

## MEASLES EPIDEMIC.

The prevalence of measles during the year caused numerous absences of officers from duty, and at many offices the staffs employed were seriously depleted for a time at least. Fortunately the absences were not of lengthy duration and it was possible, without any inconvenience to the public, to make temporary arrangements to meet the position. In view of the extent and the nature of the epidemic, officers who contracted the complaint were allowed up to two weeks' sick-leave on full pay without charge against the sick-leave pay normally due under the regulations. The period allowed was sufficient in most cases to cover the full period of the officer's absence from duty.

## CHARWOMEN: PAYMENT OF WAGES FOR SICK-LEAVE.

Commencing in November, charwomen absent from duty on account of sickness were granted sick-leave with pay in accordance with the schedule operating in the Department in respect of permanent officers. The change in policy was made in order to accord to charwomen in the employ of the Post and Telegraph Department the same treatment in the matter of sick-leave pay as is enjoyed by similar employees in Government Departments controlled by the Public Service Commissioner.

## SICK BENEFIT FUND.

During the year 386 officers were granted assistance from the Sick Benefit Fund.

## CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL.

The Correspondence School was reopened in May, 1938, the curriculum being confined to the subjects of the various Controlling Officers' Technical Examinations.

Previously, most of the technical courses available covered too wide a field to be treated comprehensively in single courses. The new courses were therefore subdivided into sections corresponding to the sections of the revised syllabuses of the examinations. This arrangement facilitates the work of instruction and reduces the difficulties hitherto experienced by some students in passing the examinations. The following subjects are now included in the curriculum: Magnetism and electricity; introductory course for outside plant; introductory course for telephony and telegraphy; Morse telegraphy; multiplex systems; teleprinter systems; radio (*a*); outside plant, stages I and II. It is proposed to add later two more subjects, radio (*b*) and transmission.

During the year 1,250 officers applied for tuition, and of those who availed themselves of the facilities of the school 71 per cent. passed the examinations held at the conclusion of the courses. One hundred of the students who were studying the magnetism and electricity section of the technical courses were accredited with a pass in that section.

## EXAMINATIONS.

Officers who were candidates for departmental examinations during the year numbered 4,757, of whom 2,671 were either wholly or partially successful.

## SUGGESTIONS BOARD.

Some 143 suggestions for the better working of the Department were received from officers during the year, and seventeen awards, involving a total sum of £40, were made for meritorious proposals.

## COMMERCIAL BRANCH.

The business dealt with by the Commercial Branch during the year represented a revenue value of £77,190, being £7,986 (11.54 per cent.) in excess of the figures for the preceding year. It is estimated that approximately £19,617 of the total amount can be classified as "new business" *i.e.*, business which would not have been secured or which would have been deferred but for the interest created and the information supplied by commercial officers.

In assessing the value of the business handled, no cognizance is taken of items which do not affect the revenue position, such as, for example, the internal or external removal of telephones, the rearrangement of existing equipment, or the transfer of telephones from one person to another, although commercial officers render extensive and valuable service to the public in connection with such matters.

Of the business secured, £45,039 represents the value of telephone transactions, the balance (£32,151) being in respect of advertising, postal, and miscellaneous.

Included in the functions of the Commercial Branch is the selling of advertising space on the blotting-pads used on public desks at post-offices, the revenue thus obtained being a very helpful offset to the expenditure on this item of office stationery. During the year an improvement has been made by replacing bound pads by loose sheets of advertising blotting-paper in suitable holders.

Publicity arrangements regarding departmental services were continued during the year, both by newspaper advertising and by the distribution of folders, brochures, &c.