

mentioned, it should be explained, are in addition to the benefits that accrue to widows and children by reason of the deceased officers being contributors to the Public Service Superannuation Fund. It is also the Department's endeavour always to place in departmental employment, where possible, the widows of deceased officers. Four widows of officers were placed during the year.

#### PERSONAL.

Mr. G. McNamara, Secretary of the Department, returned from the Universal Postal Union Congress at London on the 9th September, 1929, and resumed charge of the Department almost immediately.

Mr. M. B. Esson, Second Assistant Secretary, ceased duty in the Department on the 24th August, 1929, and left the Dominion a few days later for London to take up duty as New Zealand's representative on the Imperial Communications Advisory Committee. Mr. Esson was succeeded as Second Assistant Secretary by Mr. W. J. Gow, Chief Postmaster, Auckland.

The vacancy at Auckland consequent on Mr. Gow's appointment was filled by the promotion of Mr. H. P. Donald, Chief Postmaster, Christchurch, Mr. Donald in turn being succeeded by Mr. F. J. Shanks, Inspector, General Post Office.

Mr. R. H. Boyd, Chief Postmaster, Wellington, retired on the 22nd November, 1929, after completing almost forty years' service. He was succeeded by Mr. J. M. McLean, Chief Postmaster, Wanganui. Mr. Boyd's retirement was necessitated by ill health, and his death occurred soon after his relinquishing official duties. Mr. Boyd was a valued officer, who did not spare himself in the Department's interest. His early demise is much to be regretted.

#### RECLASSIFICATION.

The classification list of officers was issued on the 22nd November, 1929, after the regrading and classification of positions were completed as required by the regulations. The work of classifying a permanent staff of nearly nine thousand officers is a work of magnitude, importance, and responsibility, and to satisfactorily review the whole of the positions above the rank and file in both the Clerical and General Divisions, and to determine where the creation of new positions was warranted, required many weeks of careful investigation. As a result of the review 140 positions in the Clerical Division and 101 positions in the General Division were regraded, and 127 new positions were created in the Clerical Division and 55 in the General Division. Not only was the general revaluation of positions undertaken, but the opportunity was availed of to advance 217 qualified and experienced officers from the maximum salary of Class VII of the Clerical Division to the first step (£320 per annum) of Class VI. This has relieved to some extent the congestion at the top of the rank-and-file class of the Clerical Division, and enabled a more adequate salary to be paid to a number of efficient officers. Taking the position as a whole, considerable relief has been afforded to the staff by way of opening to officers a greater number of executive positions. Promotion is by merit alone, and on this basis it was possible to improve the salary condition of 640 deserving officers.

#### GENERAL DIVISION SALARY SCHEDULE.

It may not be out of place here to forecast what has been authorized with a view to effecting a general improvement during the coming financial year in the salary scale of the General Division.

A new salary schedule for male officers of the General Division has been gazetted, and will operate from the 1st April, 1930. Under the new schedule, message-boys (who were previously employed at a fixed rate of £57 per annum) will commence at a salary of £52 per annum and proceed to £65 per annum after twelve months' service. In this way, it is hoped to bring about a more equitable position by lowering the commencing salary of message-boys by £5 a year and increasing the salary in the second year. As the message-boy class is the Department's main recruiting-ground, the bettering of the salaries in the second year of service should encourage lads to greater effort in the matter of their own advancement. This, together with an endeavour by the Department to promote boys from the message-boy class within two years of their joining the Department, should prove a means of attracting a good type of lad to the Service. It should also prove a means of holding the lads' interests while awaiting promotion, and while being educated (through the Department's correspondence classes and in technical schools) and trained for a higher class of work.

In the past the commencing salary for employees such as postmen, exchange clerks, messengers, and linemen was £70 per annum. Provision is made in the new schedule for the commencing salary to be increased to £75 a year, rising to a maximum of £240 per annum by six annual increments—the first four of £15 each, the fifth of £55, and a final one of £50. The first five years' service is regarded as the apprenticeship and the sixth year as the improver's stage. An officer commencing at £75 per annum will ordinarily reach the maximum of his class after six years' service. The new schedule provides also for certain skilled workmen to proceed automatically to a maximum salary of £265 per annum.

The view has been taken, in compiling the new schedule, that, as a General Division officer reaches his maximum output at an earlier stage than does the Clerical Division officer, the officer is entitled to higher remuneration for his services in earlier manhood—that is, when he has reached his full capacity. This capacity in the ordinary course he carries in his particular line for many years, and with it goes the maximum salary. An adult wage has been provided after six years' training as a junior and improver. By this method officers in the General Division will reach the maximum salary (£240 per annum) at ages varying from twenty-one to twenty-three years. The operation of the new schedule may give rise to complications when promoting qualified officers from the General Division to the Clerical Division, but a fair adjustment of salary will obviate any anomalies arising.