

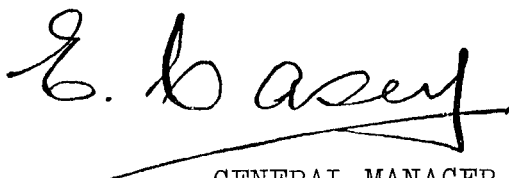
At the outbreak of war the total staff employed by the railways was 25,765, so that as at 31st March, 1943, the number employed was less than the pre-war staff by 3,215, or 12·5 per cent. These totals do not, however, give any real indication of the handicap under which the Department is labouring by reason of the loss of trained and experienced railwaymen. In addition to the 6,876 men serving with the armed forces, the Department has since the outbreak of war lost the services of 2,663 of the permanent staff through deaths, resignations, retirements, and dismissals.

The pre-war female staff consisted of clerical and refreshment-room workers to the number of 627. Since the outbreak of the war 1,400 additional female employees have been engaged, principally to replace male clerical workers, but a number are also employed in ticket-checking, interior carriage-cleaning, luggage-room and stores work, and other duties formerly performed by men. The work of the women employees has been of a high standard, and they have shown considerable adaptability in applying themselves to railway duties.

A total of £61,731 was paid under the Workers' Compensation Act during the year to employees suffering injury in the course of their employment.

CONCLUSION

That the railways were able to handle the greatly increased volume of traffic was due to the willing co-operation of all members of the staff, and I desire to record my sincere appreciation of their arduous, loyal, and cheerful service during a year of unprecedented difficulties in the operation of the railways.


GENERAL MANAGER.