director, General Post Office, was appointed a member of the Post and Telegraph Promotion Board during the year in succession to Mr. L. L. Hills, who retired from the Service.

APPEAL BOARD.

The Post and Telegraph Appeal Board, under the Chairmanship of Mr. H. A. Young, Stipendiary Magistrate, Christchurch, sat at a number of the more important centres during the year. The session commenced at Dunedin on the 3rd July and terminated in Wellington on the 16th August. Appeals totalling 319, received from 169 officers, were adjudicated upon, with the following results: Allowed, 2; conceded by Department, 5; withdrawn, 72; did not lie, 4; disallowed, 235.

In one other case the Appeal Board recommended that the appellant be allotted the same grading and salary as the appointee.

During the year Mr. A. Robertson, the Postal representative on the Appeal Board, was re-elected unopposed for a further term of three years. Mr. A. C. Wells being the only officer nominated for the position of Telegraph representative, was duly elected. The retiring Telegraph representative on the Board, Mr. G. A. Wilkes, did not seek re-election.

SICK BENEFIT FUND.

During the year 698 officers were granted assistance from the Sick Benefit Fund.

The Fund has now been recognized as a sick benefit fund for the purposes of the Land and Income Tax Amendment Act, 1940, and the Social Security Contribution Regulations, Amendment No. 1. This means, in effect, that any payments made from the Fund since the 31st March, 1940, are exempt from income-tax and from the social security charge and the national security tax.

STAFF-TRAINING.

Apart from tuition in telephone-exchange operation, in Morse and radio operating, and in machine-printing telegraphy, no intensive staff-training for its officers has previously been undertaken by the Department. It is now considered, however, that a comprehensive scheme of intensive training should be undertaken, and arrangements are being made with this object in view. Although it is not practicable at present to introduce the main projects which the Administration has in mind, a start is about to be made with the establishment of several classes in a modified form. These will be given intensive training over specified periods in sub-office duties, in radio procedure and geography, in toll and telephone-exchange operating, and in motor and electrical work. Practical and theoretical tuition in each course will be provided. For instance, in the course for exchange operators, which will cover eight weeks, the trainees, in addition to receiving switchboard practice, will receive, by means of lectures, demonstrations, voice culture, and a course of study, instruction in all other phases of exchange service. The object of the schools will be to provide for the students a sound foundational training which will enable them to become useful working units in the shortest possible time.

It is hoped, when conditions are favourable, to extend the scheme by the establishment of classes for other officers. Preliminary courses and draft time-tables have already been prepared in respect of classes for junior engineers, mail-room, money-order and savings-bank, and other clerical officers, cable-jointers, and mechanics. It is considered that the ideal arrangement would be to have all the courses conducted at one central training-school, and this aspect is to receive consideration later in connection with the establishment of the main scheme.

TRAINING SCHOOLS FOR TELEGRAPH OPERATORS.

As a result of the war, considerable demands have been made upon the Department's staff of skilled radio telegraphists, and it soon became apparent that a reserve of these officers would be necessary to meet future requirements. A school was therefore established in Wellington in July for the training of specially-selected telegraph cadets in radio operating. Good progress has been made, and up to the end of the year forty of these cadets had been fully trained. As the demand for radio telegraphists is likely to continue for the duration of the war, it is the Department's intention to keep the school functioning so that a constant supply of radio operators will be available.

In addition to the school for radio operators, there is in operation in Wellington a school for the training of male and female officers in machine-printing telegraphy as well as a school for the training of male officers in Morse telegraphy. Morse-telegraph schools are established also in Auckland and Christchurch.

CONFERENCE OF SENIOR CONTROLLING OFFICERS.

In pursuance of the policy of securing close co-operation and co-ordination in departmental activities a conference of senior controlling officers was held in Wellington during the last week of February. The conference, which was the first of its kind since 1923, was attended by Chief Postmasters and Inspectors, by Engineers in charge of the more important districts, and by many senior officers of the General Post Office.

The conference was held primarily for the purpose of discussing the measures taken or about to be taken by the Post Office to meet war conditions, and of enabling a general review to be made of the effects of recent policy changes introduced in the Department. Consideration was also given to proposals for improving the organization and methods of management within the Department. The conference was an undoubted success, and the results of its deliberations are likely to be of especial value in the administration of the Service.