

completed the Law Professional Examination, a number of these also being qualified as barristers, and eighty-five officers who have passed the Professional Accountants Examination, three of whom have also graduated in commerce.

All branches are now well organized, and it is the object of the management of the Office to reduce staff changes to the lowest possible limit, both to save removal and travelling expenses and to secure continuity in the administration of the estates and the transaction of the business generally.

The principal appointments during the year were—

- (a) The appointment of Mr. D. O'Donoghue, Assistant District Public Trustee, Invercargill, to the position of District Public Trustee, Whangarei.
- (b) The appointment of Mr. F. C. Coombe, First Assistant District Public Trustee, Christchurch, to the position of Reviewing Inspector Wellington.
- (c) The appointment of Mr. F. M. Whyte, Second Assistant District Public Trustee, Christchurch, to the position of First Assistant District Public Trustee, Christchurch.

There has been an addition to the number of the staff during the year, rendered necessary by the ever-increasing volume of work handled by the Office.

It is with regret that I have to record the deaths of officers :—

- Rinaldi, S. J., Clerk, Christchurch.
- Lerke, J. V., Cadet, Hamilton.
- Webster, W. D., Clerk, Head Office.
- Choules, C. F., Clerk, Wanganui.

33. With the rapid growth of business during the years just past, and the prospects of an even greater volume in the future, the matter of staffing in the years to come is one which demands serious attention. Obviously the practice of obtaining temporary clerical assistance in times of exigency and pressure would not be satisfactory in a Department such as this. It is not always easy to recruit from outside sources men with the necessary qualifications, and so it is realized that special attention must be devoted to the training of junior officers. They are encouraged to take an intelligent interest in all sides of the Office work, and to qualify themselves by undertaking some course of study which will be of value to them in their work. In addition, there has been in operation for some time past a system of classes for the training of the junior members in theoretical and in practical work. These training classes are accommodated in the Christchurch office, and each year a number of promising juniors are selected for a course of training. The members of the previous year's class are allocated to the various branches throughout the Dominion to meet staffing requirements. The results of the classes have been very gratifying, and show that they are serving the purpose for which they were designed—namely, the training and developing of promising junior officers in order to fit them for the exacting duties which they will be called upon to perform.

CORRESPONDENCE.

34. A frequent source of trouble and anxiety on the part of large concerns is the existence of recurring delays in the handling of the work. This difficulty arises largely owing to an unsatisfactory record system and the absence of effective check on the answering of correspondence, or through understaffing. The main cause is usually in the dealing with and replying to correspondence, and this fault prevails not only in large concerns, but even in those of smaller proportions. In connection with the work of the Public Trust Office, some years ago very special consideration was given to the dealing with correspondence, with a view to eliminating avoidable delays. A system of review of unanswered correspondence was instituted in order to locate and remedy the causes of delay. The system has now been in force for over ten years, and its introduction has had a marked effect on the correspondence. The system is simple and inexpensive, and in every way justifies the little extra labour involved.