

The total expenditure incurred in connection with the Committee including the cost of printing its Report amounted to about one lakh of rupees.

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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

POSTAL ENQUIRY COMMITTEE, 1934-35.

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REPORT.

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CHAPTER I.

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Introductory.

Our Committee was appointed under the orders contained in Resolution No. Es. A.-156/33 (1), dated the 16th March 1934 of the Government of India in the Industries and Labour Department (Posts and Telegraphs Branch) which is reproduced below :—

“ Several enquiries have been made in recent years into the working of the various branches of the Indian Posts and Telegraphs Department. In 1928, the Government of India appointed Mr. G. V. Bewoor, I.C.S., to suggest revisions of the formulæ, generally known as “ time tests ”, designed to serve as guides in determining the strengths of staff to be employed in the various duties of the post office. In 1931, the Posts and Telegraphs Accounts Enquiry Committee overhauled the system of accounts and adjustments in force in the department. In the same year the Posts and Telegraphs Sub-Committee of the Retrenchment Advisory Committee made recommendations for effecting immediate and ultimate reductions in the expenditure of the Department, and it reviewed certain specific proposals for retrenchment ; but it did not undertake a detailed investigation into the methods of work followed in the Department. In 1933, the Telegraph Establishment Enquiry Committee made a thorough investigation into the traffic organization of the Telegraph Branch of the Department, and its report is now under the consideration of Government.

2. The Governor General in Council has had under consideration for some time the appointment of a Committee to make enquiries into the working of the Postal Branch of the Department similar in nature to those made by the Telegraph Establishment Enquiry Committee into the working of the Telegraph Branch. It is hoped that this enquiry will produce suggestions for improving the general efficiency of the Postal Branch of the Department, and for a simplification of its methods of working ; and that the consequent reorganisation may also secure further economies.

3. The Committee will consist of the following officers :—
- |  |       |                  |
|--|-------|------------------|
| Mr. M. L. Pasricha, C.I.E.,<br>Postmaster-General                                | .. .. | Chairman :       |
| Mr. Rang Behari Lal, M.A.,<br>Indian Audit and Accounts Service                  | ..    | Member :         |
| Khan Sahib M. Sabihuddin, B.A.,<br>Bar-at-Law, Superintendent of Post<br>Offices | .. .. | Member :         |
| Rai Sahib J. N. Dar, B.A.,<br>Superintendent of Post Offices                     | ..    | Member :         |
| Mr. K. L. N. Iya, B.A., LL.B.,<br>Gazetted Postmaster                            | .. .. | Member :         |
| Rao Sahib K. R. Bakhle, B.A.,<br>Assistant Deputy Director-General               | ..    | Member-Secretary |

Terms of Reference.

4. The Committee will—
- ✓ (a) investigate the methods of work followed in all departments of the post office with a view to their simplification ;
  - ✓ (b) investigate the methods followed for determining the number of posts of all establishments including signallers employed in post offices, postal and railway mail service divisions and their subordinate offices and in the offices of Heads of Circles ; and
  - ✓ (c) make recommendations to secure the most efficient and economical organization of the department.
5. The Committee will be authorised to record evidence and make such other investigations as it may consider necessary and will submit its recommendations in relation to the foregoing and cognate matters to the Governor General in Council through the Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs.
6. The Committee will assemble in New Delhi in the beginning of April 1934.”

2. We met in New Delhi on the 3rd April 1934. After a preliminary discussion as to the lines on which we were to proceed and an examination of a number of important rules in the Posts and Telegraphs Manuals we found it desirable to study the working of the different offices. With this object in view we divided into two parties. One party proceeded to Lahore to look into the office of the Postmaster-General, Punjab and N. W. F. Circle in all its branches including the Stock Depot and the Dead Letter Office, the offices of the Superintendents of Post Offices and Railway Mail Service, the General Post Office, Lahore, and the Railway Mail Service office at Lahore railway station. The other party was engaged in studying the methods of work in the Delhi General Post Office and other post offices and offices of Superintendents of Post Offices and Railway Mail Service including Record Offices in and around Delhi. By kind courtesy of the Accountant General, Posts and Telegraphs this party was shown over the office of the Deputy Accountant General, Posts and

Telegraphs, Delhi. In the course of our visit to different offices, detailed observations were made and the items of work which could with advantage be simplified were noted.

3. We requested the Heads of Circles to invite the officials of the Department to make suggestions regarding the simplification of the methods of work in the post offices, the Railway Mail Service, the Divisional and the Circle offices. At the same time we addressed the recognised Service Associations and requested them to send in their suggestions if any. The response to the invitation was generous and the suggestions forwarded to us have received our very careful consideration.

4. Chambers of Commerce and Trades Associations were also requested by us to favour the Committee with any suggestions they may have to make in conformity with the terms of reference of the Committee. Only one of them had some suggestions to make but we could not take them into our consideration as they were not within the scope of our enquiry.

5. On the 7th June 1934 a Questionnaire consisting of 56 questions was issued to all Heads of Circles and recognised Service Associations. On the same day, a Special Questionnaire containing 17 questions mainly dealing with the delegation of powers of Heads of Circles to lower officers was issued to all Heads of Circles. After the issue of these questionnaires more subjects requiring investigation were discovered and a Supplementary Questionnaire consisting of 10 questions was issued on the 19th June 1934. On the same day a Supplementary Special Questionnaire consisting of 11 questions was issued to Heads of Circles.

6. In order to study the local conditions prevailing in different Circles, and to record evidence of different officials and representatives of Service Associations we visited Bombay, Madras, Nagpur, Calcutta, Patna and Lucknow. The following offices and Railway Mail Service sections were visited by us in the course of our tour :—

(a) Offices of the Postmasters-General at—

- (i) Lahore,
- (ii) Bombay,
- (iii) Madras,
- (iv) Nagpur,
- (v) Calcutta,
- (vi) Patna, and
- (vii) Lucknow.

(b) Dead Letter Offices at—

- (i) Lahore,
- (ii) Bombay,
- (iii) Madras,
- (iv) Nagpur,
- (v) Calcutta, and
- (vi) Lucknow.

## (c) Offices of Superintendents of Post Offices at—

- (i) Lahore,
- (ii) Meerut,
- (iii) Rohtak, and
- (iv) Lucknow.

## (d) Offices of Superintendents, Railway Mail Service—

- (i) D Division, Delhi,
- (ii) L Division, Lahore,
- (iii) M Division, Madras,
- (iv) E Division, Calcutta, and
- (v) O Division, Lucknow.

## (e) Head Post Offices at—

- (i) Ambala,
- (ii) Lahore,
- (iii) Delhi,
- (iv) Simla,
- (v) Bombay General Post Office,
- (vi) Madras General Post Office,
- (vii) Nagpur,
- (viii) Calcutta General Post Office,
- (ix) Patna,
- (x) Lucknow,
- (xi) Rohtak,
- (xii) Gurgaon, and
- (xiii) Meerut.

## (f) Sub Offices at—

- (i) New Delhi,
- (ii) Kalbadevi,
- (iii) Mandvi,
- (iv) Girgaon,
- (v) Churchgate,
- (vi) Mount Road,
- (vii) Nagpur City,
- (viii) Burra Bazar,
- (ix) Beadon Street,
- (x) Archana,
- (xi) Treasury Buildings,
- (xii) Writers' Buildings,
- (xiii) Rohtak Mandi,
- (xiv) Bahadurgarh,
- (xv) Thyagarajanagar, and
- (xvi) Ballard Estate.

## (g) Branch Offices at—

- (i) Sampla,
- (ii) Mambalam.

## (h) Record and Mail Offices at—

- (i) Lahore,
- (ii) Delhi,
- (iii) Meerut Cantt.
- (iv) Ghaziabad,
- (v) Howrah,
- (vi) Nagpur,
- (vii) Bombay,
- (viii) Sealdah,
- (ix) Lucknow, and
- (x) Simla.

## (i) Railway Mail Service Sections noted below—

- (i) D-11 In,
- (ii) A-15 In,
- (iii) F-1 Out,
- (iv) B-19 Out,
- (v) Fm-9 Out,
- (vi) W-16 In,
- (vii) J-3 In,
- (viii) J-4 Out,
- (ix) W-4 Out,
- (x) M-16 Out,
- (xi) M-10 In,
- (xii) M-14 Out,
- (xiii) M-17 Out,
- (xiv) M-18 Out,
- (xv) F-19 Out,
- (xvi) C-7 In,
- (xvii) C-7 Out.

## (j) Offices of the Deputies Accountant General, Posts and Telegraphs at—

- (i) Delhi,
- (ii) Madras,
- (iii) Nagpur, and
- (iv) Calcutta.

7. In addition to the offices and sections mentioned above, we visited the Foreign Post Offices at Irwin House and Ballard Pier, Bombay on the days of the arrival and departure of the English Mail steamer.

8. We gave the recognised Service Associations and Unions an opportunity to state their views both in writing and orally. The oral examination of their representatives was confined to matters covered by the questionnaires and points arising therefrom. The public, the Press and

the representatives of the Associations and Unions were afforded full facilities to attend the meetings of the Committee during the public examination of witnesses.

9. The following departmental witnesses and representatives of Service Associations were examined by us :—

<i>Centre.</i>	<i>Departmental witnesses.</i>
<i>Bombay</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mr. C. H. Bell, Presidency Postmaster.</li> <li>2. Khan Saheb Sheikh Mohammad Yacoob, Inspecting Postmaster.</li> <li>3. Mr. B. H. Bhatporia, Inspecting Postmaster.</li> <li>4. Mr. S. R. Kothavala, Superintendent of Post Offices, Baroda.</li> <li>5. Mr. P. F. Kamdin, Postmaster, Ahmedabad.</li> <li>6. Khan Saheb M. Barkat Ali, Deputy Postmaster-General.</li> <li>7. Mr. J. G. Trivedi, Assistant Postmaster General.</li> <li>8. Mr. H. S. Jassawala, Superintendent, Foreign Post.</li> <li>9. Mr. C. D. Rae, Postmaster-General (In camera).</li> <li>10. Mr. M. V. Dave, Superintendent, Railway Mail Service, W Division.</li> <li>11. Mr. L. J. Sajnani, Superintendent, Railway Mail Service, B Division.</li> </ol>
<i>Madras</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12. Rao Bahadur G. N. Naidu, Superintendent, Railway Mail Service, T Division.</li> <li>13. Mr. V. S. Sankaran, Superintendent, Railway Mail Service, M Division.</li> <li>14. Mr. T. P. Santhoshnatham Pillay, Head Assistant, Circle Office.</li> <li>15. Lieut.-Col. W. A. Smith, Deputy Postmaster-General.</li> <li>16. Rao Bahadur V. Narayana Iyer, Presidency Postmaster.</li> <li>17. Mr. C. R. Raghavendra Rao, Assistant Presidency Postmaster.</li> <li>18. Mr. D. Bhima Rao, Superintendent of Post Offices.</li> <li>19. Mr. K. M. Aslam, Assistant Postmaster-General.</li> <li>20. Mr. V. Balasubramaniam, Lower Division Clerk.</li> <li>21. Mr. F. T. Peters, Deputy Postmaster-General (partly in camera).</li> <li>22. Mr. A. Brokenshaw, Postmaster-General (In camera).</li> </ol>

*Centre.**Departmental witnesses.*

23. Mr. K. V. Nilkantham, Assistant Postmaster-General.
- Nagpur* .. 24. Mr. R. E. Shalom, Superintendent, Railway Mail Service, J Division.
25. Khan Saheb S. M. Quraeshi, Superintendent, Railway Mail Service, F Division.
26. Mr. K. Rama Rao, Superintendent of Post Offices, Nagpur.
27. Mr. Mohd. Yunus, Inspector of Post Offices.
28. Mr. Madan Mohan Dube, Postmaster, Nagpur.
29. Mr. A. Paul, Head Clerk, Postmaster-General's Office.
30. Rai Saheb Dhanpat Rai, Assistant Postmaster-General.
31. Rai Bahadur Kundan Lal, Deputy Postmaster-General.
32. Mr. P. N. Mitra, Postmaster-General (In camera).
- Calcutta* .. 33. Mr. M. N. Crawford, Postmaster-General, Calcutta (In camera).
34. Mr. J. N. Datta, Superintendent, Railway Mail Service, E Division.
35. Mr. N. M. Ghosh, Superintendent, Railway Mail Service, C Division.
36. Mr. H. J. Nicholas, Presidency Postmaster.
37. Rai Saheb B. M. Mitra, Sub-Postmaster, Burra-bazar.
38. Mr. A. Sarkar, Superintendent of Post Offices.
39. Lieut.-Col. S. C. Sinclair, Deputy Postmaster-General.
40. Rai Bahadur A. K. Mukerji, Deputy Postmaster-General.
41. Lieut. J. H. Owens, Assistant Postmaster-General.
- Patna* .. 42. Rai Bahadur J. Kumar, Officiating Deputy Postmaster-General.
43. Rai Saheb S. P. Sarbadhikari, Assistant Postmaster-General.
44. Mr. R. J. St. S. Pusey, Postmaster, Patna.
45. Rao Bahadur L. P. Kulkarni, Postmaster-General (In camera).

*Centre.**Lucknow**Departmental witnesses.*

46. Rai Saheb Shanker Lal Bhargava, Superintendent of Post Offices.
47. Mr. P. S. Jaini, Superintendent, Railway Mail Service, O Division.
48. Mr. H. L. Jerath, Assistant Postmaster-General.
49. Mr. H. M. S. Newton, Postmaster, Lucknow.
50. Mr. T. J. Daintith, Deputy Postmaster-General.
51. Rai Bahadur S. C. Gupta, Postmaster-General (In camera).

*New Delhi*

52. Mr. W. Homer, Sub-Postmaster, New Delhi.
53. Mr. M. D. Murtrie, Postmaster, Delhi.
54. Mr. Ganpat Rai, Superintendent, Railway Mail Service, D Division.
55. Rai Bahadur P. N. Mukerji, Postmaster-General (In camera).
56. Mr. D. T. Joshi, Deputy Superintendent, Foreign Post, Bombay.

*Simla*

57. Mr. Bishen Das, Superintendent of Post Offices, Ambala.
58. Rai Bahadur J. Sabharwal, Assistant Postmaster-General, Lahore.
59. Mr. Narinder Singh, Superintendent, Railway Mail Service, L Division.
60. Mr. Sherrard-Smith, Postmaster, Simla.
61. Mr. J. H. E. Cook, Deputy Postmaster-General, Lahore.
62. Major A. Angelo, Postmaster-General, Punjab and N.-W. F. Circle (In camera).

*Unions and Associations.**Bombay*

1. Representatives of the All-India and Burma Postmasters' Association.

*Nagpur.*

2. Local representatives of the Indian Post and Telegraph Union.

*Calcutta*

3. Representatives of Postal Officers' Association.
4. Local representatives of the Indian Posts and Telegraphs Union.

*New Delhi*

5. Representatives of the All-India Postal and Railway Mail Service Union.

6. Representatives of the Indian Posts and Telegraphs Union.

*Simla*

7. Representatives of the All-India Posts and Telegraphs Administrative Offices Association.

8. Representatives of the All-India Postmen and Lower Grade Staff Union, Bombay.



## CHAPTER II.

### Circle Offices.

10. Under the orders of the Director-General, Posts and Telegraphs, the staff work of all branches of the Department in a major Circle is required to be in the hands of one of the Deputies Postmaster-General, while all the establishment work is allotted to the other Deputy. In addition, the technical work of different classes for the entire Circle should be distributed between these two officers. In one of the Circles we have found that while the staff and the establishment work for the whole Circle is given to the two Deputies as ordered by the Director-General the technical and the miscellaneous work is divided between them according to the ranges of which they have been put in charge. This arrangement has defeated the whole idea of the organisation ordered by the Director-General, and cases relating to a subject are dealt with by the two Deputies Postmaster-General according to their charges.

11. Again in the matter of tours undertaken by the Deputies Postmaster-General we find that the Circle referred to above differs from the other Circles. In this Circle the Deputy Postmaster-General I and the Deputy Postmaster-General II were absent on tour, on an average, for about 12 days each in a month during 1933-34, and the expenditure on their travelling was Rs. 2,610-11-0 and Rs. 3,005-1-0 respectively. The total expenditure in this Circle during the year on the journeys performed by these two officers, the Postmaster-General and the Assistant Postmasters-General was Rs. 10,193-12-0. In no other Circle was such heavy expenditure incurred on travelling. By an examination of the travelling allowance bills we have noticed that while in other Circles the purpose of each journey is specified on the travelling allowance bill, the Deputies Postmaster-General in this Circle have contented themselves by making an omnibus entry against the journeys which reads "enquiries and inspections". We have no fault to find with enquiries and inspections as such, but we cannot help remarking that journeys do not appear to be undertaken with any regard to economy. As an illustration we may mention the case of one of these Deputies Postmaster-General travelling from his Headquarters station to a hill station for "enquiries and inspections". He halted there for ten days and returned to his Headquarters. Three days later he started out again for another station on the same line for a similar purpose, viz., "enquiries and inspections". This is not an isolated case and instances can be multiplied to support our view that economy is not being practised.

12. For enquiry work the Department has the services of Inspectors of Post Offices, Superintendents of Post Offices and investigating Inspectors. In these circumstances it seems incredible that it should be necessary for an officer of the rank of Deputy Postmaster-General to be conducting frequent enquiries. In our opinion, it should not ordinarily be necessary for a Deputy Postmaster-General to go out on enquiry work and if Deputies Postmaster-General are actually deputising for the Postmasters-General there should be enough work for them to keep them busy in their Circle headquarters. The Postmaster-General of the Circle referred to attaches a great deal of importance to the inspections and visits by the Deputies Postmaster-General. He holds the view that such visits make it possible to bring about a reduction in the establishment. We

have no information regarding the savings effected in this Circle by these visits, but we fail to see what economies in establishment can be expected in the small sub offices which are visited so frequently along a long road line. Further we have noticed that there is no evidence of similar concern for economy having been shown in the case of the offices at the headquarters of the Circle.

13. A number of Assistant Postmasters-General are sanctioned for Circle offices and they hold charge of the different sections in the Circle Office. The number of these officers was reduced in some of the Circles a few years ago. A Postmaster-General represented to the Director-General, Posts and Telegraphs, that the reduced number of Assistant Postmasters-General sanctioned for the Circle Office was not able to cope with the work and asked for sanction for an additional Assistant Postmaster-General. The necessity for an additional officer appears to have been recognised but in order to avoid similar demands from the other Circles where the number of Assistant Postmasters-General had been reduced it was decided to sanction instead an additional officer of the Superior Traffic Branch II Division. The Postmaster-General concerned has told us in his evidence that this officer is perfectly useless as he is not conversant with the postal work. Our reading of the situation is that an additional officer need not be sanctioned. What is required is that there should be a proper distribution of work and the Deputies Postmaster-General should receive direct some of the cases which at present go to them through the Assistant Postmasters-General.

14. In our opinion there is scope for simplification of work in the Circle Offices and this matter requires careful investigation. Some of the methods practised in the disposal of work are extremely wasteful; for example we have noticed that in a Circle the clerk dealing with appeal cases prepares a large statement for each appeal. The first column of this statement contains the grounds of appeal and the facts of the case as reported by the immediate superior of the appellant, the second the remarks and the suggestions by the dealing clerk, third the views of the Assistant Postmaster-General; fourth the views of the Deputy Postmaster-General, and finally, the orders of the Postmaster-General in the fifth column. In some of the Circles appeal cases go direct to the Postmaster-General through the Assistant Postmaster-General and the dealing clerks are not allowed to make any suggestions. We recommend that this system should be adopted in all Circles.

15. In about 50 per cent. of the sections in the Circle Offices two officials of the lower selection grade are employed. The senior of the two is in charge of the section while the junior is allotted some dealing work. This work is said to be of such importance that it cannot be entrusted to ordinary time scale clerks. We have examined the work of these officials and noticed that in several cases they are doing no more important work than some of the lower division clerks. We suggest that the employment of two selection grade officials should be more restricted. Ordinarily, in accordance with the orders of the Director-General, not more than one selection grade official would be justified for a section with not more than ten clerks. In our opinion this decision should be enforced.

16. Office Superintendents and Head Assistants are sanctioned for Circle Offices on the scales of pay given below :—

Name of Circle.	Grade of the Office Superintendent.	Grade of the Head Assistant where employed.
	Rs.	Rs.
Punjab and N.-W. F.	.. 350—450	250—350
United Provinces	.. 350—450	250—350
Bihar and Orissa ..	.. 250—350	.....
Bengal and Assam	.. 350—450	250—350
Burma ..	.. 350—450	250—350
Central ..	.. 250—350	.....
Madras ..	.. 350—450	250—350
Bombay ..	.. 350—450	250—350
Sind and Baluchistan ..	.. ..	250—350

These two officials are supposed to exercise the necessary control over the working of the different sections.

17. The Head Assistant's primary duty appears to be to open the daily dak and distribute it to the sections. In the Madras Circle this official is engaged in this work up to about 3 o'clock in the afternoon. We are satisfied that there is no justification for the retention of this appointment. An ordinary lower-division clerk or at the most an upper division clerk can give all the required help to the Office Superintendent for opening the dak and distributing it. We suggest that the Head Assistant's appointments may be brought under reduction in all Circles. We are also of the opinion that the Rs. 350—450 scale of pay sanctioned for the Office Superintendent in Burma Circle is not justified and we suggest that it may be brought down to Rs. 250—350.

18. We consider that Assistant Postmasters-General should be required personally to visit the sections in their charge and take steps necessary to secure the expeditious disposal of cases. We noticed in one of the Circles that some of the Assistant Postmasters-General did not even know in what part of the office the sections in their charge were located. Unless these officers take some personal interest in the work of their sections there is bound to be waste of man power for want of intelligent interest in the duties performed by the staff. Our observations lead us to think that a careful investigation of the working of the sections would result in reduction of the staff as the work does not appear to be distributed among them with any regard for economy and efficiency.

19. It has been pointed out to us that in a Circle where a Director of Telegraph Engineering is employed, he has charge of the Building Section but all cases relating to rented buildings go to the Deputy Postmaster-General. With such an arrangement, it happens that while the Building Section may be arranging to construct a new Departmental building for the post office in a station, the Deputy Postmaster-General, not knowing anything of this project, arranges to rent a building for the same post office on a long lease. And if the Director of Telegraph Engineering takes responsibility for both the Departmental and the rented buildings, he may agree to the rent of a building being raised

without the Establishment branch approving of the increased expenditure. The latter branch may actually be considering the question of closing the office on financial or other grounds. Such cases of defective procedure can only be avoided if strict orders are issued to the effect that when more than one branch of the office is concerned in a case, no sanction should be accorded without consulting the branch or branches concerned.

20. It has been represented to us that clerks of the Circle Office should be recruited from the Post Office clerks. We are satisfied that it would be an advantage to have a small percentage of clerks with Post Office experience serving in the Circle Office. Such recruits would be useful in the ' Investigation, Frauds and Complaints Section'. A careful selection would have to be made from those who volunteer for employment in the Circle Office. Men with higher educational qualifications should be accorded a preferential treatment. Some of the departmental officers have objected to the proposal, but we have no reason to believe that Post Office clerks would not be able to pick up the secretariat system of working in a short time. In our opinion their services ought to prove very useful in the Circle Office and we recommend that the suggestion may be adopted. The number of clerks selected should, however, be kept as low as possible as we are not in favour of a large number of Post Office clerks being employed in Circle Offices in the different sections. The selection should be entirely at the discretion of the Postmaster-General but we would suggest that comparatively junior clerks should be given preference.

21. It has also been represented to us that the adoption of the post office scale of pay for the clerks employed in the Circle Office has caused disappointment among the Circle Office staff and that, as they are required to perform more responsible duties than the post office clerks, a higher scale of pay should be sanctioned for them. It is true that the Circle Office staff enjoy a larger number of holidays than the staff employed in the post offices but considering that work required of the former is of a superior order we recommend that the scale of pay sanctioned for them should be higher than for the post office staff.

22. We find that an appreciable amount of work done in Circle Offices is such which should not find its way into these offices. The adoption of the suggestions made by us in this report would afford a certain amount of relief in this respect. We suggest that more powers should be delegated to Superintendents of Post Offices, Superintendents, Railway Mail Service and First Class Postmasters. Our suggestions on the subject are contained in Appendix A. Further we are convinced that the reformator of the ranges in Circles, as recommended by us in para. 223, would considerably reduce the work in Circle Offices and generally result in improved efficiency of the service.

23. There is at present no uniformity of procedure in regard to cases which should be submitted to Deputies Postmaster-General and the Postmaster-General for their orders. The system adopted in the different Circles differs a great deal and we have been told by some of the Postmasters-General that there should be clear orders on the subject of the powers that may be exercised by the Assistant Postmasters-General or behalf of the Postmaster-General. We agree with this view and suggest that the proposals contained in Appendix B may be adopted.

24. At present pension cases of selection grade officials are prepared by Divisional Superintendents and 1st Class Postmasters and submitted

to the Audit Office through the Circle Offices. We have considered the question of relieving the Circle Offices of this work. A Deputy Accountant-General and some of the Postmasters-General with whom the matter was discussed were of the opinion that no useful purpose is served by sending the papers through the Circle Offices and that the disposal of pension cases would be expedited if Divisional Superintendents and 1st Class and Presidency Postmasters were authorised to send the pension papers of all non-gazetted staff working under them direct to the Audit Office. The latter office would verify the service of the official concerned and communicate to the Postmaster General the amount of pension admissible for his administrative sanction. We recommend that this may be done.

25. Whole-time upper and lower division typists are at present employed on copying work in Circle Offices. Their continued employment on this work renders them unfit for further advancement in the Department. In actual practice difficulty has been experienced in providing for them in the lower selection grade. On reaching a certain stage of service they claim such promotion. For their part it may be argued that it is no fault of theirs that during their service they have not been entrusted with any dealing work. If they are to be eligible for supervisory appointments it is essential that arrangements should be made for exchange of duties. We are, however, of the opinion that a reversion to the old arrangement of employing section writers for typing work would be more economical.

26. We have been told by a responsible officer of the Department that while there is admittedly scope for reduction in the establishment of a Circle Office it is not possible to effect any reduction as a large majority of the staff is said to be incompetent due mainly to the system whereby the members of the clerical establishment earn their annual increments as a matter of course which leaves little or no incentive to the really competent men to show their worth. We are of the opinion that this would be remedied to a great extent by the clerical establishment being placed in one cadre divided into two grades as suggested by us in the chapter on Recruitment.

27. Similarly in the case of the selection grade officials we are told that really competent men are not promoted to this grade as promotion is regulated mostly according to seniority. Merit is supposed to be taken into consideration but as merit has to be determined according to entries in the character sheets and as these entries are mostly colourless due to their being appealable, unsuitable men get promoted to the lower selection grade. We are satisfied that there is a great deal of truth in what has been stated on the subject and steps are required to be taken to improve matters. In our note of the 12th June 1934 we have requested the Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs that the orders contained in the Government of India (Home Department) Resolution No. 1568-1595-(Ests.), dated the 14th September 1915 circulated with the Government of India letter No. F-281|33|D|Ests., dated the 14th July 1933 may be enforced in the Department. Further we consider that an examination can be the only satisfactory method of selecting candidates for promotion and we suggest that the lower selection grade examination should be restored for all branches of the Department.

28. There has been rapid development of postal and telegraph communications in the Punjab and N.-W. F. Circle and we consider that in the interest of efficiency a separate minor Circle in charge of a Director of Posts and Telegraphs should be formed for the North-West Frontier Province with headquarters at Peshawar. It might include the whole of the Northern Command and Kashmir to avoid overlapping of duties with the neighbouring Circle.

29. The Central Circle covers a very vast area, and in our opinion its being split up into two minor circles with headquarters at Nagpur and Ajmer would be more economical and lead to improved efficiency. Heavy expenditure has at present to be incurred on tours undertaken by Circle officers to distant parts of the Circle, and much time is lost in references having to be made by the offices in Rajputana to the Circle Office in Nagpur.

30. In the case of the Bengal and Assam Circle we recommend a minor Circle being formed for Assam with headquarters at Shillong. And if Orissa becomes a separate province we would suggest that the present Bihar and Orissa Circle should be split up into two minor Circles with headquarters at Cuttack and Patna.

31. We are convinced that the above changes would secure more efficient administration and at the same time provide a responsible representative of the Department at the headquarters of each Local Government. Further with the formation of the proposed minor Circles, one of the Deputies Postmaster-General in the present Punjab and N.-W. F. and the Bengal and Assam Circles could be withdrawn.

32. The question of prescribing a standard for calculating the clerical staff for Circle Offices has been engaging the attention of the Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs for some time. About ten years ago Mr. Hamilton was placed on special duty in this connection. He conceived the idea that the staff in a Circle Office should be proportionate to the total operative staff employed in the different offices in the Circle. On this basis he took into consideration the staff employed in each of the Circles and worked out the proportion of staff in each such office in relation to the operative staff. The establishment of the Punjab Circle Office had just then been revised and he found that the proportion in that Circle gave the minimum staff on the basis of his idea. He fixed the staff for all the other Circle Offices on the proportion obtaining in the Punjab Circle but the arrangement was found to be unsuited as there was no uniformity of procedure in all the offices.

33. Rai Bahadur J. P. Ganguly was then placed on special duty to look into the matter and he suggested a re-organisation in Circle Offices on the lines corresponding to the office of the Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs. The strength of each section in an office was suggested by him by calculating the time required for the disposal of the files dealt with, but he did not attempt to apply this standard to all the offices visited by him.

34. Recently the Accountant-General, Posts and Telegraphs suggested a time test for Circle Offices and the views of all the Postmasters-General were invited regarding the possibility of such a standard being applied for determining the staff required for their offices. Most of them have expressed their views against the proposal as they contend that the work in a Circle Office cannot be measured in terms of time.

35: We are of the opinion that it should be possible to contrive a time factor for operations such as copying, despatching, and check of travelling allowance bills and acquittance rolls. We fear, however, that it would be difficult to find a suitable standard which could be made applicable to the disposal of files dealing with different subjects. The suggestions made by Rai Bahadur J. P. Ganguly are based on actual observations in regard to the time taken for disposal of all kinds of work in a section. He has not attempted to calculate the time required for the disposal of each class of work. We consider that this is the only practical method which can be followed in determining the strength of clerical staff in the Circle Offices.

36. In the United Provinces Circle an attempt has been made to determine the staff in each section on the number of letters received in it per day. The following standard has been adopted in that office :—

Appointment Section .. .. .	10 letters:
Building Section .. .. .	8 "
Sorting Section .. .. .	9 "
Establishment Section .. .. .	7 "
Miscellaneous Section .. .. .	9 "
Accounts Section .. .. .	8 "
Pension Section .. .. .	9 "
Life Insurance and Savings Bank Section ..	10 "
Fraud and Inspection Section .. .. .	7 "
Complaint Section .. .. .	11 "
Traffic Section .. .. .	9 "

37. We also find from a letter No. E.C.-1599|Coll. II, dated the 16th May 1932, from the Postmaster-General, Madras, to the Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs that in determining the requirements of each section of his office he has taken the number of papers received in it as a basis for his calculations. These instances incline us to the view that it should be possible to prescribe a suitable standard for calculating the staff requirement.

38. The time at our disposal did not permit of our making exhaustive observations with a view to suggest a standard. We recommend that the matter may be entrusted to an officer on special duty. This officer should also examine the establishments of all large Post Offices where staff in excess of what is justified by the application of the Time Test is sanctioned. We are of the opinion that it would be necessary for this officer to have the necessary data collected under his own supervision as we have a feeling that the methods on which they are compiled is not uniform in all the post offices.

39. We would also suggest that this officer should examine every case in which the Head of a Circle proposes to sanction a supervisory appointment which is not justified by the standards already laid down.

## CHAPTER III.

## Stock Depots.

40. Stock Depots form a part of each Circle office. The staff employed in each of the Depots is as follows :—

Name of the Circle.	Selection Grade officials (including Managers in charge).	Time scale clerks (including lower division clerks).
United Provinces .. .. .	.. 2 (160—250)	.. 12
Bihar and Orissa .. .. .	.. 1 (160—250)	.. 11
Madras .. .. .	.. 3 (250—350)	.. 16
Bombay .. .. .	.. 2 (250—350)	.. 14
Central .. .. .	.. 1 (160—250)	.. 9
Burma .. .. .	.. 1 (160—250)	.. 6
Punjab and N. W. F. .. .. .	.. 2 (250—350)	.. 11
Bengal and Assam .. .. .	.. 1 (250—350)	.. 17
Sind and Baluchistan .. .. .	.. 1 (160—250)	.. 2

*N.B.*—The pay of the Manager in Charge has been indicated above within brackets.

41. Bengal and Assam Circle employs the largest number of clerks and yet there is only one selection grade official to supervise the work of the Depot. We do not see any justification for larger number of such officials being employed in some of the other Circles and suggest that the additional appointments may be withdrawn. Further we consider that the Managers of the Stock Depots (except of the Sind and Baluchistan Circle who should be on the time scale) should all be placed in the lower selection grade on Rs. 160—250.

42. In most cases, the Depots are located on the Circle office premises. The Depot in the Punjab Circle has recently been shifted from Lahore to Moghalpura where the Telegraph Storeyard is located. On account of the five miles distance, which now separates the Circle office from the Stock Depot, it has been found convenient to retain the stocks of cash certificates in the Circle office in the joint custody of the Office Superintendent and a clerk of the Mails B Section. We are of the opinion that the officer in charge of the Telegraph Depot should take over the work of the Stock Depot. With the introduction of the changes in the procedure proposed in this report the additional responsibility devolving on this officer by the proposed transfer will not be heavy. The Postmaster-General, Punjab who was consulted in the matter is in favour of the proposal.

43. In Calcutta a part of the Stock Depot with some clerks is located in the Telegraph Storeyard at Alipore. In the main Stock Depot in the old Telegraph Office building are held stocks of forms and cash certificates. The system adopted for compliance with demands by the contingent working in the Telegraph Storeyard is as follows :—

On receipt of a copy of the indent (the original is held by the main Stock Depot) the required articles are put together. A



quantity of timber is obtained on payment from the Controller of Telegraph Stores. The carpenter employed in the branch of the Stock Depot prepares boxes for packing of the articles required to be despatched. The articles together with these boxes are then made over to the despatch department of the Controller of Telegraph Stores for packing and despatch to the indenting officer. The invoices for these despatches have to be prepared by the main Stock Depot in the old Telegraph Office building.

44. We are of the opinion that the work of this branch of the Depot should be entrusted to the Controller of Telegraph Stores. The Postmaster-General, Bengal and Assam Circle who was consulted in the matter agreed that there was not likely to be any practical difficulty in the way of such a transfer being made.

45. The Stock Depots have to supply forms, bags of sorts, postmen's bags, uniforms, bicycles and all other post office requirements.

46. Forms are obtained by the Stock Depots from Government Presses and issued to offices on demand. In the case of the United Provinces and the Punjab Circles the Government Press at Aligarh undertakes to supply forms to all Head and Sub-Post Offices direct. The Branch Offices receive their supplies from the post offices with which they are in account. The demands of the Superintendents of Post Offices and Railway Mail Service, Divisional Engineers Telegraphs, and officers in charge of Government Telegraph Offices in these two Circles are also met direct by the Government Press. In the Bengal and Assam Circle, the Government Press at Calcutta supplies forms direct to all Head Post Offices and the requirements of the other offices have to be met by the Stock Depot. We recommend, that as in the Punjab and the United Provinces Circles all Head and Sub-Post Offices should obtain their requirements from the Printers. If accommodation is required by them for storing the printed forms we suggest that the spacious rooms in the old Telegraph Office building at present used by us for the Stock Depot should be made available for them.

47. Bulk despatches of forms for the Stock Depots at Madras and Bombay are at present made by sea from Calcutta. This mode of transport should continue. The adoption of our suggestion for these Circles would, however, mean that separate consignments for each of the offices in the respective Circles would be made up by the Printers and bundled together to form bulk despatches, which should be consigned to the respective Postmasters-General. On receipt in Bombay and Madras the local authorities will make arrangements for further disposal of the individual consignments by rail. These despatches will include the requirements of the respective Circle Offices, the offices of the Divisional Engineer Telegraphs (including Sub-Divisional Officers), Divisional Superintendents of Post Offices and Railway Mail Service (including the Sub-Divisional Inspectors), Government Telegraph Offices and Railway Mail Service Record Offices. There should, in addition, be a certain reserve supply of selected forms, which should be retained either in the Circle Office or in the main post office at the Headquarters of the Circle for meeting emergencies.

48. The practice obtaining in some of the Circles is to prepare, in triplicate, the form of Schedule, which is prescribed for obtaining supplies of forms. This is against the provisions of Rule 289, of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume II, as corrected by Correction Memo. No. 145, dated the 1st of June 1932. The schedule should be prepared in duplicate.

49. Under note 2 to Rule 299 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume II, the Money Order Receipt Books have to be obtained by Sub-Offices from the Head Offices with which they are in account, and not more than one book is supplied at a time. We suggest, that selection grade Sub-Offices should be authorised to obtain their requirements half-yearly from the source of supply.

50. Uniforms are made up of material obtained from the Indian Stores Department contractors. Except in the case of the United Provinces and the Madras Circles, the procedure followed is to call for tenders for making up uniforms and the work is given out on contract. In the Madras Circle this work is entrusted to the Central jails in the locality where the uniforms have to be supplied. The procedure followed in this Circle is described in the Circle Office note, dated the 13th July 1934 a copy of which is reproduced below :—

*“ Procedure for the supply of uniforms to various officials in the Madras Circle.*

The Divisional Officers are first asked to submit, sufficiently in time, indents for uniforms for the various classes of officials under them and these indents which are received in triplicate are checked in this office and approved, one copy being sent to the Jail Department, another to the Divisional Officer and the third copy retained in this office. A sample form of indent, which is used in this Circle is attached (*vide* Appendix C). Formerly two jails at Tanjore and Vellore were stitching the uniforms, but as there was delay in completing the work, the Inspector General of Prisons was moved last year to open a third centre at Palamcottah for doing the work and so last year's supply was made promptly and within the scheduled time. As soon as the uniforms for all the officials of a division are ready, the Jail Superintendent concerned sends them through the local post office in service parcels of convenient sizes, addressed to the Divisional Officers. The Divisional Officers check the uniforms on receipt with their indents and then distribute them to various officials in the Division, any discrepancy between the number indented for and that actually received as also any defects in stitching, etc., being reported to this office. It may, however, be mentioned here that no complaint of shortage in supply has so far been received in this office ever since the Jail Department undertook to do the work, about ten years ago. As soon as the Jail Superintendent completes the supply of uniforms to any particular division a bill in triplicate is sent by him to this office detailing therein the particulars of uniforms supplied. A sample copy of the bill is attached

(*vide* Appendix D). The particulars noted in the bill as to the number and class of uniforms are checked with the office copy of the indent and passed if found in order, one copy being sent to audit office for book adjustment, the other to the Jail Superintendent, and the triplicate retained in this office. With a view to watch the progress of work in the jails and to guard against the possibility of double payments in respect of one and the same item a statement in the enclosed form (*vide* Appendix E) is maintained in this office. After entire supply of uniforms for the year is completed, a statement is sent to the audit office, as prescribed in para. (2) of Rule 10-A, Appendix 17 of Posts and Telegraphs Initial Account Code, Volume I.

It may be seen from the note above, that sufficient check is exercised at various stages to guard against any irregular or over payment to the Jail Department in respect of making charges of the clothing. As the work is done by a Government Department and the charges are adjusted by book debit a formal report from the Divisional Officers to Circle Office as to the correctness of supplies received by them direct has not been insisted upon before passing the bill.

As regards the supply of cloth, the Indian Stores Department contractors are asked to supply direct a certain quantity of cloth calculated roughly on the work of a group of divisions and offices allotted to each of the three jails whereby there is not only a saving in transport charges, but also in the work of checking and rechecking, unpacking and packing and storing of the cloth is avoided. As the quantity of cloth required for each class of clothing is fixed, there is no difficulty, in determining the total quantity of cloth consumed in making the uniforms, for several divisions, allotted to each of the three jails. Before submitting indents for cloth, etc. for the next year's supply, the quantity of cloth remaining unused, if any, is ascertained and necessary deductions when ever necessary are made in the annual indent."

51. In the United Provinces Circle the entire work is entrusted to the Central Jail, Cawnpore. The completed uniforms are received in the Stock Depot and then distributed to the different offices. This means double handling.

52. We are of the opinion, that the system obtaining in Madras regarding making up of Summer uniforms and their distribution should be extended to other Circles. The Postmaster-General, Punjab who was consulted in the matter did not see any objection to the proposal, and from informal enquiries made from the Inspector General of Prisons, Punjab it has been ascertained, that the Jail Department would be quite prepared to undertake the work.

53. Considerable variation is noticeable in the rates of charges paid in the different Circles. The charge for making up the warm uniforms is the lowest in the Bengal and Assam Circle, and we suggest consideration of the question of entrusting this work for all Circles to the contractors in Calcutta.

54. Most of the articles of stock are purchased by the Depots from the Indian Stores Department contractors for stock and supply to post offices, as required. We have found a tendency in some of the Depots to make purchases merely because funds happen to be available. Some of the articles purchased are of a perishable nature, *e.g.*, bicycle tyres and tubes. This procedure results in capital being unnecessarily locked up, and involves waste of funds in the case of perishable articles due to their deterioration on being held in stock for prolonged periods. Such wastage would be avoided, if requirements of offices were met direct by the Indian Stores Department contractors. The agreements with the latter provide for this facility and we recommend that it should be availed of.

55. In one Depot we found on hand over 5,000 yards of khaki drill cloth and over 3,000 yards of pugree cloth purchased somewhere about the middle of 1933. We consider, that purchases of such articles should be against immediate requirements and they should not be held in stock for future demands.

56. Bicycles required for use in Post offices are purchased through the agency of the Indian Stores Department except in Burma and the United Provinces Circles where local purchases are made. Clocks are obtained through the Indian Stores Department in the Punjab, Bombay, Central and Sind and Baluchistan Circles. In Burma they are purchased locally while in other Circles those for use in post offices are purchased through the Indian Stores Department while time-pieces (marked G. T. D.) for use in Traffic branch of combined offices in the Bombay, Bihar and Orissa and the United Provinces Circles are obtained from the Controller of Telegraphs Stores. In Madras, clocks for the Traffic side are also purchased through the Indian Stores Department, and those for the Engineering branch through the Controller of Telegraph Stores. We consider that it is essential to have a uniform procedure in the matter of obtaining bicycles and clocks and we suggest that bicycles and clocks for the use of post offices should be obtained by Heads of Circles through the Indian Stores Department and that time-pieces (marked P. T. D. and not G. T. D.) for the use of the traffic branch of combined post offices should be obtained from the Controller of Telegraph Stores who presumably obtains his stocks through the Indian Stores Department.

57. Stamps and seals for each individual office (Postal as well as Railway Mail Service) are ordered by the Stock Depots from the Workshop in Aligarh on receipt of requisitions from offices concerned. The supply is received in the Stock Depots and passed on to the indenting offices under invoice. The work would be considerably simplified, if the manufacturers were required to send the supplies direct to the indenting offices concerned. Copies of the invoices accompanying the supply would bear the impressions of the manufactured articles, the receiving officers would sign these invoices in token of their having received the articles correctly and forward them to the Stock Depots to meet the requirements of Rule 366 (2) of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VIII and for adjustment of accounts. We suggest that this system may be adopted.

58. Jute and Canvas Mail bags of sorts are purchased by the Stock Depots from the Indian Stores Department Contractors for issue to the Post Offices and the Railway Mail Service as required. The heaviest demands for them are from large post offices and the Railway Mail Service

and we suggest that they should receive their supplies direct from the manufacturers instead of through the Stock Depots. We understand that there would be no difficulty in extending this system to all selected post offices of even lesser importance. The orders would be placed on the Contractors by the Postmasters-General with detailed instructions regarding the distribution of the supply to the different offices. The receiving offices would send their acknowledgments to the Postmasters-General to enable them to check and accept the bills.

59. Under Rule 711 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume II, the supplies of saleable publications are required to be obtained by the Head Office and selected Sub-Offices from the Stock Depots. Head Offices in the Punjab Circle receive their supplies direct from the Government Press. We suggest, that similar arrangements be made for offices in other Circles and all selection grade Sub-Offices authorised to sell departmental publications. In order to meet unforeseen demands at short notice the supply branch of the Postmaster-General's office should hold a small reserve stock of these publications.

60. Under rules 362 and 372 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VIII, and 255 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume II, all issues made from the Stock Depots are required to be accompanied by serially numbered invoices for each indenting office. This procedure means, that at the beginning of each financial year, the name of every indenting office in a Circle has to be written down in a register called the "Index of Invoices despatched", and a serial number has to be entered in this register against each issue made to the office concerned. At the close of the official year, a closing invoice has to be sent to each of these offices giving the number of the last invoice on which articles of stock were supplied. If no supplies are made to an office during the year, a closing invoice bearing the remark 'nil' is issued. In the case of a post office or Record Office about to be closed before the end of an official year a closing invoice is required to be issued immediately. In the reverse direction all offices having transactions with the Stock Depots are required under Rule 304 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VIII to send to the Depots a closing invoice on the 31st of March each year giving the number of the last invoice with which any articles of stock were returned to the Depots. Such an invoice has to be issued on the last working day if an office is being closed down before the expiry of the official year. This system is much too elaborate and involves a considerable amount of clerical labour. It has been adopted to enable the supervising officers to see whether or not all supplies received from the Stock Depots have been correctly accounted for in the Stock Books of the offices concerned.

61. At the time of our visit to the office of a Superintendent of Post Offices, we found on hand four new time-pieces which were obtained in 1933 after a prolonged correspondence with the Stock Depot. They were intended to be supplied to certain post offices to replace those declared to be beyond repair. But, the correspondence with the Stock Depot having dragged on for months the old time-pieces had in the meantime been repaired and returned to offices concerned. The new supply received in the office of the Superintendent was never brought on to the Stock Book, and the Superintendent and the Deputy Postmaster-General, who

had inspected the Divisional office never discovered the irregularity. This tends to show that in actual practice the prescribed check does not always receive serious attention from the Supervising Officers.

62. We have noticed that by far the largest number of supplies have been made by Stock Depots to Head Post Offices and important Sub-Offices. In the case of other offices only one or two issues are made in the year, and in several instances, there have been no issues at all. When it is remembered that a Stock Depot has to deal with perhaps four to five thousand post offices, besides Divisional and other offices, the names of which have to be reproduced in a register every year it will be appreciated that the present system of issuing serially numbered invoices for each office is extremely wasteful in man power. We recommend that it should be discontinued. The object of the present system can be equally well served by the indent forms being machine-numbered and bound in books of sizes to suit our requirements. Space would be provided on these forms for the annual serial number to be entered on each indent. An indent will be prepared in duplicate and submitted, to the counter-signing authority. One copy of the indent will be received back in the indenting office and the other forwarded to the Stock Depot for compliance. Invoices bearing the serial number of the Stock Depot with which supplies are received will be attached to the copy of the indent by the Indenting officer. It will be the duty of the latter to see that the demand has been complied with in full.

63. We do not consider it necessary to retain the present system of submission of a closing invoice by either the Stock Depots or the Post offices for the number of transactions during the year. We recommend that it should be discontinued.

64. The copies of indents retained in an office together with the connected invoices relating to the previous official year should be destroyed under the orders of the Inspecting Officer, after he has satisfied himself that all supplies have been correctly accounted for in the Stock Book. This procedure is already followed in the case of invoices for saleable publications, and we see no justification for a prolonged preservation of invoices for articles of stock. The last entry in the Stock Book should be signed by the Inspecting Officer in token of his having checked the transactions up to the date of his visit. In large offices the distribution of the stock to the different branches of the office should be shown in the Stock Book by providing in it the requisite number of additional columns.

65. A very elaborate procedure is followed by Head offices in some of the Circles, in connection with the disposal of surplus articles of stock received by them from the offices in account with them. According to this procedure the Sub-Offices forward the articles with serially numbered invoices. The Head Offices acknowledge receipt of the articles, and bring them on their Stock Books. The articles are then included in the "transfer" statements submitted to the Stock Depots. On receipt of the statement the Stock Depot issues a serially numbered invoice for the Head office concerned. The Head office reproduces the number of this invoice in the Stock Book, and if the article is unserviceable, it then consigns it to the Stock Depot with a fresh serially numbered invoice, which is duly acknowledged by the Stock Depot. The above procedure is not authorised by the rules and should be discontinued.

66. We are of the opinion, that steps should be taken to discontinue the present practice of obtaining frequent supplies of consumable articles from the Stock Depots. We have found that important post offices are in the habit of making very frequent demands for consumable articles such as stamping ink, ink pads, circular drill cloth pieces for ink pads, etc. In our opinion, supplies of such articles should be restricted to once or at most twice a year. The demands for the supplies should be submitted to the Postmaster-General, who would forward to the Indian Stores Department contractors a consolidated indent for direct compliance according to the distribution list which should accompany the indent. This should apply also to the requirements of offices of Divisional Superintendents of Post Offices and Railway Mail Service, Divisional Engineers Telegraphs and Departmental Telegraph Offices. The Sub and Branch Post Offices in a Division should obtain their supplies from either the Divisional Superintendents concerned or the Head Offices with which they are in account. For this purpose, adequate supplies of consumable articles should be held by Superintendents of Post Offices and Head Postmasters.

67. According to the instructions contained in Rule 329 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume II, certain damaged articles are required to be returned to the Stock Depots for repairs if arrangements cannot be made to repair them locally. The list includes items such as lamps, lanterns, wicker baskets, etc. The return of such articles to the Stock Depots frequently results in further extensive damage to them in transit and on receipt they are consigned to the rubbish heap. The original cost of these articles is generally so low, that the additional work thrown on the post offices in handling them in transit is entirely wasted. We suggest, that the Supervising Officers who order the local repair or return of such articles to the Stock Depots should be authorised to use their discretion in the matter and resort freely to local disposal by public auction when it is clear, that the articles have given good service and their despatch to the Stock Depots would only result in their being auctioned for a few annas at the other end. In cases of wilful damage, the articles are under the rules, replaced at the expense of the officials to blame.

68. The rule quoted above does not contain any instructions regarding the disposal of unserviceable bicycles and accessories. The result is, that in some circles old tyres and tubes at all stages of decay as also badly buckled wheels, and other perfectly useless parts of bicycles are all consigned to the Stock Depots. Expenditure and labour has been wasted on their transfer and a few annas is all that is collected by their sale at the Depots. The rules require that handcarts and trucks should not be returned to the Stock Depots. They should be repaired locally if damaged and when unserviceable sold locally by auction under proper authority. We suggest similar procedure being ordered for bicycles. The present tendency to return all unserviceable articles to the Stock Depots under invoice should be checked. If there are no local buyers for the unserviceable articles it would be better to throw them away or give them a decent burial than waste time and labour over their return to the Stock Depots.

69. Under Rule 370 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VIII the officer countersigning an indent is held responsible to see that articles passed by him are necessary to meet the requirements of the Indenting Officer. A further careful check is required to be exercised in the Stock

Depot under rule 371. That the second check cannot be effective has been amply demonstrated to us by an instance in which we found that a certain mail office had over 10,000 bags in stock in excess of its requirements. We were told that the Superintendent Railway Mail Service had merely arranged to replace the bags which had been made over to the Division on the closure of the Railway Mail Service range some years ago.

70. In the Circle Office, it is the duty of an Assistant Postmaster General to give the necessary orders on behalf of the Postmaster-General for the issue of stores indented for. This is a needless formality and we consider that this procedure should be modified. The Managers-in-charge of the Stock Depots are already authorised to pass indents for certain articles, without reference to the Head of the Circle. Their powers, however, are very restricted. They are not authorised to issue even petty articles of stock when the value of an indent exceeds Rs. 5. We are of the opinion, that the countersigning officers should be held personally responsible for the reasonableness of demands made by offices subordinate to them and the Circle Office should be relieved of the responsibility of exercising any check on such demands. Indents for articles such as bicycles, etc., should continue to be submitted by the Managers Stock Depots to the Circle Office for orders before the supply is made.

71. Every Postmaster-General issues periodical circulars in English and Vernacular for the guidance of the staff in the Circle. They are either printed or roneoed. The system obtaining in the different Circles is as shown below :-

Name of the Circle.	English.	Vernacular.
Bengal and Assam .. .. .	..	Central Government Press.
Bihar and Orissa .. .. .	..	} Local Government Press.
Central .. .. .	..	
United Provinces .. .. .	..	
Bombay .. .. .	..	Government of Oudh Press, Lucknow on the basis of 2 years' contract.
Madras .. .. .	..	} Roneoed in Circle offices.
Burma .. .. .	..	
Sind and Baluchistan .. .. .	..	
Punjab and N. W. F. .. .. .	..	Government of India Press, Aligarh. As explained below.

72. The system followed in printing the vernacular circulars in the last named Circle is that as soon as a draft circular is ready for being sent to Press, representatives of private presses are invited to the Circle Office and asked to submit their tenders. The work is given to the successful tenderer. This procedure leads to delay and we suggest that with the concurrence of the Controller of Printing, an agreement may be entered into with a private press for a prescribed period in the same manner as in the United Provinces or in the alternative enquiries made as to whether this work cannot be given to the local Jail Press.



## CHAPTER IV.

## Dead Letter Offices.

73. Dead Letter Offices are located at (1) Calcutta, (2) Bombay, (3) Madras, (4) Lahore, (5) Lucknow, (6) Nagpur and (7) Rangoon. Those at Calcutta and Lahore serve two Circles each, namely,—

*Calcutta*—Bengal and Assam, and Bihar and Orissa ;

*Lahore*—Punjab and N.-W. F., and Sind and Baluchistan.

74. The functions of a Dead Letter Office are two-fold, viz., as an enquiry office it redirects articles with insufficient or illegible addresses and as a Dead Letter Office it keeps in deposit articles which cannot be forwarded to the addressees or returned to the senders.

75. Its function as an enquiry office is the more important as expeditions disposal is required to be effected of the following classes of unregistered articles :—

- (a) without address,
- (b) with imperfect address, and
- (c) with undecipherable address.

Under Rule 66 (2) of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume V articles of the above categories are required to be consigned by all post offices to the Dead Letter Office daily through the main post office where the Dead Letter Office is located. Our investigations go to show that the volume of traffic falling under these categories is very appreciable and most of it is forwarded to the addressees by the local Dead Letter Offices. One day's count of these articles kept in the different Dead Letter Offices has given the following results regarding their disposal :—

Dead Letter Offices at

	Lahore.	Lucknow.	Calcutta.	Madras.	Pombay.	Nagpur.	Rangoon.
(a) Transcribed and redirected.		98 or 97%	91.38%	98%	89.48%	90.40%	90%
(b) Transferred to other Dead Letter Offices for transcription ..	2%	..	0.68%	2%	0.48%	1.30%	..
(c) Returned to senders ..	..	1 or 2%	5.44%	..	8.41%	5.65%	6%
(d) Deposited as dead ..	1%	2%	2.50%	..	3.63%	3.05%	4%

76. In the course of our enquiry we have discovered that the Dead Letter Office at Nagpur, in its anxiety to comply with the direction contained in Rule 398 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VIII, returns to the sender to ascertain the "legible address" of an article which cannot be forwarded to the addressee. This action is taken after the name and the address of the sender have been ascertained by opening the article and referring to its contents. If the sender furnishes the required information the original postage is utilised for forwarding the

article to the addressee. Rule 414 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VIII requires that an article which has been opened should be sent to either the sender or the addressee enclosed in a Dead Letter Office envelope. It seems to us that the procedure followed by the Dead Letter Office at Nagpur is not regular, as we feel very doubtful whether the original postage can be utilised for forwarding such an article to the addressee after it has once been opened and returned to the sender. We suggest that the matter may be investigated.

77. Rule 389 (2) of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VIII permits the Dead Letter Offices to close on Sundays, Post Office holidays and other gazetted or public holidays in the same way as Circle offices. Such closure necessarily means delay in disposal of the articles of the classes referred to above. In our opinion the better arrangement would be for all such articles (excluding those without any address) to be dealt with by a section in the General Post Office at the headquarters of each Circle, which might be designated the "Directory" office and which should observe the ordinary post office working hours and be closed only on Sundays and Post Office holidays. We suggest that this system be adopted without delay.

78. In Calcutta and Bombay General Post Offices there is already a section which deals with articles the addressees of which are not readily traceable. The adoption of our suggestion would mean that these sections will have to be enlarged and equipped to deal with articles of the classes referred to in the above paragraph for the whole Circle. Staff required for the work should be drawn from the Local Dead Letter Offices.

79. The proposed directory offices should have the necessary books of reference to enable them to deal expeditiously with articles of the classes referred to in para. 75. The adoption of this suggestion would effect a very appreciable reduction in the volume of work to be handled in the Dead Letter Offices and lead to considerable economy.

80. With the introduction of the above change, the Dead Letter Offices will have to deal with only those articles which have to be opened for purposes of ascertaining such particulars as would facilitate either their delivery to the addressees or return to the senders.

81. It has been noticed that the number of unregistered packets dealt with by the Dead Letter Offices is very large. We are of the opinion that undeliverable packets should be forwarded to the Dead Letter Offices only if the senders' names and addresses cannot be ascertained by the postmasters. Clauses 61 and 62 of the Post and Telegraph Guide contemplate examination of the contents of packets by the postmasters in order to see that there has been no violation of the rules governing the packet post. Our suggestion is that the postmasters should be empowered to ascertain by such examination the names and addresses of senders for return to them of such of the packets as cannot be delivered to the addressees. Under Clause 68 of the Guide, the name and address of the sender has to be furnished on the cover of each pattern packet. This class of articles need not therefore go to a Dead Letter Office if it cannot be delivered. Similarly in the case of undeliverable registered newspapers we see no reason why they should not be returned to the newspaper offices by the postmasters instead of being consigned to the Dead

Letter Offices. The figures noted below show that in 1932-33 no less than 1,066,892 newspapers and packets were dealt with by Dead Letter Offices :—

Number of articles dealt with in Dead Letter Offices.

Name of Dead Letter Offices.	Registered Newspapers.	Unregistered packets.
Bombay .. .. .	20,363	354,857
Calcutta .. .. .	30,346	283,344
Lahore .. .. .	30,686	78,815
Lucknow .. .. .	9,359	40,958
Madras .. .. .	14,807	151,841
Nagpur .. .. .	2,503	20,545
Rangoon .. .. .	10,039	38,429
Total .. .. .	118,103	968,789

82. Had the above articles been returned by offices of delivery to senders in accordance with the provisions of Rule 143 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI as corrected by correction slip No. 327, dated the 1st March 1932, the number of such articles finding their way to Dead Letter Offices would have been quite negligible.

83. Similarly in the case of registered articles, if the names and addresses of the senders are available on the covers, they should invariably be returned direct to the senders by the offices of delivery in conformity with the orders contained in Rule 190 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI as corrected by correction slips Nos. 333 and 334, dated the 1st March 1932 instead of being consigned to the Dead Letter Office. At present large numbers of such articles find their way to Dead Letter Offices.

84. According to note 3 to Rule 413 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VIII, the unpaid or insufficiently paid articles to be returned from a Dead Letter Office to the senders served by sub-offices within the jurisdiction of another Dead Letter Office have to be sent through the latter. The procedure should be amended to enable Dead Letter Offices to return such articles through the Head Offices or the Sub-Offices concerned. The present procedure leads to needless duplication of work.

85. Rule 416 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VIII lays down that if unclaimed or refused printed papers, such as price lists, trade circulars, etc., posted in India are found, on being opened, to have originated in any foreign country, i.e., if the address of the sender be in a country served by the foreign post, they must be sent at once to the appropriate Dead Letter Office for disposal according to general or special instructions given by the local Postmaster-General. In our opinion there should be no objection to authorising all post offices to ascertain the names and addresses of the senders' agents in India by an examination of the contents of the packets and to return the articles to them direct. If the disposal in this manner is not possible the articles should be consigned to the appropriate Dead Letter Office for disposal.

86. The staff employed in each of the Dead Letter Offices is as shown below :—

Name of Dead Letter Office.	Pay of Manager.	Pay of Assistant Manager.	Head Clerks.		Supervisor.		Upper Division clerks.		Lower Division clerks.		Leave Reserve.		Packers.		Peons.		Chowkidar.		Dpttri.		Other inferior servants.		Average monthly cost of establishment.			
			No.	Pay.	No.	Pay.	No.	Pay.	No.	Pay.	No.	Pay.	No.	Pay.	No.	Pay.	No.	Pay.	No.	Pay.	No.	Pay.	No.	Pay.		
Bombay	350—450	250—350	3	160—250	1	60—160 Rs. 20 allowance.	53	60—160	..	..	6	60—160	9	25—30 H. R. A. Rs. 8/8	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	8,228	9 0	
Calcutta	350—450	250—350	4	160—250	..	..	53	60—160	..	..	6	50—160	1	18—23	1	18—23	1	18—23	1	20—30	4	18—23	..	..	7,875	14 0
Lahore ..	250—350	160—250	2	160—250	1	45—145 Rs. 20 allowance.	37	45—145	3	45—85	5	45—145	6	18—23 H. R. A. Rs. 2.	1	18—23 H. R. A. Rs. 2.	1	18—23 H. R. A. Rs. 2.	..	..	..	..	..	5,656	1 0	
Lucknow	250—350	160—250	2	160—250	..	..	48	45—145	1	45—85	4	45—145 45—85	7	15—20	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6,404	9 0
Madras ..	250—350	..	5*	160—250	..	..	48†	40—150	..	..	5	40—150	6	17—22 H. R. A. Rs. 3.	..	..	2	17—22 H. R. A. Rs. 3.	..	..	..	..	..	..	6,351	1 0
Rangoon	250—350	..	2	160—250	..	..	15	70—170	..	..	2	70—170	2	22—27	1	22—27	..	..	..	..	..	1	22—27	2,935	15	
Nagpur	160—250	..	1	160—250	..	..	18	40—140	..	..	2	40—80	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2,232	10 0
																							39,684	1 0		

\* 1 kept vacant.  
† 3 kept vacant.

87. We are of the opinion that there is room for revision of the establishment at present sanctioned for the different Dead Letter Offices and we suggest that the matter may be taken up. With the procedure simplified as suggested in the foregoing paragraphs there will probably be no necessity for the employment of an Assistant Manager. The volume of work done in each of the Dead Letter Offices as shown in the Annual Report for the year 1932-33 does not justify the scales of pay at present sanctioned for the Managers of the Bombay and Calcutta Dead Letter Offices. We suggest that it may be brought down to Rs. 250—350. With the introduction of the proposed changes the pay of the Manager in Lahore can also be brought down to Rs. 160—250. The necessity for the employment of head clerks in each section of the Dead Letter Office on the selection grade scale of pay would also cease to exist. In our opinion time-scale clerks with an allowance of Rs. 20 should ordinarily provide the necessary supervision, selection grade officials being sanctioned for sections with a staff which justifies employment of such officials.

88. It is an every day practice for the different Dead Letter Offices to exchange a large number of articles between themselves. During the half-year ending the 30th of September 1933 they received 449,341 articles from other Dead Letter Offices and transferred 560,303 to other Dead Letter Offices. These figures have risen to 485,077 and 634,035 respectively during the half year ending the 31st of March 1934. We are of the opinion that with the establishment of Directory offices there would be no necessity to maintain a Dead Letter Office at the headquarters of each Circle for the disposal of unclaimed and refused articles. We recommend that one Central Dead Letter Office for the whole of India excluding Burma should be established, preferably at Nagpur, for disposal of such articles. There would then be no question of unclaimed and refused articles being sent from one office to another for disposal, while increase in transit time for their despatch to a Central Office would not be of much consequence. The figures given in para. 75 above show that an extremely small percentage of articles of the categories mentioned therein are transferred to the other Dead Letter Offices for disposal. With the adoption of our proposal these transfers will take place between the Directory offices.

89. As explained in para. 75 above, the post offices have to make daily despatches to the Dead Letter Offices of articles with insufficient address, etc. Under Rule 613 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI, articles have to be sent in the account bag to Head Offices. If our suggestion is adopted all post offices would send the articles with insufficient address, etc., to their respective directory offices while the refused and unclaimed articles would be consigned to the proposed Central Dead Letter Office. This office would serve as (i) deposit office for dead articles for the whole of India, and (ii) office for the disposal of unclaimed and refused articles.

90. Rule 419 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VIII lays down that if any article issued from a Dead Letter Office for delivery to the sender and realisation of the postage or any other sum taxed on it, is declined by the sender and returned to the Dead Letter Office, the Manager will in the first instance issue a letter to the postmaster concerned, in Form D. L. O. 15 authorising him to call upon the sender to pay up the charges due. If the sender still refuses to pay the postage due, the Manager will submit the case for the orders of the Postmaster.

General. Finally the case has to be referred to the Director-General and if he so decides, non-official correspondence for the sender has to be stopped and necessary authority in Form D. L. O. 15 (a) issued to the postmaster. This elaborate procedure involves much unnecessary delay in correspondence and we are of the opinion that in such cases postmasters should be authorised to issue a notice in Form D. L. O. 15 without obtaining Postmaster-General's sanction, further action being taken as at present if it is considered necessary to obtain the orders of the Director-General for stoppage of non-official correspondence. We are in favour of this power being delegated to the Postmasters-General to be exercised by them personally.

91. Under Rule 111 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume V, all unpaid inland postcards of private manufacture and insufficiently paid postcards have to be sent by the post offices to the Dead Letter Office for destruction. We are of the opinion that the duty of destruction of postcards should be delegated to Head Postmasters thus relieving Dead Letter Offices of this work entirely. The Head Offices will receive all such articles from the Sub and Branch Offices in account with them and it will be the personal responsibility of the Head Postmaster to check and destroy them. Such postcards found in the Railway Mail Service should be consigned to the nearest Head Office.

92. According to Rule 111 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume V, open or insecurely closed unpaid letters are sent to the Dead Letter Office for destruction. It appears that inhabitants of rural localities labour under a misapprehension that unpaid letters reach addressees without fail, while they think that paid articles are at times liable to go astray. In a large number of such cases articles, though securely closed when posted, get opened, in transit, chiefly due to weather conditions and ineffectiveness of means adopted for closing. All such articles are required to be consigned to the Dead Letter Offices. We are of the opinion that in the majority of cases the Department would be able to realise the postage due if such articles were closed and sent out for delivery to the addressees, and we suggest that this procedure may be adopted.

93. According to the formula laid down in the Bewoor Time Test for the operative staff of Dead Letter Office the time factor allowed for the disposal of unregistered articles is 2.5 minutes per article with a coefficient of 6/5. It has been represented to the Director-General by the All-India Postal and R. M. S. Union that having regard to the fact that the work in connection with the disposal of unclaimed, undeliverable or refused articles which bear on the outside the names and addresses of the senders has been decentralised to Head Offices, the Dead Letter Offices have now to dispose of articles which do not bear the names and addresses of senders and they therefore take much longer to dispose of such articles than is permitted under the Bewoor Time Test. We have watched the work performed in some of the Dead Letter Offices in this connection and come to the conclusion that for the reasons advanced, the time factor for disposal of unregistered articles should be increased from 2.5 to 2.75, the coefficient remaining the same as at present. A further examination of the adequacy of the proposed time factor would become necessary when Directory offices are established. It would then perhaps be possible to prescribe a lower time factor for the Directory offices and a higher one for the Central Dead Letter Office.

## CHAPTER V.

## Railway Mail Service.

94. Several of the senior experienced officers of the Department have told us that the efficiency of the Railway Mail Service has suffered a great deal as a result of this branch of the Department being placed under the Postmasters-General. The changes took place in October 1927, January 1929 and April 1929. It is now represented that the Postmasters-General are saddled with so many responsible duties that they have not the time to give the administration of the Railway Mail Service the necessary consideration for its satisfactory working. The successful working of the Post Office depends very largely on the efficiency of the Railway Mail Service, and we are told that unless steps are taken to improve the present state of affairs, the efficiency of the service must go from bad to worse.

95. Prior to 1927, the administration of the Railway Mail Service was placed in the hands of three Deputies Postmaster-General with their headquarters at Ambala, Calcutta and Poona. In their report, the Posts and Telegraphs Department Committee of 1924-25, presided over by the late Sir Thomas (then Mr.) Ryan, stated that in their opinion the time had come for the Railway Mail Service to be placed under the Postmasters-General as an integral part of the ordinary postal administration. They contended that the organisation then existing was not conducive to economy and the isolation of this Branch of the Service was causing a number of administrative difficulties. The disadvantages attaching to the then existing arrangements were stated to be as follows :—

- “ (a) In Loss and fraud cases both the Railway Mail Service and the Post Office are frequently concerned, and the final settlement of such cases and the definite fixing of responsibility is greatly complicated by the fact that the two staffs concerned are under separate control, and considerable friction between the two branches frequently results.
- (b) The distinction of control makes co-ordination of policy and effort almost impossible, and as the administrative local heads of the Railway Mail Service are of a status inferior to that of postal circle officers, there is an inevitable tendency that their suggestions shall carry less weight with the Directorate, and where differences occur, the scales tend to be weighted in favour of the latter.
- (c) The Railway Mail Service personnel feel that their interests cannot be represented with the same force as those of their postal brothers.
- (d) Owing to the fact that the Railway Mail Service is not so well paid as the ordinary postal service, and has a lower standard for recruitment there is a tendency to regard it as the Cinderella of the Department.”

96. The Committee were of the opinion that the above difficulties might be removed “ either by once more placing the Railway Mail Service as a whole under the control of a single officer of the status of a Postmaster-General, that is to say, by reviving the system of one Inspector General, Railway Mail Service, for the whole of India or by placing the

existing Deputies, Postmaster-General, Railway Mail Service, under the control of postal Postmasters-General.' They remarked that the former system having already been tried and abandoned as 'unsatisfactory, it was not desirable to revert to it so long as any alternative remained.

97. The Committee held that the difficulties of adjusting the Railway Mail Service charges to coincide with the various postal circles were of a very formidable nature. The problems which required solution were stated to be as follows :—

- (a) The adjustment of Railway Mail Service section in such a way as to make them coterminous with postal circles, and the designation of sections in each circle.
- (b) The control of the foreign mail sections and questions relating thereto.
- (c) The issue of high officials' tour orders, and through sorting lists.
- (d) Correspondence with the different railways regarding haulage, postal accommodation, and rolling stock.
- (e) The control of Railway Mail Service sections on through trunk lines."

98. The Committee admitted that the above difficulties were such as to preclude the possibility of an attempt being made to hold each Postmaster-General responsible for the Railway Mail Service organisation working within the limits of his postal Circle. They recommended that the scheme should be modified to the extent of "packing only those Postmasters-General in charge of the Railway Mail Service work whose headquarters are located at the headquarters of the more important Railway Administrations, and giving them control of all Railway Mail Service work on the Railway systems administered from those headquarters." They felt that the proposed change would greatly simplify the solution of the above problems. It meant the placing of the administration of the Railway Mail Service in the charge of the Postmasters-General, Bengal and Assam, Bombay, Madras and the Punjab.

99. The changes actually introduced in the years 1927 and 1929 have resulted in the administration of the Railway Mail Service being entrusted to each Head of a Postal Circle. The defects enumerated in para. 95 above have not been remedied by this change. Our views on the different items are as follows :—

- (a) The loss and fraud cases do not necessarily concern the staff belonging to only one Circle. The settlement of such cases has not therefore been made any easier nor do the Railway Mail Service find themselves in happier circumstances. Elimination of friction if any has been secured at the expense of efficiency as Railway Mail Service problems do not always receive the consideration they deserve.
- (b) Co-ordination of policy has not been secured. Our investigations go to show that changes in timings of important through trains affecting more than one Circle and involving revision of sorting lists do not receive proper attention with the result that misrouting of the mails takes place and continues.



undetected. The letter mail is thus subjected to serious delay. The change has not relieved the Directorate of the responsibility of having to settle inter-circle differences in matters relating to the Railway Mail Service.

- (c) From the instances, which have been brought to our notice it is pretty clear that under the present organization the Railway Mail Service personnel are not better off than they were when Railway Mail Service was a separate organisation. In the circle offices the Railway Mail Service problems are tackled by officials who do not hesitate to admit that they do not feel competent to deal with them with any success or promptitude. The Railway Mail Service is looked upon as a side line requiring no attention.
- (d) The Railway Mail Service is as well paid as the postal staff and has the same standard of recruitment but still it appears to be regarded as the Cinderella of the Department.

100. The inherent defects in the present day organisation are as follows :—

- (a) The beats of Railway Mail Service sections have been curtailed in the attempt to make them coterminous with the territorial jurisdiction of each postal circle, but the object has not been achieved in all cases.
- (b) Mail and Record offices situated within the territorial area of one circle are in some cases under the administrative control of another circle.
- (c) The control of Railway budget in respect of one railway system is vested in one Head of a Circle whereas the Railway Mail Service sections working over that railway system are controlled by two or three circles.
- (d) There is lack of co-ordination between the Circle officers with the consequent lack of unity of policy and procedure.
- (e) Any change in the running of trains on a single railway system, such as the G. I. P. or the E. I. R. has to be worked out in respect of sorting and mail arrangements by more than one Postmaster-General, and protracted correspondence has to be carried on between different circles. These consultations inevitably cause delay duplicate work and multiply issue of Sorting orders.
- (f) More than one Postmaster-General has to discuss matters with the same railway administration in connection with the same question which frequently means divided counsels.
- (g) Mail vans and mail offices seldom receive attention of the responsible officers of the Circle.

101. The interests of the Foreign Mail have been safeguarded by placing the Foreign Mail Division under the Postmaster-General, Bombay. This Division controls the movements of the Foreign Mails throughout the country. The other difficulties enumerated in para. 95 above have not only not been overcome, but the changes introduced have resulted in an enormous increase in the volume of work.

102. Had the original recommendation of the Ryan Committee been adopted and the Postmasters-General whose headquarters are at the headquarters of the more important through railway systems in India given the control of the Railway Mail Service organization working over those systems, the duplication of work in connection with items (c) and (d) of para. 97 above would have been avoided to a certain extent.

103. In order to secure effective control of administration of the Railway Mail Service the Ryan Committee had suggested that the Postmasters-General should have the assistance of an officer of the standing of Deputy Postmaster-General who would have the experience and status necessary to permit of the delegation to him of considerable powers. Their recommendations involved the absorption into the postal circles of the Deputies Postmaster-General who were then holding charge of the Railway Mail Service circles. There has therefore not only been no economy in the present organisation but the change has made a permanent feature of the very real difficulties which were recognised by the Ryan Committee, and which difficulties exist in the shape of duplication of sorting orders and protracted correspondence with different railway administrations by different Heads of Circles.

104. We are impressed with the arguments, which have been placed before us by different witnesses to the effect that the Railway Mail Service work requires expert knowledge to deal with its problems and we are satisfied that the arrangement of placing the administration of the Railway Mail Service under the different Postmasters-General has not proved a success. Prior to 1907, the administration of the Railway Mail Service was under one Inspector General, who had been given one Deputy to assist him. In our opinion the assistance given to this officer was inadequate, and we are satisfied that a reversion to the old arrangement whereby the administration of this branch of the postal department would be under one officer with two Deputies and one officer of the rank of Assistant Postmaster-General to assist him, would secure a more efficient service than is possible under the existing conditions. The officer-in-charge (designated Director of Mails) should be of the rank of the Postmaster-General and of the two Deputies, one would supervise the Railway Mail Service work of the sections and offices on the East Indian, Bombay Baroda and Central India (metre gauge), Eastern Bengal, Assam Bengal, North-Western, Bengal & North Western and other auxiliary railways, which comprised the defunct Northern and Eastern Circles. The second Deputy would supervise the work on the Great Indian Peninsula, Bombay Baroda and Central India (broad gauge), Bengal Nagpur, Madras and Southern Mahratta, South Indian, Kathiawar, Mysore, Nizam State, Jodhpur, Bikaner, States Railways and other auxiliary branch lines, which at one time comprised the Western and Southern Railway Mail Service circles. The office of the proposed Director of Mails with its headquarters in Delhi would issue weekly sorting orders to all concerned and compile due mail and sorting lists for all Railway Mail Service sections and post offices in direct communication with the Railway Mail Service. We are further convinced that the proposed arrangement would be of very great administrative value in connection with the rapid development of the Air Mail Services. One controlling authority would be in a better position to arrange for the expeditious disposal of Air Mail postings, and located at the Headquarters of the Director-General, Posts and Telegraphs, the Director of Mails would be able to relieve the former of a great deal of

work in connection with the issue of instructions regarding the despatch of Air Mails to the nearest Air Port by the most expeditious route and economical means. The staff required for the office of the proposed Director of Mails should be found from the staff at present employed in Circle offices on Railway Mail Service work. ✓

105. The General Post Offices at Bombay and Madras are entrusted with the entire sorting work in those stations while in Calcutta the sorting is distributed among the General Post Office, the Railway Mail Service Sorting Office at Sealdah, and the Railway Mail Service Sorting Office at Howrah. The last named office is under the administrative control of the Postmaster-General, Bihar & Orissa.

106. The Sorting Office at Madras, under the control of the Presidency Postmaster, Madras, is located near the railway station about a couple of miles away from the General Post Office. In order to secure the best possible results it is essential that the sorting work should be entrusted to experienced hands. The present arrangement frequently results in changes in the personnel being made to suit the convenience of the General Post Office, and we have been told that the staff of the Sorting Office of the General Post Office is freely changed about, and, not infrequently, those clerks, who fail to give satisfaction in post office work, are drafted to work in the sorting office. Such changes cannot but make for inefficiency in sorting. We are of the opinion, that the sorting should be placed under the control of the proposed Director of Mails. It is realised that the proposed change would mean that the Registered articles booked at the General Post Offices would have to be sent invoiced in Registered Lists and enclosed in bags addressed to the proposed sorting offices (in the same building at Bombay and Calcutta) and again invoiced and enclosed in bags addressed to the different sections by the sorting offices. This would undoubtedly mean duplication of work but such duplication is already taking place in Madras, where the General Post Office has to resort to this method of transfer to the Sorting Office near the Central Railway station. If this duplication cannot be avoided by resorting to hand transfer, bulk entry for registered articles suggested by us (para. 287) would considerably simplify matters. The General Post Offices would continue to make direct parcel bags for the different sections.

107. At Bombay the work of the old foreign mail division should be taken away from the Superintendent, Foreign Post and placed along with the sorting work done in the Bombay General Post Office (in respect of unregistered and registered articles) under a Superintendent, Railway Mail Service. The existing newspaper sorting offices in Bombay and at other stations, wherever they exist, should also be placed under the control of the Superintendent Railway Mail Service.

108. In Calcutta although the sorting work is performed in three centres yet considerable unsorted matter which should go to sorting offices is consigned to running sections by Town Sub-Offices, which prepare direct bags for the latter. In Poona, sorting work is performed at the General Post Office, Poona City Post Office and the Railway Mail Service Sorting Office which results in making up 3 bags for the same running section and object of concentrating, sorting work at stationary offices is frustrated. We are convinced that the sorting work would be done more efficiently and economically if it were placed under the supervision and control of Railway Mail Service Superintendents.

109. At present large staff is maintained in several Railway Mail Service sections to do Town Delivery sorting work and no less than 145 sorters are required in running sections for the Town Delivery sorting for Calcutta alone. It is suggested that the delivery centres at Calcutta and other places for which town delivery work is done in Railway Mail Service sections should be assigned numbers as is the case in Bombay. This system should replace the symbols such as S. W., E., etc., which are at present used in Simla, Madras and other places. The delivery area numbers should be shown against the offices concerned in the List of Indian Posts and Telegraph Offices in section XIII of the Post and Telegraph Guide. The names of non-delivery town offices should have entered against them the number of the delivery office serving the area. The public should be advised to address their correspondence correctly and the articles not addressed to District Numbers should be consigned to the Main Post Office in the City for subsequent despatch to the Town Sub-Offices. The stationary offices can also sort such articles according to District numbers and thus relieve the running sections of this work.

110. We have found that accommodation provided for certain sections and mail offices such as J-22 and Howrah Railway Mail Service is very limited and work has to be carried on under trying conditions. We recommend that steps should be taken to reduce work in sorting sections by improved accommodation being provided for mail offices to enable them to take up more work.

111. We are of the opinion that the system of preparing unusual bag invoices described in rules 161—163 of Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume V, should be extended to important Mail and Post Offices.

112. I. The mail agency work now performed by the Railway Mail Service at the following stations can conveniently be transferred to the Post Offices at those stations as they are situated near the Railway stations and the number of bags exchanged is not large. Posts of seven sorters on time scale of pay can thus be brought under reduction and savings effected under house rent:

1. Kanbalu	.. .. .	1 sorter.
2. Samasatta	.. .. .	1 sorter.
3. Ghaziabad	.. .. .	2 sorters.
4. Pakala	.. .. .	1 sorter.
5. Kundian	.. .. .	2 sorters.

II. The post of mail agents (time scale sorters) can be converted into that of mail guards for exchanging mails at the following stations:—

1. Jetalsar	.. .. .	1
2. Lumding	.. .. .	1
3. Ruk	.. .. .	1
4. Sibi	.. .. .	1
5. Chandausi	.. .. .	1
6. Ratangarh	.. .. .	1
7. Ladhran	.. .. .	2
8. Dandkhel	.. .. .	1
9. Sherkot	.. .. .	1

Ten posts of sorters on time scale of pay can thus be converted into those of mail guards.

113. Under Rule 27 of Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VII, the head sorters employed in running sections of the Railway Mail Service are required to check the work papers of the sorters in the same manner as prescribed for examination of these papers in the Record Offices in Rule 132. Rule 68 of this publication further makes it the personal duty of the head sorter to carry out a very careful examination of the work papers relating to the registration and parcel sorters. The question of dispensing with the examination carried out in the Record Offices has before now been under consideration of the Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs on a suggestion made by one of the executive officers but the suggestion was not accepted. It was, at the same time, laid down that the Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs saw no reason to relieve the head sorters of the duty at present prescribed for them in Rule 27. We consider that the second detailed examination of the work papers in the Record Offices is unnecessary as it seldom, if ever, results in any mistakes being found and it can safely be abolished. The Postal Officers' Association has also put forward this suggestion. In our opinion a beginning should be made by restricting this examination to 50 per cent. of the work papers with the ultimate object of its total abolition.

114. Detailed examination of mail lists in Record Offices should in any case be abolished altogether.

115. In every Railway Mail Service division Inspectors in the selection grade are employed for checking the work of sorters. In our opinion the class of work done by them can be equally well performed by Assistant Inspectors selected from the time-scale sorters with a special allowance. In the post office certain selection grade appointments of Supervisors have been replaced by time-scale clerks with an allowance, and we see no justification for the employment of selection grade inspectors in the Railway Mail Service. We recommend their replacement by Assistant Inspectors. It should be the duty of the proposed Assistant Inspectors to be frequently on the move to check the work of the sorters in the running sections.

116. In addition to the Inspectors, there is at present one other selection grade Inspector in each Division, designated the Headquarters Inspector. His primary duty is to conduct enquiries and to assist the Superintendent in the general administration of the Division. If, for purposes of investigations, the services of one Headquarters Inspector are considered to be insufficient we recommend that an additional Headquarters Inspector may be sanctioned for this purpose when Inspectors are replaced by Assistant Inspectors.

117. Several officers have told us that the present system of employing Superintendents of Post Offices in charge of Railway Mail Service Divisions for a period of only three years is contributing very largely to the inefficiency of the Railway Mail Service work. It is contended that it takes a Superintendent of Post Offices the major part of the prescribed period of tenure to understand the intricacies of the Railway Mail Service work and one enthusiast has gone to the extent of asserting that the Railway Mail Service is a lifelong study. Another school of thought describes the Railway Mail Service as routine work which requires no study at all. We have given the matter our very careful consideration, and we are satisfied that a thorough knowledge of sorting is most essential for the

general efficiency of the post office and it is imperative that steps should be taken to improve the efficiency of the Railway Mail Service. We suggest that with the present organisation, Superintendents of Post Offices should be required to hold charge of Railway Mail Service Divisions for not less than five years.

118. That the intricacies of the Railway Mail Service administration are not such an easy matter has been brought home to us by a bold admission by a Deputy Postmaster-General to the effect that it takes him some hours to deal with a case involving a Railway Mail Service problem, while an officer with the Railway Mail Service, experience would be able to settle it within 20 minutes. We consider that pending settlement of the question of placing the entire work of the Railway Mail Service under one officer specially selected officers with Railway Mail Service experience should be employed in Circle Offices to assist the Postmasters-General in the administration of the Railway Mail Service. These offices should invariably be consulted in all cases relating to the staff and establishment employed on the Railway Mail Service. In this connection we would like to mention that bitter complaints have been made to us to the effect that in a certain Circle well-considered schemes submitted by Superintendents, Railway Mail Service, are turned down in the Circle Office. The officers dealing with them do not understand nor take the trouble to understand the problems. We have further been told that in this Circle the Postmaster-General or the Deputies Postmaster-General do not pay any attention to the working of the Railway Mail Service and seldom if ever, visit the sorting offices and mail offices. An examination of the travelling allowance bills of these officers tends to confirm this, as it has been noticed that most of the journeys are performed by road and the charges claimed by rail.

119. At Howrah Railway Mail Service and Railway station three stamp vendors (on Rs. 25 each) are employed on sale of stamps worth Rs. 200 per day. It should be possible to reduce this number and the Superintendent, Railway Mail Service, agrees that this can be done without any inconvenience to the public.

120. Van peons and porters of the Railway Mail Service should be considered in the same cadre for the pay drawn in the establishment bills and separate entries regarding these two classes of officials in establishment bills, acquittance rolls and service rolls should be done away with.

121. We have at present 14 Railway Mail Service Divisions in India (excluding Burma) and the superior staff in each Division consists of the following:—

Superintendent	..	1
Headquarters Inspector	..	1
Head Record Clerk	..	1
Head Clerk or Accountant		1
Sub-Division Inspectors	..	4 or 5 according to the size of the Division.

We have recommended the replacement of Inspectors by time-scale sorters with an allowance for the checking of sorting work, and have suggested that an additional Headquarters Inspector may be attached to each division whenever necessary for investigation work.

122. We examined 11 out of the 14 Superintendents, Railway Mail Service and the predominant impression that we have received from their

evidence is that their exclusion from the privilege of special classification under Supplementary Rule 18 for purposes of travelling allowances, has caused more discontent in this branch than on the postal side. A Superintendent of Post Offices can and does frequently travel by motor car, but this alternative is not open to his colleague on the Railway Mail Service side who meets the position by restricting his journeys to the irreducible minimum. We were also told by several witnesses that their Inspectors could not go out on tour frequently enough because of the curtailment of the grant for travelling allowances, and we feel that in this matter the policy requires to be reviewed. It appears to us that it is false economy to restrict the grants for travelling allowances of officers specially appointed for touring, and would suggest that in cases of financial stringency the better alternative would be to keep some of these appointments in abeyance and enlarge the jurisdiction of the remainder.

123. Another impression which we received from the evidence recorded by us is that the work of a Superintendent, Railway Mail Service is in many respects different from that of the Superintendent of Post Offices. Much of the work is of a routine nature, and consists of the issue of tour orders and dealing with staff cases. There is no rigid definition as to which sections or offices should be inspected by a Superintendent, Railway Mail Service and the inspections are shared between him, the Headquarters Inspector and Sub-Divisional Inspector.

124. We suggest that a Superintendent, Railway Mail Service should be required to inspect every important section and every mail office in his Division at least twice a year. It must also be a part of his duty to carry out a rigid and systematic examination of all the sorters in his Division in such a way that every one is examined at least twice a year. Our object is not to relieve the Headquarters Inspector of inspection which he must perform while out on the line on investigation work but that the Superintendent's inspections must be in addition to these visits by the Headquarters Inspector whose main function should be that of investigation.

125. Several of the senior Railway Mail Service officers who gave us the benefit of their experience laid great emphasis on the interdependence of the sorting arrangements in one unit on those of others, and as we were quite convinced of the correctness of this view we have suggested that the Railway Mail Service should be treated as a separate organisation. A natural corollary to the recognition of this principle is that the Railway Mail Service units of administration should be as large as convenient to secure the maximum of efficiency and to ensure that the arrangements made in one part of the unit do not clash with those of others. With this object in view, we enquired from most of the Superintendents, Railway Mail Service who appeared before us if it was possible for two of the existing divisions to be amalgamated into one. Several favoured the idea, but others felt that the combined divisions would become unmanageable as the staff work alone would take up all the time of a Superintendent. From the evidence we conclude that work in some of the present Divisions is sufficiently light to permit of an extension of jurisdiction but in others this cannot be done without loss of efficiency.

126. The tone of the service must necessarily deteriorate if the officers are unwilling to go out on inspections. In order to obtain maximum of efficiency we suggest that the present 14 Railway Mail Service Divisions may be redistributed into 4 divisions under Divisional Superintendents

and 12 sub-divisions (under Deputy Superintendents). The headquarters of the Divisional officers should be at Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and Lahore and those of the Sub-Divisional Officers under them should be at Lahore, Delhi, Ajmere, Allahabad, Calcutta, Silchar, Trichinopoly, Madras, Poona, Bombay, Nagpur and Baroda. The Divisional Superintendents should all be first class officers, while the Deputy Superintendents in charge of Sub-Divisions should be gazetted officers promoted from subordinate ranks (selected solely on qualifications of efficiency) and placed in the scale of Rs. 250—20—450. The main function of the Superintendent would be inspection, investigations requiring his personal attention and issue of sorting orders. The Inspectors and Assistant Inspectors will all be under his direct control. *(para 126)*

127. First appointments of time-scale clerks will be made by the Divisional Superintendent and he will allot the staff to the sub-divisions in his jurisdiction. The Deputy Superintendents would do staff work, issue tour orders and do other routine work which at present takes up the bulk of the time of the Superintendent, Railway Mail Service. The Deputy Superintendent will grant leave to the time scale clerks and keep character sheets and service books and service rolls.

128. As already explained the present distribution of Railway Mail Service sections with a view to make the Divisions coterminous with the territorial jurisdiction of the Postmaster-General's charge has not been conducive to efficiency. We would suggest a redistribution of the sections so as to give to each of the Superintendents full control over one mail route and the charges of the Deputy Superintendents should be so fixed as to have about 350 sorters in each sub-division. In our opinion, the distribution may be somewhat as follows :—

The Southern Division to consist of the following 3 sub-divisions :

- T Headquarters at Trichinopoly and comprising the whole of the South Indian Railway system.
- M Headquarters Madras, to be made up of the Madras sorting office and the route from Madras to Calcutta with the connecting minor sections.
- B Headquarters Poona the whole of the metre gauge of the Madras and Southern Mahratta, the Bombay-Madras broad gauge section and other minor sections connected with the system.

The Western Division to consist of the following sub-divisions :

- F. M. sub-division to be comprised of the Foreign mail and Bombay sorting.
- F Headquarters Nagpur to comprise of the Bombay to Calcutta route via the Bengal Nagpur Railway, the Great Indian Peninsula section from Bombay to Allahabad together with the minor sections working into these main sections.
- W Headquarters Baroda to comprise of the Bombay Baroda and Central India Broad Gauge, sections of the Great Indian Peninsula not included in the F. Division and railways in Kathiawar and Gujerat.



The Eastern Division to have the following sub-divisions :

- E Headquarters Calcutta to comprise of Calcutta Sorting and Eastern Bengal Railway (Broad gauge).
- S Headquarters Silchar to consist of the Assam Bengal Railway and Eastern Bengal Railway (metre gauge) and the steamer services.
- A Headquarters Allahabad to be comprised of the Rohilkhand and Kumaun Railway, Bengal and North Western Railway and the East Indian Railway line from Calcutta to Lucknow and Delhi.

Northern Division with the following sub-divisions :

- L Headquarters Lahore to consist of the main sections Lahore to Karachi and Lahore to Peshawar.
- D Headquarters Delhi to be comprised of the Lahore-Delhi and Lahore to Lucknow sections on the North Western and East Indian Railways.
- J Headquarters Ajmere to consist of the Bombay Baroda and Central India (Metre gauge), Udaipur-Chittorgarh, the Jodhpur and the Bikaner Railways.

129. Under the proposed system each Deputy Superintendent will have an Accounts section (under a qualified Accountant) as at present in the Head Record Offices and a sorting section under an Inspector.

130. It may be argued that under the proposed scheme the charges on account of travelling allowances of the Superintendents will be heavy but we feel that an extended jurisdiction has obvious advantages. We do not believe that the organization suggested by us will be more expensive than the present one. We are confident that it will make for very much improved efficiency.

## CHAPTER VI

### Foreign post.

131. We have made a general review of the methods adopted for the disposal of the sea-borne mails, and we offer certain suggestions for their simplification. In dealing with the subject we have confined ourselves to the major problems as we consider it unnecessary to go into all the details relating to the sorting work.

132. Our attention has been drawn to a newspaper report according to which First-Class Mail matter is intended in future to be despatched from England to India by means of daily Air services. If this development takes place and all letter mail is exchanged by Air transport the scene of activity will be shifted from Bombay to Karachi and the sea-borne mail will lose much of its present importance. In the meantime, we are of the opinion, that it should be possible to make more economical arrangements for the handling of all kinds of this mail at Bombay.

133. Our observations of the Outward Foreign Mail sorting have convinced us that the work in the vans could be appreciably reduced, if the provisions of Rule 67 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume V, were generally followed. This rule requires that all offices and sections which make up bags or bundles for F. M. 6, F. M. 9, or F. M. 14 Out sections, should prepare labelled bundles for certain offices in the United Kingdom. We find that usually this is not done and the bulk of the mails is received in the vans in an unsorted condition. The observance of this rule should be strictly enforced.

134. At present separate bags for a large number of offices in the United Kingdom and other foreign countries are prepared by some of the large Indian Post offices including Bombay Ballard Pier and also F. M. 9 Out and F. M. 14 Out sections. Some of the bags prepared by these sections for the offices in the United Kingdom contain very few articles and hardly justify their retention. We propose that such direct bags may be discontinued and their contents consigned to the Ballard Pier Sorting office in labelled bundles for inclusion by it in its direct bags. This will reduce the number of bags, which are at present unnecessarily prepared by the running sections, as well as the total number of bags from India to the United Kingdom.

135. With regard to the Inward Foreign Mails, we would observe that these are received throughout the week by various lines of steamers but the most important receipt is on Thursday afternoon or Friday morning when the P. and O. Mail boat brings the mails from the United Kingdom, Germany, France and other European countries and also America.

136. Several of the important towns in Great Britain as well as certain other countries close direct bags for important towns in India. The bulk of the sea-borne mails is, however, received from London (Foreign section), and we will first consider the manner in which despatches are made by that office to India. Under the scheme in operation at present, London prepares direct mails for Bombay City, Calcutta, Karachi, Madras City, Rangoon, Sind and the Persian Gulf. The direct mails include correspondence of all kinds, *viz.*, Registered and Unregistered Letters, Postcards and Packets. The rest of the Mails is enclosed in bags prepared for 23

territorial divisions and one bag containing unregistered letters and post-cards for each of the following places :—

Agra.	Cawnpore.	Lucknow.	Poona.
Allahabad.	Delhi.	Meerut.	Quetta.
Ambala.	Jhansi.	Mhow.	Rawalpindi.
Bangalore.	Jubbulpore.	New Delhi.	Simla.
Bareilly.	Lahore.	Peshawar.	Trimulgherry.

137. The arrangement for the registered mails for all places (excluding Calcutta, Madras, Karachi and Rangoon for which offices direct mails are sent) is that bags are closed for the territorial divisions while all Insured letters are included in the registered bags marked India 'Miscellaneous'. On the date of our visit, we noticed that the Ballard Pier office had to deal with only 58 insured letters and in their disposal the ordinary procedure prescribed for this class of traffic was followed, *i.e.*, each of the letters was weighed and put into an insured cover or included in a bundle. The weight of each of these articles is converted from grammes or ounces into "rates" and all the covers are then sent on to the Bombay G. P. O. for onward transmission. We are of the opinion that the handling of these letters at the Ballard Pier is entirely unnecessary and the best plan would be to ask London authorities to close all these insured letters in the registered bags for Bombay City. We will thus avoid the double handling which takes place at present.

138. The Postmaster-General, Bombay, has kindly supplied us with a list showing the number of bags prepared by the Ballard Pier office, and we note below the names of offices for which 10 or more bags are prepared from the unsorted mails :—

Calcutta .. ..	40	Chakrata .. ..	11
Rangoon .. ..	22	Meerut .. ..	19
Jubbulpore .. ..	21	Mussoorie .. ..	10
Ranikhet .. ..	26	Naini Tal .. ..	19
Poona .. ..	27	Kirkee .. ..	12
Mhow .. ..	16	Secunderabad .. ..	11
Jhansi .. ..	13	Madras City .. ..	36
Agra .. ..	13	Amritsar .. ..	40
Bareilly .. ..	11	Delhi .. ..	71
Ahmednagar .. ..	10	Ferozepore .. ..	15
Ahmedabad .. ..	17	Murree .. ..	10
Trimulgherry .. ..	13	Lahore .. ..	74
Bangalore T. D. .. ..	48	Nowshera .. ..	14
Nagpur .. ..	11	Peshawar .. ..	34
Shillong .. ..	10	Razmak .. ..	15
Allahabad .. ..	21	Srinagar .. ..	11
Milkusha (Lucknow) .. ..	16	Karachi .. ..	16
Lucknow .. ..	18	Bombay Town Sub-offices .. ..	20
Ambala .. ..	17	Jullundur .. ..	10
Lahore Cantt. .. ..	10	Multan .. ..	11
Rawalpindi .. ..	42	Sialkot .. ..	16
Risalpur .. ..	10	Bombay Fort .. ..	25

139. The necessity for the making up of so many bags by the Ballard Pier office appears to be due to two reasons. The London Foreign Section closes only one letter bag for the towns referred to in paragraph 136 above. The remaining correspondence for these very places is either unsorted or tied up in bundles and included in the bags marked India 'Miscellaneous'. It also appears from a communication, dated the 27th May 1927, from the Secretary, General Post Office, London, to the Director-General, Posts and Telegraphs, that bulky letter packets are sent specially in the 1st Division (*i.e.*, the India Miscellaneous) *at the request of the Indian Administration.*

140. To reduce work at the Ballard Pier, we would suggest that London authorities should be requested to close direct mails (including packets, and if possible also the registered mails) for each of the offices for which one direct letter bag is prepared at present (*vide* paragraph 136 above). Further, there would be considerable saving of time if London were to close direct bags for all the stations for which at present 10 or more bags have to be prepared in Bombay (paragraph 138). Considering that the mail that India receives is heavier than that which it sends out, and that we prepare separate bags for large number of offices in Great Britain we do not think that our request to the London Postal authorities to reduce the bulk of our unsorted mails would be unreasonable.

141. As regards the bags for territorial Divisions, we would observe that the London office consigns them to the respective Travelling Post offices in India, and it would be more economical, if, instead of the present arrangements at the Ballard Pier, the sorting work were carried out in the travelling vans. The present methods are distinctly uneconomical as not only full advantage is not taken of the sorting already done in London but in some cases it is undone. For example, to suit the requirements of the sorting arrangements at the Ballard Pier, the mails received ready sorted for Punjab I and Punjab II are mixed up and dealt with in the Punjab section. Similarly the contents of separate bags made out for Bengal and Bihar and Orissa are mixed up and dealt with in the Bengal Section.

142. The question of sorting is so intimately connected with the arrangements for the despatch of mails from Bombay that it is desirable to describe them in some detail. The present arrangement is that the mails are despatched to the different parts of the country as follows :—

*Northward—B., B. and C. I. and N.-W. R. route.*—By the Frontier Mail (Ballard Pier portion) leaving Ballard Pier at 20-30 hours.

*Eastward—G. I. P. and E. I. R. route* (Bombay to Chheoki via Jubbulpore and from Chheoki to Howrah via main line of the E. I. R.).—By a special train called the Imperial Indian Mail which usually leaves Bombay within 4 hours of the arrival of the English Mail steamer. The major portion of the mails brought by the English Mail steamer is sent by this train. It carries mails for Khandesh, C. P., U. P., B. and O., Bengal, Eastern Bengal and Assam, and Burma Divisions.

*Southward—G. I. P. and M. S. M. route* (Bombay to Madras via Raichur).—Every alternate week by the Bombay-Madras Postal Special train, which leaves Ballard Pier 4½ hours after the arrival of the English Mail steamer.

143. This special train is run when the mails for the Straits Settlements and the Far East transit India. On other occasions the Foreign mails for Southern India are despatched either by the Madras Mail leaving Victorial Terminus, Bombay, at 22 hours or by the Madras Express of the following day leaving at 13 hours according as the steamer reaches Bombay by 17 hours or after it.

144. Mails for Karachi, Sind, and Persian Gulf are despatched by a British India Steam Navigation Company's steamer leaving Bombay after the arrival of the English Mail steamer.

145. The above arrangements for the conveyance of Inward Foreign Mails were made when the Mail steamer used to arrive in Bombay on Friday mornings. Now that it usually arrives on Thursday afternoons between 15 and 17 hours and several of the important train services have been accelerated since the arrangements were originally made, the whole question merits further consideration.

146. The difference in the haulage charges payable to Railways for the running of postal vans by ordinary and by special trains is considerable. In the case of the former it is 6 annas per mile per bogie van, while in the latter case it is Re. 1-8-0 per mile for 3 vans or less if the special train takes passengers also, and Rs. 2 per mile if there are no passengers on the train. The necessity for the two postal specials referred to above requires examination.

147. For the conveyance of our ordinary foreign mails from Bombay to Madras, we do not require any special train. It must therefore be conceded that the engagement of such a train, when the Straits Mails are being conveyed across the country, is mainly with a view to expedite their transit. The question of the retention of this special was examined by the Retrenchment Committee in 1931, and it was then held that as the charges for the Special train did not exceed the transit charges recovered by us from the Foreign Administration there was no necessity of discontinuing this arrangement. The position has changed since then, as the volume of the Straits Mails has appreciably decreased, and, we understand, that the last International Postal Conference at Cairo has decided to lower the rates of transit charges. It is not known to what extent India would stand to lose when this decision is enforced, but under Regulation 3 of the "Detailed Regulations for the execution of the Universal Postal Convention", India cannot be required to incur special expenses for the transit of such mails. As stated above the Special train is not required for the mails for India, and if the decision of the Cairo Conference exposes us to a financial loss, the Straits Mails should, in our opinion, be carried by the same means by which the Indian Mails are carried, namely by either the Madras Mail or the Express. If the adoption of these means results in the Straits mails missing connection with the East bound steamers at Negapatam and the running of the Special train becomes essential the additional expenditure to be incurred on it should, in our opinion, be met by the Administration benefitting by the arrangement.

148. We will now deal with the despatch of other 'eastward' mails by the Imperial Indian Mail Special train. Apart from the considerations of extra expenditure the question is of very great importance as all the arrangements in the Ballard Pier Sorting office on Thursday are governed by the time of departure of this train.

149. This train takes about 37 hours 44 minutes to reach Howrah (Calcutta) from Ballard Pier, and as the steamer usually arrives between 15 and 17 hours on Thursday, she is due to arrive at Howrah between 9 and 11 A.M., on Saturdays. The daily E. I. R. Calcutta Mail, which leaves Bombay at 21-15 reaches Howrah at 10-30 hours and the Calcutta Mail (via Nagpur) leaving Bombay at 18-10 reaches Howrah at 7-36 hours on Saturdays. We suggest that all the mails for Burma and Eastern Bengal and Assam, also all the letter bags and as many as possible of the packet bags for Calcutta, should be despatched by the B. N. R. Mail. For this purpose, it would be necessary to arrange for a bogie mail van to be attached to this train on Thursdays. On arrival at Calcutta at 7-36 hours, the bags for Eastern Bengal and Assam should be transferred *immediately* to the Sealdah Mail office for sorting, while the Calcutta bags would be sent on to the G. P. O. Such an arrangement would mean that if the Mail Steamer arrives (as it usually does) about 15 hours on Thursdays the English Mail letters could be ready for delivery in Calcutta about one and a half hour earlier than at present. The remaining packet bags for Calcutta and mails for C. P., Eastern U. P., and Bihar and Orissa could travel by the E. I. R. route. About a couple of hours' delay to the letter mail for these areas would be of no consequence as the ordinary Mail as well as the Special pass through most of the main stations at night.

150. The Town Delivery Sorting of the Rangoon Mails is at present carried out by the Foreign Mail sorters working on the Imperial Indian Mail train between Bombay and Calcutta. Under the scheme proposed by us, this work will have to be done either in Calcutta or Rangoon. Ready sorted mails for Rangoon are at present taken over by the Railway Mail Service staff at Howrah station for transfer to the B. I. S. N. Co.'s steamer sailing on Sundays. During the interval between the receipt of these mails on Saturday mornings and the sailing of the steamer on Sunday mornings, it should be possible for the Town delivery sorting for Rangoon to be done in Calcutta G. P. O. If, on the other hand, arrangements are made for the steamer to leave on Saturdays instead of Sundays, the unsorted mails could reach Rangoon on Mondays instead of Tuesday and be delivered about 24 hours earlier than at present. This would make it possible for replies to the correspondence being sent one week earlier by the steamer leaving Rangoon on Tuesdays.

151. On occasions when the mail steamer reaches Bombay on Friday mornings instead of Thursday afternoons it would mean that the Burma mail steamer would have to be detained in Calcutta for a day under the terms of the agreement with the shipping Company.

152. We have examined the transit time of the important trains on the main routes in India and we find that the B. N. R. timings between Nagpur and Howrah compare somewhat unfavourably with the other routes. If this route were adopted by us and the Railway Administration concerned could arrange for shortening of the time taken on it, the mails would be ready for delivery in Calcutta a good deal earlier than at present and the transfer of the Burma unsorted mails to the steamer, if sailing on Saturdays instead of Sundays, would present no difficulty.

153. We would like to point out that according to the present arrangements the work at the Ballard Pier Sorting office is rushed through regardless of the interval between the arrival of the steamer and the departure.

of the Ordinary Mail trains. It has to be remembered that no sorting is required of the direct bags for Calcutta and the volume of Burma mails is comparatively very light. The unsorted mails are the heaviest and as they contain articles for all parts of India, they must be attended to very quickly to suit the departure of the Imperial Indian Mail train. The largest number of bags made up from this mail are for the Punjab. The time of departure of the Ballard Pier portion of the Frontier Mail which carries these mails is 20-30. There is, therefore, no necessity for the sorting of these mails being rushed through in the same manner as those which have to be sent by the Imperial Indian Mail. There is still less necessity for the same expedition in the case of the mails for Southern India, which travel by the Madras Mail leaving Bombay at 22 hours on Thursday or by the Express at 13 hours on Friday. We will only add that the running of the Imperial Indian Mail train four hours after the arrival of the Steamer in Bombay on Friday mornings can be of no use to Calcutta as the train would reach there late at night on Saturdays and no earlier delivery could be effected than if the mails were to travel by the Ordinary mail trains.

154. The old scheduled time of arrival of the Steamer at Bombay was Friday morning but on the 7th of June 1932, the P. and O. Steam Navigation Company sent the following notice to the Director-General, Posts and Telegraphs :—

“ We have received telegraphic advices from the Managing Directors in London that commencing from ‘ Rawalpindi ’ which leaves London on the 10th June 1932, and due here on Thursday the 30th June 1932, all the Company’s steamers have been instructed to arrive in future in Bombay not later than 5 P.M. on Thursdays, excluding the S. S. ‘ Malwa ’ which will arrive on Friday, the 29th July 1932.”

155. Apparently some difficulty was experienced in carrying out these instructions as during the 12 months ending with the 30th of June 1934, the English Mail steamers arrived in Bombay between 1 P.M. and 5 P.M. on Thursdays on 39 occasions, after 5 P.M. on Thursdays on 6 occasions, and on Friday mornings on 7 occasions.

156. From the above it will be seen that it was only on 6 occasions when by the despatch of the Calcutta mails by the Imperial Indian Mail train earlier delivery could have been effected than if they were sent by the ordinary mail. Against this the delivery could have been made earlier on 39 occasions by despatching mails by the B. N. R. route as suggested by us. We may mention that on every occasion that the P. and O. steamer arrives at Bombay after 5 P.M. on Thursdays the important mails for Northern India have to be detained in Bombay till the following evening as they travel by the Ordinary Mail trains.

157. It may safely be assumed that all possible steps will be taken by the P. and O. Steam Navigation Company to work up to the hopes held out by their announcement of 1932 to secure the arrival of the mail steamer on Thursdays by about 3 P.M. Our sorting arrangements at the Ballard Pier should therefore be simplified as explained below.

158. At present all eastward mails are despatched by the Imperial Indian Mail. The bags meant for stations in the Central Province (on the B. N. R. route) are taken down at Bhusaval and those meant for Western U. P. at Itarsi. The former are sent on by the Nagpur Express

and the latter by the Peshawar Express. All this means double handling. We would suggest that all direct bags prepared by London (including Bookstall bags) should be despatched by the Inland sections in the earliest trains available, viz., the B. N. R. and G. I. P. Calcutta mails. Mails for the Western U. P. could be despatched by the Peshawar Express leaving Bombay at 23-00 instead of being transferred to it at Itarsi. This would appreciably reduce the number of bags to be sent by the subsequent trains and avoid unnecessary transhipment.

159. We are also of the opinion that the Ballard Pier Sorting office should deal with only those mails which must be opened there, viz., the India 'Miscellaneous' and the rest should be dealt with in the vans or by the "Travelling Post offices". This would eliminate the present hoisting up of a considerable quantity of the mails to the sorting office and their subsequent handling for loading in the mail vans. For this purpose, it would be necessary to adopt the procedure, which we understand was at one time followed for sorting mails for Madras. The Railway would place the vans alongside a convenient platform and the requisite number of "volunteer" sorters, who should be men actually doing sorting work in the Railway Mail Service sections or in the G. P. O. would deal with the mails for one division at a time. The bags would be kept stacked on the platform and gradually opened in the vans and their contents sorted. The sorting work can be carried on in one spare van specially kept at the platform for this purpose. Those which cannot be sorted up to within half an hour of the departure of the train will be loaded in the vans for subsequent sorting by the staff employed in the Travelling Post offices. We feel confident that the number of volunteers could be regulated in such a way that the bulk of the mails would be sorted as proposed and the balance left over would not be of such proportions as could not be dealt with by the Foreign Mail Section sorters in the running train.

160. We have the following remarks to make on the subject of the staff employed in the Ballard Pier Sorting office. According to the averages worked out by us each letter bag contains about 460 letters and each packet bag 150 packets. For the purposes of our calculation we have taken the mails of the 26th of July 1934 when the receipts were very heavy. On the standard of sorting of 600 articles per sorter per hour, the following would be required :—

Division.	Letter bags.	Packet bags.	Total number of articles.	Time required for sorting by one man.
Bengal .. .. .	35	135	36,350	60 hours.
Eastern Bengal and Assam .. .. .	9	76	15,540	26 Do.
Burma .. .. .	8	69	14,030	24 Do.
C. P. and Khandesh .. .. .	19	50	16,240	27 Do.
United Provinces .. .. .	30	79	25,650	43 Do.
Agra .. .. .	11	67	15,110	26 Do.
Punjab .. .. .	67	307	76,870	125 Do.
Gujrat and Kathiawar .. .. .	18	66	18,180	30 Do.
Deccan and Konkan .. .. .	7	64	12,820	21 Do.
Hyderabad and Eastern Coast .. .. .	7	58	11,920	20 Do.
Mysore, Coorg and Nilgiris .. .. .	8	67	13,730	23 Do.
Malabar and South India .. .. .	23	101	25,730	43 Do.
Ereliminary Section .. .. .	267	167	1,47,870	246 Do.
<b>Total .. .. .</b>				<b>714 hours.</b>



If the men engaged for the work were to be employed continuously for 6 hours, 120 men would easily be able to deal with the mails. In actual practice, the time taken for the sorting should be less as according to our observations the bags supposed to contain letters—specially those in the preliminary section—contain a large number of packets and labelled bundles which are not required to be opened for sorting purposes.

161. The staff usually employed on sorting work is as follows :—

	Supervisor.	Clerk	Head Packer.	Packer.
<b>Punjab—</b>				
Paper .. .. .	2	33	1	23
Letter .. .. .	3	29	..	12
Registration .. .. .	1	13	..	12
Preliminary Registration .. .. .	2	22	1	11
Final .. .. .	1	17	..	10
Bengal .. .. .	2	27	1	13
Circular (Bengal and Eastern Bengal and Assam) .. .. .	1	14	..	1
Eastern Bengal and Assam (Letters and Paper) .. .. .	1	14	..	6
Burma (Letters and Paper) .. .. .	1	10	..	6
Preliminary Paper .. .. .	2	34	1	32
Central Provinces and Khandesh—Letter and Paper .. .. .	1	12	..	8
Gujrat and Kathiawar—Letter and Paper .. .. .	..	11	..	6
Deccan and Konkan—Letter and Paper .. .. .	1	9	..	6
United Provinces—Letter and Paper .. .. .	1	13	..	9
Agra—Letter and Paper .. .. .	1	14	..	11
Preliminary Letter .. .. .	5	30	1	32
Tampered mail .. .. .	1	2	..	3
Transport .. .. .	2	21	3	27
Malabar and South India—Letters and Paper .. .. .	2	30	1	18
Mysore and Coorg—Letters and Paper .. .. .	1	11	..	7
Hyderabad and East Coast—Letters and Paper .. .. .	..	11	..	7
Persian Gulf .. .. .	1	7	..	4
Government Despatch .. .. .	1	3	..	2
Madras Registration .. .. .	..	4	..	3
Foreign Mail .. .. .	..	22	..	6
Foreign Parcel .. .. .	2	9	..	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>422</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>287</b>

After making a liberal allowance for the time taken in the opening and closing of bags and of the staff required for work such as dealing with registered articles, tampered mail, Government despatch, etc., it seems to us that the staff employed was excessive and its entertainment was necessitated only by the fact that the time between the arrival of the steamer and the departure of the Imperial Indian Mail was so short.

162. This interval is 4 hours and after making a sufficient allowance for the unloading of the mails from the steamer, the hoisting of the bags to the sorting office, opening them, distributing the contents to the various sorting tables, closing the bags, transport to the vans and finally the loading, the volunteers have no more than about 2 to 2½ hours for the actual sorting. This applies not only to the mails carried by the Imperial Indian Mail but also to the mails carried by other trains starting at a later hour in the evening. It is, therefore, not surprising that the Ballard Pier Office has to make up "packet bags" to seven mail offices for further sorting. Six such bags are supposed to be allotted to Delhi Mail Office. During our visit to that office at about 11-30 on the 3rd November 1934 we found that 15 bags had been received the previous evening. The contents of two of them opened in our presence included the number of letters shown against each of the following stations :—

Lahore .. .. .	21	Dharamsala .. .. .	1
Amritsar .. .. .	13	Lyallpur .. .. .	2
Simla .. .. .	6	Patiala .. .. .	2
Jalalpur .. .. .	1	Multan .. .. .	2
Bannu .. .. .	1	Manzai .. .. .	1
Sitagarh (N.-W. F.) .. .. .	1	Ludhiana .. .. .	2
Peshawar .. .. .	1	Campbellpore .. .. .	2
Jagadhri .. .. .	1	Bakloh .. .. .	1
Gurdaspur .. .. .	1	Gujranwala .. .. .	1
Kuldona .. .. .	1	Hoshiarpur .. .. .	2
Chitral .. .. .	1	Attari (Amritsar) .. .. .	1
Srinagar .. .. .	1	Ambala .. .. .	2
Kabul .. .. .	1	Rawalpindi .. .. .	5
Multan City .. .. .	1	Jullundur .. .. .	9
Rewari .. .. .	1	Shahdara .. .. .	3
New Delhi .. .. .	2	Delhi .. .. .	4
		Sialkot City .. .. .	6

The delay to which these letters were subjected does not redound to the credit of the "volunteers" who are called on to do sorting work on each Inward Mail day.

163. It is surprising that a large number of men can be relieved from their work during office hours for employment on overtime duties in the Ballard Pier Sorting Office every Thursday. In his reply to one of our questions, the Postmaster-General, Bombay (Mr. C. D. Rae), agreed that the staff in the Bombay General Post Office is on the "liberal" side and we feel that such "liberality" is enforced by the necessity of having to provide so many "volunteers" on mail days. The matter requires careful examination as clearly it is uneconomical to maintain excessive

staff in the General Post Office in order to meet the requirements of the Foreign Mail sorting.

164. We consider that for purposes of supervision in the Ballard Pier Sorting Office, no officer should be drawn from the General Post Office. The Foreign Post Division has five such officers available on its staff and this number should suffice, for supervisory duties in Ballard Pier Office on Thursdays. Further we consider that the Foreign Post staff should not be eligible to over-time allowance, except when they are required to work outside the office hours. They should get the following scale of over-time allowance when so employed :—

Supervisors	..	..	Re. 1-0-0 per hour both during day and night.
Clerks	..	..	Re. 0-10-0 per hour during day. Re. 0-12-0 per hour during night.
Head Packers, Packers and Menials	..	..	Re. 0-4-0 per hour during day and night.

165. We feel that the number of supervisors employed at Ballard Pier could be kept down by judicious distribution of work among them. At present the total number of supervisors employed at Ballard Pier and the General Post Office, handling the inward mail is reported to be 39. 25 of these are provided by the Foreign Post Division. We consider that the requirements of the Ballard Pier Sorting so far as supervisors are concerned, should be met from the Foreign Post Division and it should not be necessary to draw additional supervisors from other sources. The supervisory staff employed in the General Post Office on sorting of local mails received from foreign countries should not be entitled to any over-time, except in cases in which they are required to work outside their hours of duty.

166. Out of 11 mucedams 8 are from the Foreign Post. We consider that the number of mucedams should be cut down to 8 and these men should be from the Foreign Post. They should not get any over-time allowance when working in connection with the foreign mails except when they are required to work outside their hours of duty.

167. At present 330 packers are employed out of whom 110 are from the Foreign Post. Considering that the clerical staff employed on sorting the inward foreign mail consists of 508 clerks it appears to the Committee that the number of packers is susceptible of considerable reduction.

168. No officer of Gazetted rank should get any over-time allowance. The gazetted Deputy Superintendent, Foreign Post, should be one of the supervising officers at the Ballard Pier.

169. Similarly the staff of the Foreign Post Division which at present deals with *outward* foreign mails without over-time allowance should not be entitled to any over-time allowance when dealing with *inward* foreign mails except when they are required to work outside their hours of duty.

170. We have no suggestions to make regarding the over-time employment of staff in Madras in connection with the disposal of the foreign mails.

171. The scales of over-time allowance paid at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras are as follows :—

Class of officials.	Between 5-6 A.M.* and 11 P.M.		At other times.	
	Bombay and Calcutta.	Madras.	Bombay and Calcutta.	Madras.
	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
Supervising officers .. .. .	12 0 0	..	14 0 0	..
Supervisors .. .. .	6 0 0	<i>Nil.</i>	7 0 0	<i>Nil.</i>
Upper Division clerks .. .. .	4 0 0	1 12 0	5 0 0	2 4 0
Lower Division clerks .. .. .	3 0 0	1 5 0	3 12 0	1 11 0
Sorting postmen .. .. .	3 0 0	..	3 8 0	..
Postmen .. .. .	1 0 0	..	1 8 0	..
Head packers (Muccadams) .. .. .	2 0 0	..	2 8 0	..
Packers .. .. .	1 0 0	..	1 4 0	..
Coolies .. .. .	1 0 0	..	1 4 0	..
Menials .. .. .	..	0 6 0	..	0 8 0

\* 5 A.M. at Madras and 6 A.M. at Bombay and Calcutta.

172. The scales we propose for Calcutta and Bombay are :—

Class of officials.	Between 6 A.M. and 8 P.M.	Between 8 P.M. and 6 A.M.
	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
Clerks working as sorters .. .. .	3 0 0	4 0 0
Sorting postmen .. .. .	2 0 0	2 8 0
Postmen if employed out of their hours of duty .. .. .	1 0 0	1 8 0
Head packers or Muccadams when employed out of their hours of duty .. .. .	0 4 0 per hour*	..
Foreign Post packers when employed out of their hours of duty .. .. .	0 4 0 per hour.	..
Other packers .. .. .	1 0 0	1 4 0

\* Reference Rule 113, Chapter X Manual of Appointments and Allowances.

173. We would like to point out that we cannot see any justification for the grant of over-time allowance to the postmen employed on the special set for the delivery of these mails at the Bombay General Post Office, Malabar Hill, and Colaba Town Sub-offices. There are other town sub-offices in Bombay which make a special delivery of the Foreign Mail but the postmen employed on this work in those offices do not receive any overtime allowance. Further, in Calcutta where the volume of the mail is heavier than in Bombay, no special delivery is made and no over-time expenditure incurred on postmen. At present there are 5 ordinary deliveries in Bombay compared with 4 in Calcutta. We are of the opinion that the Foreign Mail Delivery should be combined with one of the Inland Deliveries and the over-time allowance paid to the postmen abolished. Reference is invited in this connection to the instructions contained in Government of India (Industries and Labour Department) letter No. 389-F.B.S.]31, dated the 28th November 1931 in which it was

stated that Government had decided that the number of deliveries in the largest cities should be restricted to four, and that all special deliveries of the foreign mails should be stopped forthwith.

174. One surprising feature of the sorting at Ballard Pier is that there seems to be no direct relation between the amount of mails handled and the sum of money paid on over-time allowances. The latter is fairly constant, while the former varies considerably. A glaring instance is that of 19th July 1934 when a sum of Rs. 2,512-10-0 was paid in over-time allowances for sorting 589 letter and 1,467 packet bags at the Ballard Pier and the General Post Office while on the 26th July 1934 Rs. 2,511-9-0 were paid for the sorting of 628 letter and 1,838 packet bags. We were told that the number of "volunteers" asked to attend is determined by "experience" but we frankly confess our inability to understand the system. So far as we could make out the number of tables being fixed the same number of men is asked to attend from week to week and no attempt is made to regulate the staff in accordance with actual requirements which can and should be estimated with a fair amount of accuracy on receipt from Aden of the cable intimating the number of bags coming by the Mail steamer.

175. We are convinced that the system of having such a large "volunteer" force in the sorting office is detrimental to efficiency and as proposed by us it would be better to have the sorting of the territorial bags done in the vans before they start. In the case of sections by which some F. M. S. sorters are working, such work may be left over for them as they can conveniently do it in the train. The Ballard Pier Sorting Office should deal only with Registered Mail and the India "Miscellaneous" bags, while the travelling post offices should deal with the matter, received direct from Foreign countries marked Travelling Post offices or in the bags prepared by the Ballard Pier from the unsorted bags. As already explained if the despatch of mails by the Imperial Indian Mail is abolished and the Burma Steamer leaves Calcutta on Saturday there will be no time for doing Rangoon town delivery sorting in India. But the Eastern Bengal and Assam mails could be sorted at Sealdah as the Bengal Nagpur Railway Mail would reach Howrah in the morning and the Assam Mail does not leave till about 13-30.

176. The Ballard Pier Sorting office at present closes bags for the following number of offices in the different sections :—

Bengal (including Bihar and Orissa)	.. ..	107
Bengal and Assam .. ..	.. ..	66
Burma .. ..	.. ..	48
Central Provinces and Khandesh	.. ..	54
Agra .. ..	.. ..	59
Punjab .. ..	.. ..	135
United Provinces .. ..	.. ..	42
Gujrat, Kathiawar and Rajputana	.. ..	71
Deccan and Konkan .. ..	.. ..	34
Hyderabad and East Coast .. ..	.. ..	32
Mysore, Coorg and Nilgiris .. ..	.. ..	33
Malabar and Southern India .. ..	.. ..	98
Karachi and Sind .. ..	.. ..	16

A large number of the offices in the above sections receive only one bag and according to our observations the registered lists for an appreciable number of them contain a 'nil' entry. It appears to be wasteful to close bags for such a large number of offices. Under our scheme the Ballard Pier office will be preparing bags for only the large towns and territorial Divisions. The bags for the latter will have to be dealt with by the Travelling Post offices. In our opinion the number of bags to be prepared by the travelling sections should be restricted by prescribing a standard which would justify the preparation of a bag. We consider that 60 articles or over should ordinarily be the determining factor.

177. At present the direct bags and labelled bundles for Lahore, Delhi and Peshawar are opened at the Ballard Pier to pick out letters for high Government officials and also to sort the articles for delivery by the Town Sub-offices. This means a considerable addition to work and we are of opinion that the practice should be discontinued. It is on rare occasions that any missorts are discovered and we cannot see any reason why the precautionary measures should be confined to only Lahore, Delhi and Peshawar. Nor are we convinced of any need for Town delivery sorting work for these stations being undertaken by the Ballard Pier. If Calcutta and other towns receiving direct bags from London can perform the necessary town delivery sorting without any difficulty we do not see any reason why Lahore, Delhi and Peshawar offices should not be able to do so. We suggest that the present practice should be stopped.

178. For the outgoing mails the suggestions we have to make are the following :—

- (a) Burma and the Straits mails, if any, the Eastern Bengal and Assam mails, also Calcutta packet bags should be sent from Calcutta to Bombay by the Bengal Nagpur Railway Mail.
- (b) The remaining mails from Calcutta should travel by the East Indian Railway Mail leaving Howrah at 20-11 hours.

The Imperial Indian Mail at present leaves Calcutta at 21-41 hours on Thursdays. The change proposed by us would mean that an earlier hour of closing of the mails will have to be prescribed for the Calcutta General Post Office unless the Railway Administration agree to start this train about the same time as the Imperial Indian Mail Special does at present.

The Bengal Nagpur Railway Mail reaches Bombay at 7-50 hours and the sorting of the mails carried by it could be done at the Ballard Pier Sorting office in time for the outgoing steamer. We do not foresee any difficulty in this especially as the outgoing mail is very much lighter than the incoming mail.

The mails carried by the East Indian Railway Mail train will be sorted by the sorters of the F. M. 6 Out section.

179. In the F. M. sections some sorters, *e.g.*, those running between Bombay and Chheoki, are supposed to be at work for 20 hours at a stretch. Between Bombay and Delhi there is at present no sorting of the inward foreign mail. One sorter accompanies the ready sorted mails and delivers them at stations *en route*. Sorting of the Northern India *outgoing* mails

is carried out by 9 sorters who work for about 16 hours between Kotah and Bombay. They return to Kotah as ordinary passengers in time to take up work in connection with the following weeks *outgoing* mail. Somewhat similar system is followed between Bombay and Madras. As we have proposed the sorting of both the Inward and Outward Foreign mails in the Travelling Post offices, we suggest that the present long hours of attendance should be avoided by splitting up of the beats.

180. The accommodation rented by the Department at the Ballard Pier is fully utilised only for a few hours on the arrival of the mail steamer and for the rest of the week the place is more or less deserted except for the permanent sorters of the Foreign Post who are employed there on the progressive sorting of the Outgoing Foreign Mail articles received from different parts of the country. On the other hand the Irwin House where Foreign parcel and money order work is carried on, is practically deserted for some hours after the arrival of the mail steamer, when almost the entire staff is withdrawn to perform 'voluntary' service on payment of over-time on the Ballard Pier. For money orders, the Foreign Post is only an office of exchange as it has no dealings with the public. The work involved is chiefly accounting and we are of the opinion that the proposed Circle Accounts office at Bombay should take over this branch of the Foreign Post. Further the adoption of our suggestions regarding the disposal of the inward foreign mails would set free a lot of space at present available at the Ballard Pier. We consider that it might then be possible to shift the Foreign Parcel Section from the Irwin House to the Ballard Pier. By doing so, we shall be avoiding double handling which is at present involved in regard to the foreign parcels. A further advantage would be that we would have the Foreign Post staff available on the premises to assist in the sorting of the incoming letter and packet mail on Thursdays. If the accommodation set free by the sorting work being transferred to the Travelling Post Offices is found to be insufficient for locating the Foreign Parcel Section on the Ballard Pier it might perhaps be possible to secure larger floor area from the Port Trust. We gather that the question of extending the Sorting Office accommodation has on a previous occasion formed the subject of discussion with the Port Trust. It was then proposed to make over the accommodation at present allotted to the refreshment rooms adjoining the sorting office on the first floor and shifting the refreshment rooms to the area to be made available by covering the luggage hall of the station.

181. The negotiations were however dropped as it became possible to do without the additional accommodation. We are of the opinion that the matter should now be reconsidered. It is hardly necessary to point out that the bringing together of the parcel and the letter mails Departments in the same building would lead to smoother and more efficient working and we would also be saving the recurring expenditure on the Irwin House which comes to about Rs. 5,500 per mensem.

182. We were asked by the Director-General, Posts and Telegraphs, to express our views on a Time Test proposed by a Committee appointed by the Postmaster-General, Bombay, in 1933 for determining the staff required for the Parcel and Registration Branches of the Foreign Post. We are satisfied that it should be possible to devise a suitable time test for these branches.

183. Following remarks regarding the Registration Branch are contained in the report submitted by the Committee referred to :—

“ We examined the work in the Foreign Registration Department and took time tests. The bags were opened in our presence and we observed the work both as regards registered and insured articles. Our observation showed that 1 minute and 30 seconds are required to deal with one registered letter mail article of the Foreign mail.

In the case of inland articles the time factor is .70 minute, *i.e.*, 42 seconds. But in the case of foreign registered letters the following additional work is performed which is not performed by the ordinary post offices :—

- (a) Registered bags are received in the Foreign Registration Department from the Foreign Post Department. The total number of articles received in each bag is noted in a rough book in which also is noted the offices or sections from which bags are received. This is done with a view to arrive at a correct account of the number of bags and registered articles received and disposed of daily from the Foreign Post Letters Department.
- (b) Preliminary sorting is done for several line despatches, as for instance, Africa, America, Aden, Europe, Persian Gulf, United Kingdom, China, etc.
- (c) Transference from the preliminary sorting to the line despatchers under receipt in hand-to-hand receipt books.
- (d) On Sundays, Mondays, and Tuesdays there is less work than on Saturdays. Each line despatcher has several exchanges to deal with. He has to sort registered letters daily into their several exchanges. In inland post offices a larger number of articles are made up for a smaller number of offices or Railway Mail Service sections. In the Foreign Registration Department a smaller number of articles are enclosed for a fairly large number of exchanges. Therefore, a greater time is taken for work in connection with foreign letters than in the case of inland articles.”

184. Time Test proposed by the above Committee consisting of Messrs. Faushawe, Jassawalla and Gonet was as follows :—

Bags received	..	..	..	.15	minutes.
Bags opened	..	..	..	.50	minutes.
Bags closed	..	..	..	1.00	minutes.
Bags despatched	..	..	..	.15	minutes.
Ordinary registered articles received in sorting	..	..	..	1.50	minutes.
Insured articles received in sorting	..	..	..	3.25	minutes.
Coefficient for registered articles	..	..	..	$\frac{5}{8}$	
Coefficient for Foreign Parcel Export	..	..	..		



185. We regret we cannot agree that the work in connection with the foreign registered articles is so very different from that of Inland articles as to justify such a considerable difference in time allotment. In any case we do not think much of a time test in which the coefficient for miscellaneous items is as high as  $\frac{2}{7}$  as in the recommendation of the Committee. Our view is that the time test should be determined by the Special Officer whose appointment has been suggested by us in paragraph 38.

186. A customs declaration form is required to be pasted to each of the foreign parcels going out of India. In the reverse direction no such declaration is pasted to the parcels received from Great Britain but a declaration form in duplicate for each parcel is received one week before the receipt of the parcels which travel all the way by sea from London. A detailed list of parcels is prepared from these declaration forms and on receipt, each of the parcels has to be identified with its corresponding declaration form a copy of which is then pasted to the parcel concerned. This method throws a great deal of extra work on the staff employed in the Irwin House, Bombay, and we suggest that the British Post Office authorities should be requested for one copy of the declaration form being pasted to each of the parcels before they are despatched to India, the duplicate copy being sent in advance as at present to facilitate preparation of detailed list for purposes of customs assessment.

187. Although parcels to Great Britain are advised in bulk in the parcel bills detailed lists are prepared of all such parcels and kept on record in the office of exchange in Bombay. The country of destination is noted against the entry of each parcel in these lists. We consider that the preparation of these detailed lists is altogether unnecessary and should be discontinued.

188. In the form of Parcel Bill (Form F. P.-1) regarding C. O. D. parcels despatched from India names of addressees and addresses of parcels are noted by the Bombay office of exchange. Such details are not given by Great Britain in respect of C. O. D. parcels sent to India by that Administration and our suggestion is that the Bombay office of exchange should also be relieved of this work.

189. The maintenance of Register of Value Payable articles received in respect of C. O. D. outward parcels is unnecessary since all information in connection therewith is available in Trade Money Order charts and value payable Money Order forms. We suggest that the present practice may be discontinued.

190. Registered packets are received advised in bulk from Great Britain but in the reverse direction they are advised in detail by the Bombay office of exchange. We can see no necessity for a detailed advice in respect of registered packets from India to Great Britain, and suggest discontinuance of the present practice.

191. Rule 280 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI, requires that the offices of payment should send a certificate of payment to the Indian office of exchange in respect of each value payable money order paid in India under the C. O. D. system for a parcel despatched from India. Now that the offices of exchange receive from the Audit offices a list of all such payments the practice of issuing a certificate of payment by the Postmasters is unnecessary and may be discontinued.

192. Clause 306 (2), Post and Telegraph Guide (April 1934 edition), lays down the fee for obtaining an advice of payment for a foreign sterling money order in respect of remittances, addressed to countries with which money orders are exchanged. In other cases, according to the instructions contained in paragraph 2 of the clause referred to, an intimation is sent by the Indian Post office of exchange to the remitter to the effect that the money order has been communicated to the country of payment. We do not consider the issuing of such an intimation necessary from the point of view of the Department and if the remitters require any such information it is reasonable to levy a fee for it.

193. In the Foreign Parcel Department of the Calcutta General Post Office a Register of Value Payable Articles Received is maintained in great detail in respect of C. O. D. parcels which are treated as originating in that office. No such record is maintained in Bombay and we suggest that it may be discontinued in Calcutta.

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## CHAPTER VII.

## Divisional Organisation.

194. Mail Overseers are primarily intended for supervising runners' lines and checking the work of village postmen. They are recruited from the postmen's cadre and most of them are unacquainted with English. The Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs has had under consideration a suggestion to replace them by an educated class of official who could be expected to perform the duties more efficiently and at the same time take on more responsible work than is at present entrusted to overseers. In support of this suggestion it has been contended that although the Department pays a handsome salary to the overseers the services rendered by them are very unsatisfactory. Checking of the village delivery work in general and the verification of the payment of money orders by village postmen in particular, is admitted to be a very important function of an overseer but it is seldom if ever that a fraud is detected by him. Not infrequently it happens that an overseer reports correct payment of a money order but subsequently it is discovered that the amount of the money order has been misappropriated by the village postman.

195. We have consulted several officers of the Department on the subject. Some of them favour the retention of overseers, while others including the Postal Officers Association are emphatic in supporting the view that the Department is not getting value for money paid to them. In support of their retention it is stated that an educated official will not be able to put up with the hardships attaching to an overseer's arduous travelling. On the other hand it is pointed out that recruitment at a comparatively advanced age and lack of education renders the present day overseers unfit to exercise efficient control over the staff placed under their supervision.

196. We have given the matter very careful consideration and come to the conclusion that the employment of a better class of official would make for improved efficiency in the Department.

197. The success of the Extra Departmental Agency system depends very largely on the efficient supervision. In our opinion this can be secured by overseers being replaced by Assistant Inspectors recruited from the clerical establishment of the Post Office. Men of good physique and with good Departmental record should be selected for these posts. On passing a Departmental test they should be eligible for promotion to Inspectors' grade. Their charges should be so fixed as to enable them to inspect every Branch office in their jurisdiction twice a year. They should draw their ordinary time scale of pay plus an allowance of Rs. 20 per mensem and be eligible for the travelling allowance admissible to their class.

198. It has been pointed out to us that if all the overseers were abolished, difficulty would be experienced in shifting cash from office to office. In order to meet this contingency we suggest that cash overseers be retained for localities where frequent despatches of cash have to be made. For occasional despatches the employment of suitable postmen with an allowance should meet the Departmental requirements. This suggestion has the support of the Departmental Officers' Association.

199. Inspectors of Post Offices are at present required to inspect all the Branch offices within their jurisdiction and also some of the unimport-

ant sub-offices. As suggested above the inspection of Branch offices should, in our opinion, be entrusted to the proposed Assistant Inspectors. With this change the Inspectors need inspect only about 10 per cent. of the Branch offices in their charge, while their control over the sub-offices would be extended to include all such offices in their jurisdiction excepting those in charge of selection grade officials.

200. The statement given below shows the average, the smallest and the largest number of Branch offices and the average, smallest and the largest number of postmen, village postmen and menials, etc., in Sub-Divisions in the different Circles.

Name of Circle.	Average number of Branch offices.	Smallest number of Branch offices.	Largest number of Branch offices.	Average number of postmen, village postmen and menials, etc.	Smallest number of postmen, village postmen and menials, etc.	Largest number of postmen, village postmen and menials, etc.
Bengal & Assam ..	56	13	82	147	97	274
Bihar & Orissa ..	52	13	72	158	79	312
Bombay .. ..	58	41	71	100	60	183
Burma .. ..	21	12	28	82	41	139
Central .. ..	57	38	73	120	78	161
Madras .. ..	61	31	92	112	45	160
Punjab & N. W. F. ..	70	21	114	107	53	275
Sind & Baluchistan ..	49	34	69	82	13	127
United Provinces ..	82	9	73	175	108	279

201. From the above it will be seen that in the United Provinces Circle a sub-division can be comprised of as few as nine Branch offices. This number compares very unfavourably with the other Circles. *Prima facie* there is room for greater responsibility being given to Inspectors. We are conscious of the fact that special treatment has to be accorded to specially difficult localities but even so, the variations need not be as noticeable as they are at present.

202. The number of postal divisions in the different Circles is as follows :—

Bengal and Assam .. ..	19
Bihar and Orissa .. ..	8
Bombay .. ..	12
Burma .. ..	7
Madras .. ..	16
Punjab and N.-W. F. .. ..	16
Sind and Baluchistan .. ..	3
United Provinces .. ..	13
Central .. ..	9

203. According to the present orders the Superintendents of Post Offices are required to carry out annual inspection of Head Offices, important sub-offices and 10 per cent. of the Branch Offices in their division.

Two such inspections were prescribed at one time, but, as a measure of economy, it was decided that a second inspection of an office need only be undertaken if there were reasons to believe that it was not working satisfactorily. The calculations made in 1930 showed that two inspections of all offices of the categories mentioned above involved an additional expenditure of Rs. 2,07,000. It was suggested that the abolition of the second inspection would result in a larger number of frauds by Departmental officials. The statement below gives the total number of frauds of different classes and the amount involved, during the last six years.

Year.	Savings Bank fraud.		Money Order fraud.		Miscellaneous* fraud.		Total.	
	Num-ber.	Amount.	Num-ber.	Amount.	Num-ber.	Amount.	Num-ber.	Amount.
		Rs.		Rs.		Rs.		Rs.
1928-29	37	10,844	310	32,138	168	27,159	515	70,141
1929-30	26	11,867	292	57,092	237	26,059	555	95,018
1930-31	27	14,311	321	38,884	181	39,544	529	92,739
1931-32	35	8,869	319	16,406	196	21,966	550	47,241
1932-33	27	13,787	236	17,327	127	19,962	390	51,076
1933-34	39	47,552	157	7,779	114	21,972	310	77,303

\*Includes cases of misappropriation of office cash, theft from Post and R. M. S. offices, etc.

204. It will be seen from the above that there has been a fall in the total number of frauds but the amount involved has risen. The increase is said to be largely due to the weakness of the village postmen and Extra Departmental Agents to resist temptation. In our opinion an improvement can be effected by greater care being exercised in selecting Extra Departmental Agents and by the adoption of the more efficient means of control on the working of Branch offices instead of incurring increased heavy expenditure on travelling allowance of Superintendents of Post Offices for conducting two inspections. We are therefore not in favour of the second inspection being restored.

205. By far the largest number of offices in a division fall in the category of Branch offices. More frequent and efficient inspection of these offices by the proposed Assistant Inspectors would, in our opinion, go a long way towards securing immunity from petty frauds by village postmen and Extra Departmental Agents.

206. Elsewhere in this report we have proposed that the verification of accounts in Head offices should be entrusted to Inspectors of Accounts attached to the proposed Circle Accounts Offices. We have also suggested that the inspection of the Telegraph Branch of combined Post and Telegraph offices should be the duty of the Divisional Engineer of Telegraphs and his subordinate officers. Relieved of all these duties we are satisfied that the charges of the Superintendents of Post Offices could be considerably increased particularly as under our proposal they will not be required to inspect as many of the Sub-post offices as they do at present as this

work will be entrusted to Inspectors of Post Offices. Even as matters stand at present we have been assured by some of the Divisional Superintendents themselves and by some of the Postmasters-General that the divisional charges can be appreciably increased. An experienced officer of the Department serving as a Superintendent of Post Offices in the Punjab Circle, suggested two years ago that in that Circle the number of postal divisional charges could be reduced by four. We are satisfied that there is every scope for a reduction being made. Similarly in other Circles such reductions can be made without any fear of loss of efficiency.

207. Even with the present organization we do not consider necessary for a Superintendent to inspect every Sub-office with more than one clerk. It would be sufficient if he carries out the biennial verification of the accounts of a Head Office and inspects every Sub-office with 3 clerks and more and only 10 per cent. of the remaining Sub-offices. In addition he need inspect only 5 per cent. of the Branch offices and visit other offices of this category whenever convenient in the course of his tours. As pointed out elsewhere the number of Sub-Divisional Inspectors is in some cases out of all proportion to the number of offices he has to inspect, and we give in the next paragraph the number of Inspectors required in each Circle on the assumption that each Inspector must spend 120 days on the inspection of the less important Sub-offices (at two days for each office) and Branch offices (at one day for each office) and the biennial verification of the accounts of each Head office.

208. At present Superintendents of Post Offices are expected to spend at least 85 days in a year on actual inspection work. We consider that this figure should be raised to 100. On this basis the number of divisions and sub-divisions in the various Circles would be as follows :—

Circle	Sub-Divisions.		Divisions.	
	Present.	Proposed.	Present.	Proposed.
Bombay	42	30	12	8
Bihar & Orissa	24	18	8	6
Punjab & N. W. F.	43	39	16	10
United Provinces	34	28	13	10
Madras	57	43	16	11
Burma	12	8	7	4
Central	28	21	9	6
Sind & Baluchistan	7	5	3	1
Bengal & Assam	60	40	19	12
	307	232	103	68

### Range System.

209. The supervision of post offices of different status and mail lines is at present entrusted to the following :—

1. Overseers,
2. Sub-Divisional Inspectors,
3. Divisional Superintendents.

210. The overseers are divided into two categories, *viz.*, cash overseers whose main function is to convey cash from one post office to another and mail overseers whose principal duties are to (i) supervise mail lines, (ii) check the cash balances of Branch offices visited by them, and (iii) check a certain number of money order payments made by village postmen.

211. With the extended use of motor transport, the number of runners' lines has been appreciably reduced but a fairly large number of overseers is still being employed in some of the Circles principally to look after the long runners' lines and to exercise the checks prescribed for Branch offices' cash balances and money order payments. As already explained the overseers are unable to keep any effective control over the Branch office transactions and we are satisfied that their check of money order payments is not of any practical value. We have therefore suggested that these officials should be replaced by time scale clerks with an allowance, who should be designated "Assistant Inspectors". The functions of these officers should be

- (i) to inspect all Branch offices ;
- (ii) to check a certain number of money order payments and Savings Bank transactions ;
- (iii) to supervise delivery work of postmen within their jurisdictions ; and
- (iv) to supervise the working of the smaller mail lines.

212. We cannot lay sufficient stress on the necessity for frequent inspection of Branch offices. In our opinion they should be inspected at least twice a year but instead of this work being entrusted to a comparatively highly paid official like the present Sub-Divisional Inspector it should be the function of the proposed Assistant Inspectors.

213. The Sub-Divisional Inspectors' principal duty should be to inspect Sub-offices in charge of time scale clerks and 10 per cent. of the Branch offices in their jurisdiction.

214. Enquiries into cases of a petty nature should be conducted by the proposed Assistant Inspectors ; for purposes of other investigations there should be one Inspector attached to each division and where necessary this Inspector should have the services of an Assistant Inspector.

215. With the above change the Inspectors and Assistant Inspectors should be able to devote at least 15 days in a month to inspection of offices exclusive of the time taken in transit. They should not ordinarily be required to depart from any projected tour of inspection for purposes of investigation. Normally it should be possible for them to combine the investigation work with their inspections.

216. On the assumption that the inspection of a Branch office requires one day and that two days should suffice for a Sub-office we anticipate that

The number of Assistant Inspectors and Inspectors required for each of the Circles would be as follows :—

Circles	Number of Branch offices.	Number of days required for inspection at the rate of 15 days' inspection work per month.	Number of Assistant Inspectors required.	Number of Sub offices.	Number of days required for inspection at the rate of 15 days' per month.	Number of Sub-Divisional Inspectors.
Punjab and N. W. F.	3,378	$\frac{3,378}{15} = 226$	$\frac{226}{12} = 20$	651	$\frac{1,302}{15} = 87$	$\frac{87}{12} = 8$
United Provinces	2,802	$\frac{2,802}{15} = 120$	$\frac{120}{12} = 10$	651	$\frac{1,302}{15} = 87$	$\frac{87}{12} = 8$
Bombay	2,429	$\frac{2,429}{15} = 160$	$\frac{160}{12} = 14$	534	$\frac{1,068}{15} = 72$	$\frac{72}{12} = 6$
Bihar and Orissa	1,232	$\frac{1,232}{15} = 83$	$\frac{83}{12} = 7$	425	$\frac{850}{15} = 60$	$\frac{60}{12} = 5$
Madras	3,467	$\frac{3,467}{15} = 232$	$\frac{232}{12} = 20$	902	$\frac{1,804}{15} = 121$	$\frac{121}{12} = 11$
Burma	263	$\frac{263}{15} = 20$	$\frac{20}{12} = 2$	265	$\frac{530}{15} = 36$	$\frac{36}{12} = 3$
Sind & Baluchistan	291	$\frac{291}{15} = 20$	$\frac{20}{12} = 2$	117	$\frac{234}{15} = 16$	$\frac{16}{12} = 2$
Bengal and Assam	3,389	$\frac{3,389}{15} = 226$	$\frac{226}{12} = 20$	912	$\frac{1,824}{15} = 121$	$\frac{121}{12} = 11$
Central	1,627	$\frac{1,627}{15} = 108$	$\frac{108}{12} = 9$	421	$\frac{842}{15} = 60$	$\frac{60}{12} = 5$
Total	17,878		104	4,878		59



217. As suggested above the Inspectors of Post Offices will inspect 10 per cent. of the Branch offices within their jurisdiction and also the offices of the proposed Assistant Inspectors. The additional number of Inspectors required for the latter work, would be as follows:—

10 per cent of the total number of Branch offices .. .. .	$1/10 \times 17,878$	=	1,788
Number of offices of Assistant Inspectors .. .. .			104
		Total	1,892
Number of additional Inspectors required .. .. .	$\frac{1,892}{15 \times 12}$	=	11

The total number of Inspectors for the country will then be 59 + 11 or 70.

218. As suggested in para. 447 the accounts of post offices should be inspected by a class of officers to be designated as "Inspectors of Accounts", who should work under the officer in charge of the Circle Accounts Office. The function of these Inspectors would be to inspect the accounts of all the Main offices which term will include all the present Head offices, Sub-offices and such of the Branch offices as are authorised to transact Savings Bank business. The number of offices falling in the last named category is not known but we assume that less than half of the total number of Branch offices do Savings Bank work.

219. Under our scheme the proposed Circle Accounts Office will have all the original vouchers received from Main offices and we consider that one annual accounts inspection of such offices would be ample. If these inspections are so arranged that they are conducted about six months after the administrative inspection of an office we shall be securing two inspections of each office every year. The total number of offices of which the accounts inspection will have to be conducted will be as follows:—

Present 1st Class Head offices .. .. .	31
Present 2nd Class Head offices .. .. .	214
Selection grade Sub-offices .. .. .	182
Time-Scale Sub-offices .. .. .	4,869
Departmental Branch offices .. .. .	407
Half of Extra Departmental Branch offices .. .. .	8,500
	<hr/>
	14,203
	<hr/>

220. For purposes of calculating the total number of accounts Inspectors required for the work we may assume that on an average not more than two days will be required for such inspections. We consider that this is a fairly liberal allowance as by far the largest number of offices are very small and their inspections will not take as much as two days. The Accounts Inspectors should be able to devote 15 days a month for actual inspection work excluding the time taken in transit and the total number of such officers therefore comes to  $\frac{14,203}{15 \times 12}$  or 80.

221. The introduction of the changes proposed by us would mean that the Superintendents of Post Offices will be relieved entirely of the

accounts inspections of post offices. We have also suggested in this chapter that the Superintendents and Inspectors should not inspect Telegraph Branch of combined Post and Telegraph offices. The inspections of Head offices and Selection grade Sub-offices by Superintendents of Post Offices will therefore become very much simpler than they are at present. The offices to be inspected by these officers in the different Circles will be those falling in the present category of 1st Class Head offices, 2nd Class Head offices and Selection grade Sub-offices. In addition they should inspect 10 per cent. of the time-scale Sub-offices. They will also visit such of the Branch offices as may fall on the way of their tour of inspection of the offices referred to above. The total number of these offices in each of the Circles will be as follows :—

Circle.	1st Class Head offices.	2nd Class Head offices.	Selection Grade Sub-offices.	10 per cent. of time scale Sub-offices.	Total.
Punjab .. .. .	7	31	27	65	130
United Provinces .. .. .	6	41	15	65	127
Bombay .. .. .	2	23	29	53	107
Bihar & Orissa .. .. .	1	20	15	42	78
Madras .. .. .	5	27	34	90	156
Burma .. .. .	2	19	9	26	56
Sind and Baluchistan .. .. .	2	2	5	12	21
Bengal & Assam .. .. .	4	34	28	91	157
Central .. .. .	2	17	20	42	81

222. The Superintendents of Post Offices are at present required to spend 85 days per annum on actual inspection of offices. On the assumption that on an average not more than two days per office will be required for the very much simplified inspection the total number of these officers could be reduced very considerably. According to our calculations based on the above figures and making an allowance for the extensiveness of charges, 30 Superintendents of Post Offices distributed as follows should be sufficient.

Punjab and N.-W. F. ..	5 (4 for Punjab and 1 for N.-W. F.).
United Provinces ..	4
Bombay ..	4
Bihar and Orissa ..	3 (2 for Bihar and 1 for Orissa).
Madras ..	4
Burma ..	2
Sind and Baluchistan ..	1
Bengal and Assam ..	4
Central ..	3 (2 for Central Provinces and 1 for Rajputana).

223. In paras. 28—31 we have suggested the formation of minor Circles and we are convinced that the proposed arrangement would be more conducive to efficiency. In these minor Circles the Superintendents of Post Offices will function as Personal Assistant to the Director of Posts and Telegraphs. In the major Circles (excluding Burma) the jurisdiction of the Postmaster-General should be divided into two ranges, each

with an officer of the rank of the Deputy Postmaster-General in charge. These officers should exercise more extensive administrative and financial powers than are delegated to the present Superintendents of Post Offices. Our suggestions with respect to this proposal are contained in Appendices F, G, H, I, J and K. Their headquarters should be so fixed as to enable them to exercise close supervision over their charges. Each of these range officers will have under him two officers corresponding to the rank of Assistant Divisional Engineers who may be designated "Superintendents of Post Offices". These Superintendents will conduct the inspections of Head post offices and other offices referred to in para. 221 above.

224. In order to avoid duplication of work, postmasters in charge of Main post offices and also the Sub-Divisional Inspectors should be authorised to correspond direct with their range officers for obtaining sanctions for fresh expenditure, etc. A range officer will be at liberty to call for a report from a Superintendent of Post Offices in any case in which he considers it necessary. Copies of all sanctions accorded by the range officer will be sent to the Superintendent of Post Offices for his information.

225. The main functions of the Superintendents of Post Offices under this scheme should be

- (i) inspection of lines and offices,
- (ii) appointments of time scale clerks,
- (iii) disposal of applications for leave, pension cases, etc., and
- (iv) dealing with indents for forms and articles of stock, etc.

226. The accounts section in the office of the Superintendents of Post Offices will prepare the salary and leave allowance bills of departmental officers and attend to other staff duties, e.g., maintenance of service and leave records, character sheets, etc., which work is at present done in the Head Post offices.

227. Powers to be exercised by the Superintendents of Post Offices are contained in Appendix A.

228. While not carrying out the detailed inspection of accounts of post offices which under our scheme would be the function of the Inspector of Accounts, the Superintendents of Post Offices should whenever inspecting Main offices verify the cash balances and generally see that the accounts are properly kept and that the instructions given by the Circle Accounts Office or the Inspector of Accounts are being carried out.

229. We have mentioned above that the Superintendents of Post Offices should be relieved of the work in connection with the inspection of Telegraph Branch of combined Post and Telegraph offices. We are convinced that improved efficiency would result if this inspection work is given to the Divisional Engineers, Telegraphs. The Engineering officers (Sub-Divisional officers and Engineering Supervisors) are constantly on the move and no extra expenditure would be involved in their inspecting the Traffic Branch of combined offices. By their training they are better equipped to perform this duty than the Superintendents of Post Offices who do not possess any technical knowledge of telegraph work.

230. In addition to setting the postal officers free to give their whole time to postal matters the proposed change might also make it possible to dispense with the employment of an officer of the Superior Traffic Branch,

2nd Division in Circle offices to which Directors of Telegraph Engineering are attached. The Divisional Engineers will be competent to deal finally with much of the Traffic Branch work which at present finds its way to the Circle offices.

231. We are satisfied that the above changes would not only result in an appreciable reduction in the staff employed in the Circle offices but also lead to more expeditious disposal of work and generally bring about improved efficiency in the Department. Only such cases will then be received in the Circle offices which require the personal consideration of the Postmaster-General and it will be no longer necessary then to retain the present staff of Assistant Postmasters-General and Deputies Postmaster-General in Circle offices.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### Organisation—General.

#### Organisation.

232. Presidency Postmasters, and First Class Postmasters have administrative control of the town sub-offices. In Bombay, Calcutta and Madras, the Presidency Postmasters are given the services of gazetted and non-gazetted Inspecting Postmasters to look after the town sub-offices. The gazetted Postmaster inspects the selection grade sub-offices while the non-gazetted Postmaster inspects the remainder. All cases of appointment of and disciplinary action against the staff in the town sub-offices have to be submitted by the gazetted Inspecting Postmaster to the Presidency Postmaster for orders.

233. In our opinion the importance of the Presidency Postmasters has been unnecessarily inflated by the administrative control of sub-offices being given to them and we are quite convinced that much better control would be exercised if it was vested in Superintendents of Post Offices who would be responsible to the Postmaster-General.

234. We are also of the opinion, that in other large stations where the town sub-offices have been placed under the control of first class Postmasters, the work should be transferred to the local Superintendent of Post Offices wherever possible.

235. The recruitment to the Lower Division cadre is partly by promotion from the Postmen's grade and partly from the open market. The latter source has secured us recruits with as good qualifications as of the permanent employees in the Upper Division cadre. Restrictions were at first placed on the class of work that could be entrusted to the Lower Division clerks. But it was found that these restrictions were leading to administrative difficulties and they had to be relaxed. Postmasters-General are now authorised to exercise a good deal of discretion in the matter of duties which may be allotted to Lower Division clerks. In actual practice we have found that the Lower Division clerks recruited from the open market and equipped with as good educational qualifications as the upper division clerks are performing equally responsible duties. We are therefore of the opinion that such recruits should be freely employed on all duties performed by the better paid Upper Division clerks. Further we suggest that they should be absorbed in the lower grade of the single cadre for the clerical establishment suggested by us and be eligible for compensatory allowance which at present is being withheld from them.

236. As explained elsewhere in this report the Departmental officials promoted to the Lower Division cadre have been condemned by all Departmental witnesses who maintain that these promoted men are unfit to perform clerical duties. We cannot therefore recommend their being treated in the same manner as the direct recruits to the cadre. They should not perform any duties carrying monetary responsibility or have dealings with the public.

237. The Director-General, Posts and Telegraphs has had under consideration the possibility of having two grades of postmen, the lower

grade being employed for the delivery of unregistered articles and the higher grade on the delivery of registered and insured articles, money orders, parcels, etc. The Heads of Circles to whom the matter was referred have unanimously opposed the idea, and pointed out that it is not correct to say that postmen delivering unregistered articles are performing less responsible duties than those who deliver the registered and insured articles. Further, it has been argued, that the suggestion, if adopted in large offices, where alone the proposed differentiation can be made, would seriously affect fluidity of staff.

238. We have given the matter our careful consideration and come to the conclusion that the change proposed is undesirable.

239. Under Article 154 of the Posts and Telegraphs Initial Account Code read with Rule 45 of Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI, advances of stamps made to clerks and stamp vendors are treated as permanent advances which are checked from time to time. In the General Post Offices at Bombay and Calcutta, sale of stamps is farmed out on contract and an agreement is entered into in Form M.-56. In accordance with the provisions of clause 10 of this form the contractors or their employees, *viz.*, the stamp vendors, receive from the post office an advance of post cards, stamps, postal stationery, etc., of the total value not exceeding Rs. 1,000 per stamp vendor every morning. Clause 11 of the agreement requires that on the close of each day this advance should be verified and taken over by the Treasury Contractor or a postal official appointed by the Postmaster in this behalf. In Bombay, however, such advances to the staff of the contractor are treated as permanent advances against the vendors while in Calcutta they are adjusted daily according to clause 11 of the agreement. The strict observance of this provision throws on the post office officials a certain amount of work which was not being done when Departmental Stamp Vendors were employed. Considering that at each place the contractors have furnished a substantial security and they are responsible for the acts of their employees, it is recommended that clauses 10 and 11 of the agreement form may be suitably amended so as to permit of the procedure adopted in Bombay being regularised and thereby relieve the post office officials of the extra work with which they are at present saddled in Calcutta.

240. We are of the opinion that the system of selling stamps by contractors should be extended to offices where the daily sales are large. There should be provision in the agreements with the contractors that the staff for the sale of stamps and places of sale may be increased or decreased if required by the Department during the currency of the agreement with a *pro rata* increase or decrease in remuneration.

241. Except in offices where the daily sale of stamps justifies the work being given on contract, the sale of stamps should, as far as possible, be entrusted to extra departmental agents. If an allowance has to be paid to such agents it should be based on the daily average sales. Director-General's letter of the 7th of February 1928 lays down scales of allowances for such agents in different localities. We suggest that in order to encourage this system of sale of stamps particularly in large towns a more liberal scale may be adopted.

242. The Director-General's letter referred to above enjoins the employment of Non-Departmental stamp vendors in preference to Depart-

mental men. In actual practice we find that Departmental Stamp Vendors are being employed in several places. We wish particularly to draw attention to the fact that in Calcutta and Bombay where sale of stamps is entrusted to contractors, Departmental Stamp Vendors are being employed in offices not covered by the terms of agreement. We suggest that all such officials should be replaced by extra departmental Stamp Vendors.

243. The facilities provided by the Department for the purchase of stamps have frequently formed the subject of complaints by the general public, and our attention has been drawn to a communication which has appeared in the Press regarding the arrangements in the General Post Office at Calcutta. We are satisfied that there is some justification for these complaints and strongly recommend the opening up of additional extra departmental Sub-Post Offices in all large towns as recommended elsewhere in this report, which offices would provide the required facility for purchase of stamps and at the same time tend to decentralise the postal business.

244. Clause 3 of the Post and Telegraph Guide at present requires the Telegraph Offices to sell stamps and postcards to the general public, but it makes no mention of the Telegraph Branch of Combined Post and Telegraph Offices. This Branch does not close on all Post Office holidays and observes restricted hours of work on Sundays. We recommend that this Branch when open, should be required to sell stamps to the public on Post office holidays and during the closed hours of the Post office on week days.

245. Some of the Mail offices at Railway stations are permitted to perform Registration work but they do not sell stamps during registration hours. The result is that on presenting articles for registration in these offices the members of the public are first required to go elsewhere for purchase of stamps. We suggest that the official in charge of Registration work should keep stamps not only for registration purposes but also for sale to the public as required by them.

246. In the course of our examination of the Sub-Postmaster, New Delhi, we were informed that all the outside letter boxes in the distant parts of New Delhi are cleared by letter box peons who are provided with bicycles. Ten such peons are employed for the purpose. As clearances have to be made of letter boxes located at long distances from the post office, comparatively early hours of the last clearance have to be prescribed. We are of the opinion that motor cycles should be used in all large towns in uncongested localities. In New Delhi two motor cycles with side car attachments could serve the purpose.

247. In Calcutta, mails from offices such as Behala, and Tollygunge are brought in partly by runners and partly by motor cars. The use of motor cycles in all such localities would be more economical than the present arrangement and at the same time it would provide more expeditious service. We would add that the mails from the office at Botanical Gardens under the Howrah Head Office are brought in by special motor which must necessarily be an expensive item. It would be cheaper to use a motor cycle for this office and others similarly located in the jurisdiction of Howrah Head Office. The clearing of all letter boxes in Calcutta in localities south of Park Street should be by motor cycle.

248. We recommend that the system of employing extra departmental delivery agents in Branch Offices should be extended. Whole time postmen employed in Branch Offices should be replaced by such agents wherever possible. They should replace postmen in extra departmental Sub-Offices.

249. We have found a special arrangement in existence in Bombay regarding delivery of letters for certain merchants. According to this arrangement one Mr. Postwallah, a Parsee gentleman receives from the Post office all letters addressed to his clients who number about 250 and he makes his own arrangements for the delivery of their correspondence. It is said to be an ancient arrangement going back to over 90 years and is described as "the survival of the times when there were no Railways or the Post Office Act and no organisation for the delivery of letters or the carriage of letters outside the city of Bombay".

250. Mr. Postwallah charges a fee from his customers for delivery as well as despatch of their correspondence. The letters are received addressed "c/o Postwallah". He takes them over at the General Post Office and also at Kalbadevi Sub-Office and arranges for their disposal. In the reverse direction he collects letters from his clients and makes up direct bags for the Railway Mail Service. Mr. Postwallah is given the services of two clerks from the Department free of charge and these clerks see to the proper defacing of the stamps and making up of the bags.

251. The correspondence handled by Mr. Postwallah is said to be addressed in special scripts like Kaithi, Kutchi and Marwari, which scripts, we are told, the Post Office is not able to decipher, and in consequence the Post office finds the arrangement convenient. This argument in favour of retention of the present arrangement is not very convincing as apart from Mr. Postwallah's clients there must be other members of the general public who receive their correspondence addressed in the scripts referred to and presumably the Post office is able to deal with it. But if the position is as explained to us then Mr. Postwallah must be getting access to all the unregistered articles of the letter mail which are addressed in the scripts referred to and picking out those that are addressed to his clients. This would be a very objectionable method. We are, however, assured that the system is being continued on sentimental grounds and that the Postmaster-General has decided that as soon as the present incumbent dies or voluntarily gives up the system, it will be discontinued.

252. According to the existing arrangement Mr. Postwallah's clients enjoy the additional facility of posting their correspondence up to a later hour than that prescribed for the neighbouring post offices and without the payment of any late fee. The Department is therefore losing on the arrangement and it is desirable that it should be discontinued. An additional disadvantage of the present arrangement is that the correspondence collected by Mr. Postwallah is made over to the Railway Mail Service unsorted. It would be sorted if it was to go through either the Kalbadevi Sub-Office or the General Post Office. Additional work is thus thrown on the sorters working in the Mail vans.

253. There is yet another instance of special facilities having been provided in Bombay in a particular locality in the shape of an office called the "Shroff Mahajan Post Office". This Post office observes special working hours and closes mails for the Railway Mail Service up to a later



hour than other Post offices in the neighbourhood without recovery of late fees. Here too there is loss of revenue and we suggest that steps should be taken to prevent any further loss to the Department. The remark in the above paragraph regarding unsorted mails being transferred to the Railway Mail Service applies in this case also.

254. In large towns a separate set of postmen is employed on delivery of parcels. We suggest that in such places this work should be given out on contract if such an arrangement is found to be economical. Insured parcels should continue to be delivered by postmen.

255. It has been noticed that in some large towns the money orders and parcels are sent out for delivery with separate batches of postmen. We are of the opinion that it should be possible for both these classes of articles to be sent out with one batch of postmen by combining these two deliveries. We suggest that a trial may be given to such an arrangement if the delivery of parcels cannot be entrusted to contractors.

256. In Presidency towns the importance of the General Post Office has increased on account of paucity of town sub-offices in its neighbourhood. The position gets worse when the nearest sub-office to a General Post Office is given restricted functions to perform. For example, Churchgate Sub-Office in Bombay is permitted only to register letters and to sell stamps. The acceptance of parcels is not allowed. It is located in an important business centre and should be of very great use to the public if it were authorised to transact all Postal business.

257. Similarly in smaller towns such as Nagpur and Lahore, there is scope for opening up additional offices in busy localities. The Nagpur City Sub-Office handles a very large volume of traffic and as the accommodation provided in the rented building is very limited and work has to be carried on under difficulties it is proposed to shift the office to a new building to be constructed on the site purchased some years ago. We suggest that if a new building is constructed it should be designed to serve as an additional office. Postal facilities should not be withdrawn from the very important area where the present City Office is located. We would go a step further and suggest that arrangements should be made to open additional offices which would prevent undue importance being attached to a Central office and at the same time provide improved facilities for the general public.

258. The same policy should be adopted in Lahore where there is already a congestion in the General Post Office and unless steps are taken to decentralise the work there will be demands for expansion of the General Post Office buildings.

259. The additional offices may be of the status of Extra Departmental Sub-offices in charge of retired Postal officials. In large towns business houses might even be prepared to provide rent-free accommodation for post offices being located on their premises, such offices being named after the business houses concerned. The opening up of a large number of sub-offices of the status corresponding to that of the post office in the Irwin House in Bombay would help considerably in reducing expenditure at present incurred on supervisory officers in the General Post Offices.

260. A large number of Departmental Branch offices have been converted into Extra Departmental agencies. If the retention of the present

status of the remaining Departmental Branch offices is justified by the volume of work, we suggest that they should be converted into Extra Departmental Sub-offices. Such conversions would give the public greater facilities and at the same time the working expenses of the offices would be reduced. In order to make the Extra Departmental Agency system attractive and at the same time enable the Department to secure the services of reliable persons for the work we suggest that the scales of allowances may be made more liberal than they are at present. We are convinced that the opening up of a number of Extra Departmental Sub-offices in large towns can be ensured if the amount of the allowance is made sufficiently attractive. We are also of the opinion that there should be no ban against the employment of outsiders as Extra Departmental Sub-Postmasters. In some of the Circles, only the retired officials of the Department are selected for this work. In the Punjab and the United Provinces Circles, on the other hand, suitable non-Departmental candidates are given the required training before being entrusted with the duties of a Sub-Postmaster. We suggest that this system should be extended.

261. The opening up of additional offices in large towns would relieve the General Post Offices of the congestion at the public counter in the afternoon for which extra staff has to be sanctioned as a permanent measure. We would here like to refer to the following extracts from a report by Rai Bahadur S. C. Gupta, Postmaster-General, United Provinces, on his study of the postal system in different parts of Europe :—

“ Out of 23,125 post offices in Great Britain and Northern Ireland there are 21,588 ‘ scale payment ’ or extra departmental branch offices—as we call them, and only 1,517 crown offices. Many of the ‘ scale payment ’ offices do all classes of work and there are offices with restricted functions also. In all ‘ scale payment ’ offices the department does not supply anything except forms, postage stamps and stationery for sale to the public and defacing stamps. The building on an approved site has to be provided by the Agent and if the work justifies the employment of more than one man the Agent has to do it. He himself may or may not work in the post offices. Cash and Stamps are kept at night on the responsibility of the Agent and no cash safe is supplied by the department. The allowance of the Agent is fixed according to the income and the volume of the work of the office. I visited the Edward Street town sub-office in London which is a ‘ scale payment office ’ employing three persons. The work of these offices is reviewed every three years and the allowance revised if necessary.

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“ In Italy the total number of post offices is 12,423. Out of this as much as 12,000 are in charge of private persons. The allowance for each office is fixed according to its importance and there is a scale fixed for the volume of work of each kind.

“ In addition to these, there are 161 offices in each of which there is only one departmental man in charge while other employees

in the clerical cadre are private persons engaged by the departmental man. For this purpose he gets an allowance within which he must manage the cost of establishment engaged by him. I was informed that this arrangement was working satisfactorily.”

262. We are indebted to the Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs for furnishing us with a copy of the Report referred to. In our opinion we should give a trial to the system obtaining in Italy.

263. In this connection we give below certain comparative figures about the Department which will be found of interest :—

	31st March 1914.	31st March 1933.
Number of post offices of all classes .. .. .	18,946	23,797
Extra Departmental staff .. .. .	12,362	17,271
Total number of postal articles (excluding money orders) dealt with in the year	1,040,586,554	1,118,982,585
Inland money orders during the year—Number .. .. .	29,940,631	36,434,638
Amount .. .. .	Rs. 51,18,35,732	Rs. 75,33,76,448
<b>Savings Banks—</b>		
Number on .. .. .	1,638,725	2,736,645
Balance on .. .. .	Rs. 23,16,75,467	Rs. 41,45,37,409
<b>Total staff in—</b>		
Audit and Accounts Offices .. .. .	1,331	2,123
Post offices .. .. .	93,955	1,22,411
<b>Charges—</b>		
Audit and Accounts .. .. .	Rs. 8,37,554	Rs. 23,49,875
Presidency or District offices (or Postal expenses) .. .. .	Rs. 1,80,36,509	Rs. 5,18,48,247

264. From the above it will be noticed that the growth of expenditure on staff employed in post offices has far exceeded the growth of traffic. Further we find that whereas in 1914 one post office served 980 of the literate population in the country, figures for 1932-33 show that it is now required to serve 1,172. The number of postal articles per head of literate population has dropped from 56.06 to 40.11 in 1933.

265. We consider that there is urgent necessity for cutting down the working expenses in the Department. This object can be achieved by (i) simplifying methods of work which determine the staff employed in post offices, and (ii) employing larger number of Extra Departmental Agents. We feel that the sources from which these agents can be secured have not been fully tapped. For example in the United Provinces the services of only 370 school masters are utilised for the Extra Departmental Agents' duties as against 2,287 in the Punjab. In this connection it is worthy of note that in the Punjab one post office serves 390 of the literate population in the Province while in the United Provinces this figure stands at 894 and in Madras it is 1,586.

266. We consider that the Superintendents of Post Offices and Railway Mail Service, Inspectors of Post Offices, and Railway Mail Service and Head clerks to Superintendents, should ordinarily remain in their charges for five years. The present practice of Superintendents of Post Offices holding charge of Railway Mail Service divisions for a period of

three years has been described by all official witnesses as unsatisfactory. We agree with them and suggest that the orders contained in Rules 57—59 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume IV, should be amended.

267. The inspection of the Telegraph Branch of a combined office should be conducted according to the prescribed questionnaire and all irregularities noticed recorded in the Order Book. A copy of these remarks alone should go to the Postmaster-General. Details of the nature of tablet check, etc., should be included in the Order Book remarks.

268. We consider that Departmental post offices should be inspected only once a year. The Superintendents of Post Offices should, however, exercise as at present their discretion in the matter of a second inspection of an office which is suspected to be not working satisfactorily.

269. Unregistered articles are delivered by Calcutta General Post Office four times a day at 7 A.M., 10 A.M., 1 P.M., and 4 P.M., while Bombay General Post Office effects five deliveries at 8 A.M., 11 A.M., 1 P.M., 3-30 P.M. and 6 P.M. The last two deliveries (4th and 5th) in Bombay General Post Office consist of local letters only. The possibility of combining these two deliveries should be examined.

270. Paid unregistered articles are delivered from the Bombay General Post Office by two sets of 48 postmen each. The average number of letters received for delivery through postmen is about 20,000. This gives an average of 208 per man.

271. There are also two sets of postmen employed in the Calcutta General Post Office for similar service, each set consisting of 29 men. The average number of letters delivered through postmen is about 25,000. This gives an average of over 400 per man.

272. For delivery of registered articles and payment of money orders, Bombay General Post Office employs 93 men giving an average of 46 per man per day while Calcutta General Post Office which employs 82 men for this work gives an average of 86 per man per day.

273. The explanation for the employment of a larger force in Bombay is perhaps to be found in the special conditions of service in the delivery area of the General Post Office in that town. This matter, however, requires investigation.

274. There are 4 postmen detailed in the Calcutta General Post Office for payment of Telegraphic Money orders. The average number of Telegraphic Money Orders paid is 24 per day. The employment of 4 postmen for this work does not appear to be justified, and we suggest consideration of the question of reducing this number.

275. The Madras General Post Office makes four deliveries at 8-30 A.M., 10 A.M., 11-30 A.M. and 4 P.M. Of these the first and the fourth consist of paid unregistered articles only while the second consists of paid unregistered articles and account articles. The third delivery is for account articles only. There are 3 sets of postmen each set consisting of 29 men. One set is engaged on 1st and 4th deliveries, the 2nd and 3rd deliveries being each performed by a separate set. We have considered the possibility of combining these two deliveries but we find that this cannot be done without causing delay in delivery of unregistered articles.

## CHAPTER IX.

**Methods of work followed in the different departments of the Post Office and suggestions regarding their simplification.**

276. According to Rule 127 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VIII and Rule 175 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI, the Superintendent of Post Offices may authorise the village postmen to pay money orders. This would imply that normally a village postman is not to pay money orders unless so authorised. Actually as a general practice village postmen pay money orders except in cases in which a Superintendent issues orders to the contrary. We are of the opinion that the existing practice should be regularised.

277. Under Rules 255—267 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI, money orders for village postmen and Branch Offices are required to be entered in (a) the Register of Money Orders Received (M. O.-3), and (b) the Register of Money Orders received for village postmen and Branch Offices (M. O.-44). The particulars of all such money orders are at present entered by the money order clerk in the Register of Money Orders Received (M. O.-3) and then transferred to the Sub-Account clerk for disposal. The Sub-Account clerk enters the very same particulars of the money orders in his Register of Money Orders Received (M. O.-44), arranged in groups for each Branch Office and for each village postman. The register M. O.-44 is not maintained in the same way as the register M. O.-3, nor is it closed in the manner laid down in Rule 276 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI. When therefore money orders are returned from Sub-Account Branch either as paid or unpaid they are re-entered in red ink in the register M. O.-3 and then disposed of. If this work of re-entry is done in the Sub-Account Department and register M. O.-44 maintained and closed, as required by Rule 276 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI, there will be no need for entering the full particulars of the money orders in Register M. O.-3. The paid money orders may be transferred to the money order paid clerk under receipt in order that the money orders paid by the Branch Offices and village postmen may be included in the money order paid lists of the day. In offices where there is no separate Sub-Account clerk and the Sub-Postmaster himself performs the Sub-Account work, the clerical duties in connection with the maintenance of the Register in form M. O.-44 may be assigned to the money order clerk.

278. Rule 272 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI authorises payment of money orders by means of pay order issued in favour of payees who receive a large number of money orders. These pay orders can only be encashed at the offices of issue and for this purpose the payees have either to call at the post office or pass them through their Bank. We understand that the system is not very popular with the public as the Banks charge commission on the collection of money from the Post Office. No such commission would be payable if the Post Office were to issue a cheque on the local branch of the Imperial Bank.

279. The question is of considerable importance to the Department, as in large towns postmen have to be provided with escorts if they have

to pay money orders in excess of the prescribed limit. No staff is sanctioned for this purpose, and necessary arrangements have to be made by withdrawing men from some other duty with the consequent dislocation of work. Further when a pay order is issued on a certain day in a month the money orders pertaining to it have to be treated as unpaid even up to the end of the month, if the pay order remains uncashed. Instances occur in which money orders have to be detained beyond the month in which they are issued, the period of their currency being extended under the rules of the Department. We are of the opinion that the Department should adopt the system of making payments by cheques as far as possible and all first class Postmasters should be permitted to issue cheques on branches of the Imperial Bank of India to such members of the public as are prepared to accept them in lieu of cash. In the case of payments of money orders by cheques one consolidated cheque should be issued for the total amount in favour of a payee who should, however, be required to acknowledge the amounts in lists, prepared according to audit circles. Such payments should be treated as final and it should be unnecessary to detain the money orders to await the encashment of cheques pertaining to them, the cheques being renewed if they are not cashed during the period of their currency.

280. We are also of opinion that all first class Postmasters should be permitted to issue cheques in connection with Savings Bank, Government securities and cash certificate payments, and the public should be encouraged to receive payments by means of cheques instead of cash.

281. Under Rule 357 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI, a telegraphic reference has to be made to the remitter to ascertain his wishes in the matter whenever a telegraphic money order has been refused by the payee. We recommend that this practice should be stopped. In such cases the telegraphic advice should be returned to the remitter in the same manner as an ordinary money order is returned under Rule 286 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI.

282. We suggest that the form of the Telegraphic Money Order Advice Book should be slightly amended and the counterfoil portion omitted. The entries on the lower half of the counterfoil regarding re-direction, etc., should be embodied at the foot of the revised form. Accommodation for this purpose could be made available on the main portion of the form by omitting one line in the space reserved for the text (the present provision for the text is on a very liberal scale) and moving up the existing printed matter below the text space.

283. Telegraphic Money Order Advices in the proposed form should be prepared in triplicate, by means of carbonic process. Of the three copies thus prepared, one will remain in the office of issue, the second will be retained by the Telegraph office and the third will be despatched to the office of payment as a postal confirmation.

284. According to Rule 90 of Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume V, each registered article of the letter and parcel mail is required to be detailed in the registered and parcel lists. These entries are said to serve as a safeguard against frauds by the Departmental officials and also to facilitate enquiry. In actual practice, we find that the sorters employed in the Railway Mail Service travelling sections do not carry out a detailed check of the articles, and they content themselves with the counting of

the total number of articles and checking with the totals as given in the lists. Thereafter they prepare fresh lists from the articles themselves.

285. We have examined several witnesses on the subject of replacing the detailed entries in these lists by bulk entries. While some of them support the proposal, others are of the opinion that it would encourage the postal officials to commit frauds. Further, that the change would make it difficult to trace a missing article.

286. We do not agree, that the proposal would result in wholesale frauds by the Departmental officials. Those who are inclined to be dishonest are not deterred by the present procedure and we have no reason to believe, that the proposed modification would encourage the others to commit frauds. Frauds with articles of this class are primarily of the nature of substitution at the offices of posting and the present system of detailed entries in the lists has not been found to be an effective safeguard against such frauds.

287. With regard to the argument which has been put forward, that the introduction of the bulk entry system would make it difficult to trace an article and to conduct enquiries, we would like to point out that even with the existing procedure success is not always guaranteed in all cases of enquiries. We are told, that mistakes are often made in entering numbers in the "Registered and Parcel Lists" and such mistakes lead to protracted enquiries which usually end in a small amount of *ex-gratia* compensation being granted to the claimants. The absence of details will not make it absolutely impossible to conduct any enquiries and as the bulk entry system will, in actual practice, be found to serve all practical purposes we have no hesitation in recommending its adoption. We would like to add, that in a very large number of the foreign countries registered articles and parcels are advised in bulk.

288. According to the figures kindly furnished to us by the Financial Adviser, Posts and Telegraphs, we find that on account of the expensive operations involved the Department is losing heavily on the handling of registered letters and parcels. We anticipate that in large offices considerable time of the staff would be saved by the introduction of the change suggested by us in the foregoing paragraph and the simplification of the work would result in an appreciable economy.

289. According to the note below sub-para. 1(a) of Rule 122 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume V, a leaky article has been brought within the operations of the rules relating to the articles, the transmission of which is prohibited by the inland post. In compliance with the orders on the subject, a report has immediately to be submitted to the Postmaster-General when a leaky article is detected in a post office or has been transferred to it by a section or mail office. Under Rule 68 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VIII, the Postmaster-General has to record his orders on each such case authorising the opening or destruction of the article. With the consent of the sender, a Postmaster-General can authorise the sale of the contents of a leaky parcel and payment of the sale proceeds to the sender.

290. On receipt of the report regarding the leaky parcel the Postmaster-General authorises the post office concerned, to issue a notice to the sender, calling upon him to remove the parcel within the number of days to be

prescribed, failing which the parcel is liable to be destroyed. The Postmaster-General further empowers the post office to comply with the wishes of the sender, if he requests that the contents of the parcel may be sold and the sale proceeds remitted to him. If no action is taken by the sender to remove the parcel or to communicate his wishes within the prescribed period the Postmaster is authorised to destroy the article.

291. In the Madras Circle all Postmasters, except Branch Postmasters, have been directed by a general order not only to report such cases to the Postmaster-General, but in each case also to make attempts to deliver it to the addressee on payment of any charges, which may be due on it failing which to issue a notice to the sender of the article to arrange to take delivery of it within a fortnight. In the event of neither party taking action on the notices served by the Postmasters, a report has to be made to the Postmaster-General for further orders. The existing departmental procedure does not appear to contemplate any reference being made to the addressee of the parcel, and in this respect the instructions issued by the Postmaster-General, Madras do not seem to be quite correct. We suggest that in all such cases Postmasters should report the matter to the Postmaster-General concerned and at the same time issue a notice to the sender of the article. If no action is taken within a fortnight either to take delivery of the parcel or to authorise sale of its contents, it should be destroyed, in the presence of the Postmaster.

292. Rule 148 (6) of Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI, requires that an outward foreign parcel found in a letter box which does not comply with the special conditions regarding postage, etc., as laid down in the Post and Telegraph Guide, should be sent to the Dead Letter Office if the sender refuses to pay any attention to the communication addressed to him by the Postmaster to rectify the omission. Under Rule 423 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VIII, the Dead Letter Offices are required to return these parcels immediately to the senders if particulars of their names and addresses are readily available on the outside of the parcels. Otherwise the parcels have to be opened and further action taken according to the procedure prescribed for the disposal of unclaimed inland parcels.

293 In our opinion the above procedure entails unnecessary handling by the various offices and sections through which such parcels have to pass, including the post office at the headquarters of the Head of the Circle where the Dead Letter Office is located. There is nothing gained by a Dead Letter Office being called in, to deal with a parcel which can easily be disposed of without its intervention. We consider, that in all cases in which the names of senders and their addresses are noted on the outside of the parcels, the post offices should be authorised to return them direct to the senders after expiry of the period of deposit prescribed in Rule 148 (6) referred to above.

294. Rule 164 (3) of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI, requires that each postman should write in words below the last entry in the delivery slip, the total number of articles received for delivery as well as the total amount to be recovered on them and to sign this entry. In addition, he must initial every entry in the delivery slip. This is an unnecessarily elaborate procedure, and we suggest that the orders relating



to the initialling of every entry in the delivery slip should be cancelled. We have been told, that the present procedure is essential to safeguard the postmen against any attempt by delivery clerks to involve the former by making changes in the body of the delivery slips. We consider, that such a contingency can be met by ruling that attestation by postmen will be essential in the case of any alterations in the particulars of articles given out for delivery as detailed in the list.

295. Rule 171 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI, requires that the receipt granted to the sender of an uninsured registered article should contain the name of the addressee and the post town of destination. The general practice, however, is to give full address of the addressee on these receipts. As this means waste of time at the counter we suggest that the present practice should be stopped.

296. At present the value of postage stamps affixed to a registered packet or a parcel has to be noted in the receipt granted for it. We consider, that the post office staff should not be saddled with such additional work. In no other country is such information furnished by the post office, and we suggest that the practice obtaining in India should be discontinued.

297. Rule 222 of Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI, prohibits delivery through postmen of value payable articles in cases where the amount to be recovered exceeds Rs. 25. This limit was fixed, apparently with a view to allow a larger number of articles being delivered at a time by postmen on account of the aggregate limit of Rs. 200 prescribed in Rule 221 (4) of Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI. We have, however, been informed that a large number of value payable articles handled by the post office are valued between Rs. 25 and Rs. 50. The present limit, therefore, must cause inconvenience to the public and at the same time add to the work of the post office staff. This can be remedied by the present limit being raised to Rs. 50 without prescribing any aggregate limit for this particular class of traffic. It would suffice if the provisions of Rule 257, *ibid* are enforced regarding the total amount to be entrusted for delivery to any single postman at one time for the payment of money orders *plus* the aggregate value of value payable articles. The proposed change will afford the general public improved facility and we have no reason to believe, that the Department will be running any risks. Further we suggest, that the Postmasters-General should be permitted at their discretion to allow value payable articles exceeding Rs. 10 but not exceeding Rs. 25 in value being delivered through village postmen in approved localities.

298. Rule 703 (5) of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI, requires that the redirection fee, recovered from the addressee of a registered parcel, should be converted into stamps, which should be affixed to the receipt signed by the addressee. In the case of the redirected unregistered parcels under Note to Rule 180 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI, the parcel clerk has to prepare a receipt in form RP-1, in which the name of the addressee and the amount of the redirection fee has to be entered. This receipt is made over to the postman with instructions not to present it for the signature of the addressee. This receipt is utilised for purposes of affixing postage stamps to it to the value of the redirection fee recovered.

299. The Redirected Parcel Postage account is maintained in form A. C. G. 44 which also contains the letter postage account. If collections on account of unpaid postage and the customs duty can be taken into cash collections, we see no reason why the amounts recovered on account of redirection of parcels (registered and unregistered) cannot be similarly treated. We recommend abolition of the system of converting into stamps the redirection fee on parcels. It may instead be credited in cash.

300. Clause 80 of the Post and Telegraph Guide merely prescribes that an inland parcel must not be of a kind which owing to size, shape, manner of packing or any other cause cannot be carried by post without serious inconvenience or risk. We have been told that, in the absence of clear instructions on the subject, cases do occur in which parcels of inconvenient size and dimensions are accepted for transmission by post. Such parcels have to be sent outside the mail bags as they cannot be enclosed even in the largest sized bags. This involves considerable inconvenience in handling, and parcels are exposed to the risk of being damaged or tampered with in transit. It is therefore necessary to lay down maximum dimensions. In our opinion we cannot do better than adopt the dimensions prescribed for parcels for Great Britain and Northern Ireland, namely, the greatest length  $3\frac{1}{2}$  ft. and the greatest length and girth combined 6 ft.

301. Notes 1 and 2 to Clauses 114 and 129 of the Post and Telegraph Guide (April 1934 edition) are discretionary and senders of registered and parcel mail articles, on which acknowledgments are due, do not always present such articles at the post office with the acknowledgment forms duly filled in. This throws additional work on the post office staff, who have to prepare the acknowledgment forms before forwarding the articles to destination. Our enquiries go to show that work of this nature is of considerable magnitude. A very large majority of the officers consulted by us agree, that the preparation of acknowledgment forms by the senders should be made compulsory and we recommend this being done.

302. Further, note below clause 111 of the Post and Telegraph Guide advises the senders of registered articles to write their name and address, on the lower left-hand corner of the covers to enable the post offices to return the undeliverable articles to the senders unopened and without delay. In the absence of this information, quite a large number of these articles have to be sent to the Dead Letter Offices, where they are opened to ascertain the names and addresses of the senders. In the interest of the public as much as in the interest of the Department we suggest that the particulars referred to should be required to be furnished on the registered covers.

303. It has been suggested to us that the value payable article receipt should not be prepared by the office of delivery, but should form a part of the value payable money order form which should be filled up by the sender. This suggestion has been supported by a majority of the officers consulted by us. The proposed procedure would reduce considerably the work in the delivery branch of post offices as the time involved in the preparation of receipts would be saved and delivery of the articles expedited. It would also prevent cases of discrepancies between the amount noted in the value payable journals of the post office of posting and the

amount noted on the value payable receipts by the offices of delivery. It is true that if the proposed procedure is introduced the offices of posting will have to check not only the particulars in the money order, but also the receipt portion to make certain that the article is identical with what is entered in the receipt but this check will be all to the good. We recommend, therefore, that the value payable receipt and intimation form should form a part of the value payable money order form. The combined form should be of the same size as the inland money order form. The necessary entries in the receipt and intimation should be filled in by the sender and these entries should be checked in the office of posting.

304. No-delivery town sub-offices which have no Branch Offices in account with them do not exchange registered articles or parcels with their Head Offices and Stationery Sorting Offices in the same station on Sundays and Post Office holidays and yet they have to exchange 'Nil' registered and parcel lists with such offices. We consider it unnecessary for them to exchange such 'Nil' lists, and we suggest that the preparation of these lists both for and by such town sub-offices should be discontinued.

305. Section IV of the Government Savings Bank Act of 1873 empowers a Postmaster to pay to any person appearing to him to be entitled to receive the deposit standing to the credit of a deceased person if the amount involved does not exceed Rs. 100. The provisions of this clause are made applicable to the payment of post office five-year cash certificates under clause 3 of the Post Office Cash Certificates Act of 1917. General instructions for the guidance of the post office staff in regard to these payments are contained in Rules 503 and 567 of Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI. It has been represented to us that enhanced powers should be vested in the Heads of Post Offices in regard to these payments, as experience shows that the present low limit prescribed results in a very large number of cases being unnecessarily referred to the Heads of Circles. We are of the opinion that time has come for these limits to be raised. We suggest the following modifications :—

- (a) Postmasters in charge of second class Head Offices should be authorised to pay up to the extent of Rs. 250.
- (b) Postmasters in charge of first class Head Offices up to Rs. 500.
- (c) Presidency Postmasters up to Rs. 1,000.

We feel that the changes proposed can safely be introduced as the conditions prescribed for the guidance of the Heads of Post Offices sufficiently safeguard the Department against any abuse of the power vested in the Postmasters.

306. The Sub-Postmasters may continue to exercise the powers at present vested in them in regard to the settlement of claims relating to post office cash certificates of the deceased holders when the amount involved does not exceed Rs. 100.

307. Names of Savings Bank Depositors have to be given in column 3 of the Savings Bank Memo. (Form SB 24) submitted in duplicate by Sub-Post Offices to the Head Offices. A copy of it is forwarded by the latter to the Audit offices with their journals. As the particulars entered

in columns 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 of these forms are quite sufficient for purposes of identification of the accounts, we are of the opinion that the names of depositors need not be entered in these Memos. This information should, however, continue to be given in the Journals (Form SB 2) submitted by the Head Offices to the Audit Offices.

308. According to Rule 425 of Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI, when any person applies for permission to open a public account, the Head Postmaster has to forward the application to the Postmaster-General accompanied by the applicant's written statement showing the object and sources of income of the Corporation or Fund, and the name proposed for the Fund. If the opening of an account is clearly inadmissible under the rules for public accounts, the Head Postmaster is empowered to explain matters to the applicant and if the latter is satisfied, the application is not forwarded to the Postmaster-General. The conditions governing the opening of public accounts have been fully explained in clauses 42 and 43, Section VI of the Post and Telegraph Guide, April 1934 edition. We are told that instances have occurred in which even a Postmaster-General's sanction for the opening of a public account has been questioned by the audit office and such accounts have had to be closed. We are therefore of the opinion that the sanction of the Postmaster-General to the opening of a public account need not be obtained in cases in which conditions laid down in the rules are fulfilled. Clause 42 (b) and exception to clause 42 (h) of the Rules for Savings Bank Depositors in the Post and Telegraph Guide empower Head Postmasters to open certain classes of public accounts without reference to the Head of the Circle. We recommend that they should further be authorised to exercise this power in regard to Accounts of other classes provided that the conditions laid down in the rules are complied with. All doubtful cases should be submitted to the Heads of Circles for their orders. The proposed change would afford improved facilities to the public and avoid unnecessary references to Circle Offices.

309. Rule 450 (6) of Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI, and Rule 59 of Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VIII, require that when a depositor desires to close an account without the production of his pass book, a postmaster may decide the matter provided that the balance standing to the credit of the depositor including interest does not exceed Rs. 2. The Divisional Superintendents are authorised to settle such cases upto a limit of Rs. 10, while the Heads of Circles are empowered to sanction such settlement up to Rs. 20. The sanction of the Director-General becomes necessary in cases in which the balance to the credit of the depositors exceeds Rs. 20. In order to simplify matters we recommend that the rules cited above should be modified and the Head Postmasters empowered to settle all cases in which the balance including interest does not exceed Rs. 10. In all other cases the issue of a fresh pass book on recovery of the prescribed fee of Re. 1 should be insisted upon.

310. Rule 458 (4) of Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI, read with Director-General's letter No. 1476-C/26, dated the 3rd November 1926 lays down that Saving Bank ledgers should be renewed, as far as practicable, every five years by transferring to new ledgers all the open and current accounts, so that the new ledgers should form a complete set.

311. Our enquiries go to show that in actual practice while most of the Circles arrange for the recopying of all the ledgers every five years, in the United Provinces Circle this work is said to be undertaken whenever necessary. The work involved is considerable and frequently means employment of additional temporary staff or the payment of overtime allowances to members of the permanent staff. The services of reserve staff are utilised for the work whenever possible but it is not often that they can be spared for the purpose. A good deal of the labour is wasted, as at the time of recopying, the ledgers opened in the preceding year must necessarily contain only live and current accounts, and no useful object is achieved by the recopying of such ledgers.

312. To obviate this accumulation of work and unnecessary copying we suggest that it should be made clear that it is not the intention of the rule that all the ledgers should be recopied in full every five years. The work should be taken in hand every year, but the recopying should be confined to the set of ledgers relating to the first year of the quinquennium. Thus in March 1935, only the ledgers for the year 1930-31 should be recopied and in March 1936 those relating to 1931-32 and so on.

313. Rule 57, Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VIII requires that when a person who wishes to open a savings bank account on behalf of a minor is not a relative of the minor the postmaster should send to the Postmaster-General a Form (SB 15) filled up by the applicant giving particulars of his claim to be considered the minor's guardian together with any documents produced by him and that the Postmaster-General should issue a certificate recognising the applicant as the guardian of the minor and send it to the Head Office concerned for delivery to the applicant. When permission to open such an account is sought by guardians appointed by the orders of a competent Court of Law in British India it should not be necessary to obtain the orders of the Head of the Circle. We therefore suggest that Head Postmasters should be authorised to deal with such cases on their own authority. With regard to the Courts of Law in the Indian States there are well defined orders of Government but it is possible that these orders may be misunderstood by Postmasters and, as a measure of safety, we suggest that cases of guardians appointed by Courts outside British India should be referred to the Heads of Circles.

314. The Postmaster-General, Punjab and N.-W. F. Circle has proposed to the Director-General the introduction of an Index Register for purposes of checking the continuity of the serial numbers of cash certificates issued as required by Rule 546 of Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI. On a reference being made to him the Postmaster-General, Bombay admitted that an Index Register would be more methodical and less troublesome for exercising the prescribed check, but as an alternative he suggested that the Sub-Offices should note the date of the last issue of a cash certificate or preferably the last entry number relating thereto, in the remarks column of the issue lists [C. C. 18(S)]. The Director-General has accepted this alternative suggestion for the time being and has referred the matter to us as it relates to the procedure in post offices.

315. An Index Register is in use in the Calcutta General Post Office and we are of the opinion that a register of the type used in that office should be adopted in the Department. In the absence of such a register the adoption of the alternative suggestion would mean that in order to

check the entry and the serial numbers frequent references would have to be made to old issue lists. We do not therefore support the alternative proposal made by the Postmaster-General, Bombay.

316. At present a considerable amount of work is involved in dealing with deceased depositors' cases in Head Post Offices and the Circle Offices. This work would be greatly reduced if it is made permissible for joint accounts to be opened in two names. We are of the opinion that this facility is likely to be appreciated by the general public and it would add to the popularity of the post office Savings Bank system.

317. Rule 90 (3) of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI, requires that when unpaid articles are sent by a Sub-Office to another Sub-Office or by a Head Office to a Sub-Office not in account with it the amount of postage due should be entered on the registered list prepared for that Sub-Office. No such entries are made by the Railway Mail Service in respect of unpaid letters sent by it to Sub-Offices. Our enquiries show, that the entries required under Rule 90 (3) are seldom made, and when made, are seldom accurate. In these circumstances, we consider that the prescribed procedure can have no value and it is quite useless pursuing a system, which is not, and cannot be worked. The absence of complete details makes it impracticable to guarantee, that the entries in the letter postage account are reliable, and consequently, there is no point in retaining the procedure. We suggest that Rule 90 (3) of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI, should be cancelled and Rule 118(C) suitably amended.

318. Rules 114—124, 127, 130, and 131 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI, contain instructions regarding the manner of dealing with and accounting for unpaid articles. The present system is somewhat cumbersome and after examining it, we have come to the following conclusions :—

- (a) The memo. of taxed postage and the postmen's postage account now in use in Sub-Offices may be abolished and the letter postage account now used in head offices introduced instead. This letter postage account provides both for noting the taxed postage and the unpaid postage given out to postman for delivery.
- (b) In Head Offices the entries now being made in the Error Book, according to the provisions of Rule 115 (1) of Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI, may be discontinued. The memo. of forward postage need not be maintained, but unpaid postage to be redirected may be transferred to the sorting clerk under receipt in the receipt book of the deposit clerk.

319. The adoption of the above proposals would result in the abolition of (i) the memo. of taxed postage, (ii) Postmen's postage account, (iii) Memo. of forward postage, (iv) special Error Book, (v) the maintenance of letter postage account in all Head and sub-offices and (vi) the deposit account in Head Offices and Selection Grade Sub-Offices.

320. According to the instructions contained in Rule 600 of Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI, warrants of payment, Savings Bank acknowledgments, pass books, etc., have to be entered in the Savings Bank slips by the Savings Bank clerk and transferred to the Sub-Account clerk. The latter has to check all these documents with the Savings Bank slips

before sending them to the Sub-Offices concerned. We are of the opinion that such intervention of the Sub-Account clerk is unnecessary and the requirements of the rule would be met if all the documents in question are enclosed in a sealed cover by the Savings Bank clerk and transferred to the Sub-Account clerk for inclusion in the account bag.

321. Branch Offices, which are authorised to perform registration work independently, prepare receipts for the senders from the registered journal and forward registered articles direct to the account office, or the office, or section with which they are in communication (Rules 129 and 133, Rules for Branch Offices). Receipts for parcels and money orders are, however, given from the Branch Office Book of Receipts (Form MS 87) and these articles are sent to the Account Offices for onward transmission. Other Branch Offices which are not authorised to perform registration work independently of their account offices, grant receipts for registered articles, parcels and money orders, from their Book of Receipts in Form MS 87 [Rule 16 (t) Branch Office Rules], and forward all these items to the account offices entered in the Branch Office daily account.

322. In both the cases the Account offices have to rebook all the articles for which receipts have been granted in Form MS 87. Senders' copies of the regular receipts from the appropriate journal are forwarded to the Branch Offices concerned, entered in the Branch Office slip. On receipt in the Branch Offices they are checked with the entries in the Branch Office slip and on the counterfoils of the corresponding receipts in the Book of Receipts. They are then pasted to their respective counterfoils (Rule 35 Rules for Branch Offices). This means that registered articles or parcels booked by Branch Offices not authorised to perform registration work independently have to pass through their account offices and are thus subjected to delay in transit. We are of the opinion that all such Branch Offices should be authorised to perform registration and parcel (excluding insurance and value payable) work independently of their account offices and to issue receipts for such articles from a journal printed in the vernacular of the province in which the Branch Offices are situated.

323. Receipts for money orders and insured and value payable articles should, however, continue to be given from the Book of Branch Office Receipts as at present. This form is bound in books of 100 forms, and each form consists of a portion to be given to the sender, and a counterfoil, which remains in the office. The receipt and the counterfoil have both to be filled up in ink by the Branch Postmaster, which means that all entries have to be made twice, once on the counterfoil and again on the receipt portion. In order to save time and eliminate chances of mistakes being made in the entries in two places, we suggest, that instead of having a receipt and a counterfoil, the form of the Book of Branch Office Receipts (Form MS 87) should be so designed as to make it possible for the Branch Postmasters to use carbon paper and prepare in one operation the receipt to be given to the senders and the copy to be kept on record. The regular receipts received from the account offices can be pasted to the lower or carbon copy of the receipts concerned in the Branch Office Book of Receipts. We do not anticipate that the proposal is likely to involve the Department in unreasonable demands for carbon paper being made by the Branch Offices. On the other hand, the cost of supplying such paper to the Branch Offices would more than justify the saving in time that would be effected by the proposal.

## CHAPTER X

## Miscellaneous.

324. The system adopted for the sale of postal publications differs in different Circles where the treasury work in post offices is given out on contract. In Bombay, Burma and Sind and Baluchistan Circles, the sale is entrusted to postal staff while in Madras, Bihar and Orissa, and Bengal and Assam Circles, the Treasury contractor or his staff do this work. In the United Provinces, Punjab and Central Circles it is the duty of the contractors' men in some offices and that of the postal staff in others. We recommend that the services of the contractor and his staff should be utilised in all offices where the treasury work is performed on contract.

325. Under Rule 300 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VIII, the Inspectors of Post Offices have to submit to their Superintendents copies of remarks recorded by them in the Order Books of Branch Offices at the time of inspection. ~~We consider that~~ The Inspectors should instead bring to the notice of the Superintendents only the irregularities on which the latter has to take action. The Inspectors should be held personally responsible for taking action on other matters which are within their competence. The Superintendents, when inspecting offices of the Inspectors, are required to examine some of their inspection notes and satisfy themselves that the inspections are being made carefully and intelligently. They will therefore be able to exercise the necessary control without having to read through the detailed remarks recorded in the Order Books of the Branch Offices.)

326. Rule 78 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume II requires that at the beginning of each official year an entry should be made in the character sheet of an employee giving the period of the frequency of his absence on medical certificate during the preceding twelve months. Compliance with the provisions of this rule throws a good deal of extra work on the Heads of offices. The required information can be made readily available from the leave account of each employee by making an entry in the Remarks column whenever leave is availed of on production of a medical certificate. We recommend that the entry prescribed for the character sheets may be abolished.

327. According to Rule 6 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI a half yearly village return is prepared in Head and Sub Offices in Form MS 88 during the first 14 days of the months of June and December in each year. This return is submitted to the Inspector of the Sub-Division in which the village beats are situated. It has been suggested to the Director-General that the maintenance of this return involves much clerical labour and its submission to Divisional Superintendents once a year instead of half-yearly would do equally well. The matter has been referred to us for an expression of our opinion. After a careful examination of the question we have come to the conclusion that the submission of this return every six months should continue but the dates of its compilation should be shifted so as to include the 'enumeration' weeks.

328. Rules 648-652 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume II lay down the procedure to be followed in regard to the Manual correction slips. At the end of each list of corrections is printed a certificate which



has to be signed and dated by officers in charge of all offices. Rule 651 directs a Head Postmaster to collect these certificates from his Sub Offices to the effect that the Sub-Offices and Branch Offices have duly corrected the Manual rules. He has then to submit a consolidated certificate to the Postmaster-General saying that he has corrected his own volumes of the Manual and that he holds similar certificates regarding the Manuals in Sub and Branch Offices under him. Rule 652 requires the supervising officers and the Record clerks to submit the printed certificates duly signed and dated to the Heads of Circles.

329. The procedure prescribed in these rules imposes unnecessary work on Postmasters, record clerks and supervising officers and its utility is doubtful. It is the duty of inspecting officers to see that the Manuals in the offices have been corrected up-to-date and this examination of the Manuals, in the opinion of the Committee should be quite sufficient. We therefore suggest that the present procedure of submitting certificates to the Heads of Circles should be abolished.

330. The Director-General's circular issued in connection with every new edition of the Posts and Telegraphs Guide makes it incumbent upon Head Postmasters personally to carry out the checks referred to in Rule 707 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume II before submission of the correction lists in respect of their own offices and each Sub and Branch Office within their jurisdiction. We suggest that this duty should be distributed among Head and Departmental Sub Offices. Each such office will carry out the required check in regard to the Branch Offices in account with it. The Head Offices will continue to furnish the required information regarding the extra Departmental Sub Offices in account with them.

331. Rule 736 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume II contains instructions regarding the supply and maintenance in good condition of uniforms of the officials employed in the postal and telegraph services. The rule also requires that a periodical kit inspection should be carried out by officers in charge of post and telegraph offices. Detailed instructions regarding the manner in which this periodical inspection should be carried out were issued by the Director-General, Posts and Telegraphs in September 1928 and May 1931. According to these instructions, the kit inspection was to take place every month, and the result of the inspection reported to the Heads of the Circles. The Director-General, Posts and Telegraphs has very recently decided that kit inspections should in future be carried out quarterly instead of monthly. We have no objection to the kit inspection, but we consider that the submission of the quarterly inspection reports to the Heads of the Circles is not necessary. Postmasters should take responsibility in the matter and they can, in our opinion, be trusted to see that the uniforms supplied to the staff are kept neat and tidy and are not misused. It would suffice if the result of each inspection is recorded in the Postmasters Order Book.)

332. Under Rule 145 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume V, extracts relating to very petty irregularities such as omission of stamp impressions, noting of wrong offices of posting on registered and parcel lists, etc., are sent to the controlling offices by the Railway Mail Service and other offices. It has been suggested that such extracts should instead be sent direct to the offices concerned for necessary action and for future guidance.

333. The reports are said to be so numerous and they relate to such trifling mistakes that no one bothers to take any serious notice of them. Incidentally they go to inflate the volume of service traffic. Their numbers might be reduced by curtailing the list of irregularities for which such reports need be made. (It should also be ruled that all the reports against any one office should be sent in one bundle. The present system of treating each such report as a separate article should be abolished. Cases of habitual offenders should be reported to the controlling officers for suitable action.) The proposed changes would relieve the Divisional Superintendents of some of the unprofitable work and bring about an appreciable reduction in the service traffic.

334. According to Rule 161 (2) of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume V an invoice has to accompany each consignment of unusual bags. The prescribed form is bound in books and its counterfoil remains as a record in the office of despatch. The receiving officer has to sign the invoice in token of having received the consignment correctly and to return it to the despatching office where it is pasted to the appropriate counterfoil. We suggest that the form should be revised so as to make it possible for the despatching offices to prepare the invoices in one operation by means of carbon process. The upper copy would accompany the consignment and the lower copy remain as a record in the despatching office.

335. According to Rule 5 (2) of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI a Postmaster should once a month examine the Sub Account clerk in the village sorting list and note the result in his Office Order Book. Rule 4 (4) of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI requires that a clerk should on no account be allowed to hold charge of the Sub Account Department for a longer period than six months. A new man must necessarily take a little time before he can become thoroughly conversant with the village sorting list. It has been suggested to us that the instructions regarding the monthly examination should be cancelled especially as responsible officers of the Department have told us that in actual practice no such examination is carried out. The village sorting list is always handy for the Sub Account clerk to refer to whenever necessary. It would suffice if the Postmasters are required to satisfy themselves after lapse of a reasonable time that the new man in charge of the Sub Account department has made himself familiar with the village sorting list.

336. According to Rule 38 (3) of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI, the Postmaster in charge of every first class Head Office must inspect two departments of his office each month in accordance with the questions in the standard form of Head Office Inspection Report. We suggest that in addition to these inspections first class Head Offices except Presidency Offices, should be inspected by a Deputy Postmaster-General at least once a year. Such inspections by an independent officer would be very useful in improving the working of these offices.

337. According to the instruction contained in Rule 696 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI, the postmen are required to enter in their books the total number of money orders and registered articles entrusted to them for payment or delivery. In actual practice detailed entries are being made of names of payees and amounts of money orders and also names of addresses of registered articles. There is no sanction

for this procedure, and as it results in waste of time we suggest that the unauthorised practice should be stopped.

338. Under Rule 116 (3) of Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VIII, a Superintendent of Railway Mail Service is required to submit to the Postmaster-General annually a consolidated statement showing the amounts of the advances for postage stamps held on the 1st of April by the various mail offices in his division together with the average daily sales of postage stamps as ascertained at the last inspection. All the Heads of Circles who were consulted in the matter are unanimous in the view that no use is made of this statement in the Circle offices. It seems to be a remnant of old times when the Railway Mail Service was working as an independent administration under Deputies Postmaster-General. Whatever use might then have been made of this statement it is altogether redundant now. We suggest that the submission of this statement should be discontinued.

339. Under Rule 181 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VIII, Superintendents of Post Offices are required to report to the Postmaster-General each case in which a penalty is imposed on a mail carrier under contract with the Department. In our opinion such a report should not be necessary in the case of contractors whom the Superintendent is competent to appoint and whose services can be terminated by him for a breach of agreement. The Superintendents are authorised to deal finally with mail contracts upto the limit of Rs. 100. They may safely be trusted to exercise their discretion judiciously in the matter of imposing penalties according to the scale laid down in the schedule appended to the agreement. We recommend that the present practice may be stopped.

340. According to Rule 238 (4) as corrected by correction slip No. 118, dated the 1st September 1931, Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VIII, when the inspection of a Sub Office in charge of a selection grade official is completed a copy of the remarks recorded in the order book has to be forwarded to the Postmaster-General. In the case of Sub Offices in charge of time-scale officials, Superintendents of Post Offices have to report to the Postmasters-General only the serious irregularities which may be noticed at the time of the inspection. We are of the opinion that the orders regarding submission of copies of remarks recorded in selection grade Sub Offices need not be enforced. It would suffice if, as in the case of the Sub Offices in charge of time-scale officials, the Superintendents of Post Offices report to their Postmasters-General any serious irregularities which may be noticed in the selection grade Sub Offices. According to the recent orders the Superintendents of Post Offices are now competent to inflict certain punishments on selection grade officials even in the grade of Rs. 250—350. They should therefore be given the necessary authority to take such action as may be required on minor irregularities without throwing unnecessary work on the Circle Offices.

341. In the Punjab and N.-W. F. Circle overseers are required to submit, on the first of each month, a Summary in form General-12 of the work done by them during the preceding month. The Sub Divisional Inspectors have to forward this Summary to the Superintendents with their remarks by the 10th of each month. Under rule 355 of the Posts and

Telegraphs Manual, Volume VIII, the overseers submit to their Inspectors their weekly diaries on the 1st, 8th, 16th and 24th of each month. These diaries are prepared in duplicate, the upper copy being forwarded to the Inspector and the lower copy retained by the overseers. Full particulars of each day's doing are required to be entered in these documents, and under rule 282, *ibid* the Inspectors have to carefully scrutinize them, and such action as may be necessary has to be taken promptly. Thereafter they are filed by the Inspectors. In these circumstances, the submission of a Monthly Summary by the overseers appears to us to be wholly unnecessary, and we suggest that the practice obtaining in the Punjab Circle should be stopped.

342. In March 1932, the Director-General, Posts and Telegraphs decided to abolish the Classified List of Indian Post Offices in pamphlet form which used to be supplied to the Railway Mail Service for the use of sorters. At the same time the supply of the List of Indian Post Offices which used to be published quarterly, but which is now published yearly, has been restricted. It has been represented to us that these changes have caused considerable inconvenience to Railway Mail Service sorters who have to know the names of all Head Offices and the Sub Offices under them, and who have to pass a test in sorting every half-year. We have given careful consideration to the subject and we are of the opinion that in the interest of efficiency of the Railway Mail Service, the Classified List of Indian Post Offices, consisting of an extract of pages 1 to 60 of the List of Indian Post Offices, should be supplied to the Railway Mail Service as was the practice in the past.

343. In order to relieve the Divisional offices of copying work, it was recommended by the Conference of Heads of Circles in 1926, and ordered by the Director-General, Posts and Telegraphs, in his letter, No. 90-Post-A-I-28, dated the 17th August 1928 that in all cases in which orders issued from Heads of Circles have to be communicated by Divisional Superintendents and 1st class Postmasters to Sub Divisional Inspectors and second class Postmasters or other officials under them, a number of spare copies (typed, cyclostyled or printed) for supply to these officials should be sent with the original letter to Divisional Superintendents and 1st class Postmasters.

344. Our enquiries go to show that the instructions contained in the Director-General's letter referred to above, are not being observed in some of the Circles with the result that avoidable work is thrown on the Divisional offices. We suggest that the Director-General's orders should be strictly enforced.

345. Where the bulk of the mail matter exchanged between Branch Offices and the Railway Mail Service is not sufficient to justify the use of bags, paper covers known as R. C. B. covers (Form RP 27) are used for enclosing such mails. It is understood that the cost of 100 such covers is Rs. 0-14-0. A small dasuti bag costs about Rs. 0-6-0, and may be expected to last for about a year. We suggest that in all such cases small dasuti bags should replace the paper covers. This arrangements would be more economical. No account of these bags need be maintained.

346. From the information collected by us it has been noticed that the number of public complaints regarding mispayment, delay in payment, non-payment, short payment or non-receipt of acknowledgments of money

orders is very much higher than the number of complaints relating to work of the other branches of the Post Office. In very many cases complaints regarding money orders are lodged with the Post Office without allowing sufficient time for transit with the possibility of re-direction and subsequent refusal. In all such cases needless time is taken up in instituting enquiries. We are of the opinion that the Department would be relieved of a considerable amount of avoidable work if it is ruled that in the case of money orders some evidence of non-receipt of money by the payee should be produced by a complainant and that in the absence of any such evidence the Department would not undertake to institute enquiries.

347. We have noticed that an appreciable amount of space is taken up in Railway Mail Service vans in stacking 'direct' Parcel bags and Packet bags. The latter contain empty bags exchanged between large offices. We suggest that both these items should be despatched by rail on the weighment system in cases in which the adoption of this system would result in accommodation in the mail vans being permanently reduced.

348. The Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs has had under his consideration the question of adopting ways and means to reduce the expenditure incurred on handling and transport of the book packets. We have been assured that the sorting of these packets is done in the stationary sorting offices as far as possible. The staff employed in the running sections are called upon to sort packets for only those offices for which they alone prepare bags. We are satisfied that no further simplification in this respect is possible. We, however, suggest that with a view to economise in mail van accommodation all direct bags containing such packets should be sent on the weighment system.

349. A very elaborate and unnecessarily exhaustive list of questions is prescribed for supervising officers for the inspection of different branches of the Department. In order to simplify matters, we suggest that the following questions may be omitted from the different lists:—

*For Head Offices.*—Questions Nos. 6, 9, 13, 20, 27, 28, 29, 32, 35, 40, 53, 60, 68, 79, 81, 87, 101, 105, 127, 152, 178, 241, 259, 274, 281, 288, 293 and 306.

*For Sub Offices.*—Questions Nos. 10, 26, 44, 46, 48, 60, 64, 101, 128, 138, 139, 208, 215, 222 and 244.

*For Traffic Branch of Combined Offices.*—Questions Nos. 33 and 55.

*For Branch Offices.*—Questions Nos. 13, 35, 42, 53 and 60.

*For Dead Letter Offices.*—Questions Nos. 8, 12 and 18.

*For Stock Depots.*—Questions Nos. 8, 17 and 22.

*For Record Offices (Railway Mail Service).*—Questions Nos. 27, 29, 31, 60, 62 and 77.

*For Mail Offices.*—Questions Nos. 9, 11, 15, 18, 23, 26, 38, 42, 43, 48, 55, 57, 58, 61, 64, 69, 70, 73, 74, 85, 86 and 102.

With the adoption of the changes proposed by us it should be possible to omit a good many other questions in the different lists and we suggest that the matter may be re-examined in due course.

350. It has been suggested to us that the maintenance of all long distance runners lines which are at present worked by the Department may be given out on contract. The Committee have considered the matter very carefully and they are of the opinion that the suggestion deserves to be given a trial. A number of long distance runners lines have been replaced by motor services in different parts of the country, but wherever they still exist, the Department has to incur considerable expenditure on account of the pay of the runners and the overseers, and their pensionary and other charges. It would greatly simplify matters, if the lines were farmed out to contractors. If the Department can entrust the mail lines to an outside agency when such an agency maintains a tonga or motor service, there is no reason why mails could not also be entrusted to an agency which provides runners.

351. The following books and forms are at present unruled. To facilitate work and to save time in writing up these books and forms we suggest that they should all be printed on ruled paper:—

- (1) Sub Office account (Pa. 17).
- (2) Money Order compilation (M. O. 20 and M. O. 22).
- (3) Statistical Register (MS 13), and
- (4) Register of Money Orders Received (M. O. 3).

352. With a view to extend the postal service in the rural areas, the Director-General has ordered in his letter No. 1066-C.126, dated the 24th November 1927, that locked bags may be used for the conveyance of paid unregistered correspondence between villages situated on or close to mail lines and post offices. Under this arrangement the headman of a village is required to make his own arrangements for exchange of the bags with the nearest post office or the runner on the mail line passing close to the village. The bags and the locks are supplied free by the Department.

353. Under the existing orders the above facility cannot be availed of by individuals. We suggest that this restriction may be removed and in places where there is no Post Office individuals as well as institutions located near or on a mail line may be permitted to avail themselves of the facility on the conditions prescribed in clause 28 (2) of the Post and Telegraph Guide according to which a locked bag can be used by a member of the general public for the exchange of his mails with the local post office on payment of an annual fee of Rs. 12. In such cases the cost of the bag and the lock has to be paid for by the party concerned.

354. In the year 1930, when the Government of India accepted the revised time test for post offices as recommended by Mr. Bewoor, the Director-General, Posts and Telegraphs introduced certain new forms of statistical registers showing the work done in the various departments of the Post Office. According to the Director-General's instructions three separate statistical registers [Form Est. 78 (d), Est. 78 (e) and Est. 78 (f)] are maintained in each post office for recording statistics of the Savings Bank Department, the cash certificate Department and the Government Securities Department respectively. The work of all these three Departments is usually done by the same clerk in the Savings Bank Department and we are of the opinion that all the three statistical registers can conveniently be combined into one as shown in Appendix L.

355. In the statistical register of the Money Order Department [Form Est. 78 (c)] no provision exists for the transactions of the Sub Offices in account with a Head Office. The required columns can be easily added as shown in Appendix M.

356. In the statistical registers of the Registration and Parcel Departments [Forms Est. 78 (a) and Est. 78 (b)] provision should be made for the entry of value payable articles booked at no delivery Sub Offices situated within the delivery area of the office.

357. Prior to 1927 Postmasters in charge of Sub Offices were permitted to detain the Acquittance Rolls until the last payment had been made on them and these payments were treated as part of the cash balance of the office. The practice of treating vouchers as a part of the cash balance was rightly objected to and in modifying the procedure, it was ruled that Acquittance Rolls should be returned to the Head Post Offices by the 10th of the month and amounts remaining undisbursed are now paid on 'money paid' receipts which are sent to Head Offices in support of the charge.

358. These money paid receipts are pasted to the Acquittance Rolls on which the total amounts already paid have been certified by the Sub Postmasters. Subsequent payments cannot be included in these totals without correcting them and it is undesirable to make any changes in the totals already certified. Further the money paid receipts are required to be preserved for 35 years along with the Acquittance Rolls. They often get detached or torn and generally they are unsuited for this long term of preservation. We therefore recommend that the Sub Postmasters should be allowed to retain the Acquittance Rolls till the last payment is made and in any case not later than the 25th of the month.

359. At present pension cases of selection grade officials are prepared by Divisional Superintendents and 1st class Postmasters and submitted to the audit office through the Circle offices. We have considered the question of relieving the Circle offices of this work. A Deputy Accountant General and some of the Postmasters-General with whom the matter was discussed were of the opinion that no useful purpose is served by sending the papers through the Circle offices and that the disposal of pension cases would be expedited if Divisional Superintendents and First Class and Presidency Postmasters were authorised to send the pension papers of all non-gazetted staff working under them direct to the audit office. The latter office would verify the service of the official concerned and communicate to the Postmaster-General the amount of pension admissible for his administrative sanction. We recommend that this may be done.

360. Under Article 279 of the Posts and Telegraphs Initial Account Code, Volume I (as corrected by correction slip No. 67, dated the 15th July 1929) the duplicate copy of the bill for extra duty allowance earned by sorters, etc., has to be sent to the Head of the Circle for check and counter-signature. The counter-signature is unnecessary as no proper scrutiny is possible in the Circle Office without the daily reports and other relevant documents of the section. The submission of the duplicate copy to the Head of the Circle may therefore be stopped.

361. It is however necessary for the Postmaster-General to be kept informed of the nature of the extra duty rendered and the amount of

allowance paid. We suggest that the Superintendents should submit a quarterly statement showing these particulars.

362. Article 300 of the Posts and Telegraphs Initial Account Code, Volume I requires submission of "Not Payable" contingent bills to Heads of Circles for counter-signature and transmission to the Audit Offices. It has been suggested to us that these bills may be sent by the Head Post Offices and the Railway Mail Service Head Record Offices to the Audit Offices direct. The matter was discussed with the Heads of Circles several of whom have expressed the opinion that Circle Offices exercise a wholesome check and there should be no change in the present procedure. After a very careful consideration we have come to the conclusion that the change suggested may safely be adopted. The check at present exercised by Circle Offices is chiefly in regard to the correct classification of items of expenditure supported by sanction of competent authority. We consider that this check can as well be exercised by the Audit Offices and we suggest that the change proposed may be adopted.

363. Superintendents of Post Offices and Railway Mail Service and first class Postmasters are not authorised to grant leave to selection grade officials in their respective jurisdictions. They are vested with considerable disciplinary powers over selection grade officials and we can see no reason why the power to grant these officials leave for periods not exceeding four months should not be exercised by them. Orders of the Postmaster-General should be obtained if a Senior official is not available to fill a temporary vacancy or one available is under the administrative control of an independent authority.

364. According to instructions contained in Director-General's Circular No. 14, dated the 4th September 1933 post offices are required to endorse the classification of the charges on each voucher accompanying the "not payable" copy of the contingent bill. It has been pointed out to us that such classification is not required by the Audit Office on vouchers for Rs. 100 and above. Vouchers for payments of less than Rs. 100 are either destroyed in the post office or in the office of the Postmaster-General. The entering of the classification on the vouchers serves no useful purpose and entails an appreciable amount of work. We consider it futile to furnish this information on vouchers which are destroyed before submission to the Audit Office. We therefore suggest that the present procedure should be discontinued.

365. Supplementary Rule 200 requires that every period of suspension from employment and every other interruption in service must be noted with full details and its duration, in the service book or service roll. We have noticed that all leave even when it does not constitute interruption in service, is being entered in the service book or service roll as well as in the leave account. This practice does not appear to be based on any authorised direction either in the Civil Service Regulations or the Fundamental Rules, and is perhaps a survival of the time when no special record of leave was maintained. We suggest that it may be discontinued.

366. Until about the year 1927, all rules regarding post office procedure were embodied in four volumes of the Post Office Manual, Volume I contained rules for the guidance of the Head and Sub Offices, (the old volumes I and II being amalgamated into one), Volume III contained



the rules for the guidance of supervising officers, Volume IV contained all rules regarding the Railway Mail Service and Volume V contained the Indian Post Office Act and other legal provisions, Standing Orders, etc. These volumes were rearranged and with the additional volumes required for matter relating to the Telegraph Branch (Engineering and Traffic) we now have at present a set consisting of 11 volumes for the guidance of the officials of the Department in all its branches. Some of these volumes have two or more parts.

367. The present arrangement of the procedure rules of the different branches of the Department being spread out in many volumes is distinctly inconvenient. The old system of separate publications for the different branches was much more satisfactory.

368. At present some of the Manual volumes have to be issued unnecessarily to some of the branches even though they contain only a handful of rules which apply to them. The cost of production and supply of such volumes to a large number of offices requires consideration. We recommend therefore that the old system should be reverted to.

369. We have given our careful consideration to the examination of the Post and Telegraph Guide, as at present arranged and the following are our suggestions :—

370. Pages 96—135 containing conversion tables for British Postal Orders, foreign sterling money orders are repeated in every issue of the guide. These tables take up unnecessary space in the Guide and we suggest that they should be issued as a separate publication and supplied to the Departmental officials for their use as required. If there is any public demand for these tables, it may be met by supplying copies on payment of a small charge.

371. Similarly detailed information regarding disposal of correspondence for certain high Government officers when on the move published in Section 9, Clauses 362—368 (pages 161—163b) cannot be said to be of any interest to the general public and it appears unnecessary to include it in its present form in the Guide. This information can very conveniently be printed as a separate pamphlet which can be supplied to all post offices and high officers who are entitled to the privilege of receiving special bags containing their camp articles.

372. Clause 46 (2) advises the public to address the Superintendent of the Division or the Head of the Circle if a complainant is dissatisfied with the Postmaster's disposal of his complaint. Every complainant may reasonably be expected to consider his complaint as a matter of specific importance. This being so it is not surprising that a large number of petty complaints are addressed to the Postmasters-General who transfer them to the Superintendents concerned for disposal. This adds unnecessarily to the work of the Circle offices. We therefore consider that reference to Postmasters-General should be omitted in this clause.

373. It has been suggested to us that the commission of frauds is facilitated by the fact that the public, specially in rural areas, are not fully conversant with the rules of the Department as the Post and Telegraph Guide is an expensive compilation, and being published only in English, its contents are not known to the vast majority of the persons

who transact business with the Post Offices. We are, therefore, of the opinion that it is desirable to issue a smaller publication in English mentioning therein all the activities of the Department and giving a summary of the important rules and regulations. It should be more comprehensive than the old Abstract of Postal Information, and its sale price should be kept as low as possible. We would also suggest that such a compilation should be published in all the important vernaculars of the country.

374. In our opinion the Post and Telegraph Guide should be split up in two parts, the first containing the Rules and Regulations and the second the names of offices. The first may be an annual publication but the second should be issued every six-months. Attempts should be made to include in the latter part all the corrections up to the date of its publication, and thus relieve the staff of the duty of having to make corrections in it immediately on its receipt.

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## CHAPTER XI

## Recruitment and Training.

375. The official witnesses whom we have examined have pronounced themselves against the present system of post office clerical staff being divided into two cadres, namely the Upper Division and the Lower Division. This system leads to a great deal of administrative inconvenience inasmuch as unnecessary transfers of Upper Division clerks have to be made in order to suit the requirements of outlying offices. This results in avoidable expenditure being incurred besides the clerks of a particular cadre being subjected to frequent transfers. Further, we have found that the new entrants to the Lower Division with high educational qualifications are performing as responsible duties as the Upper Division clerks and in some cases the work allotted to them is of even greater importance. We are, therefore, of the opinion, that there should be only one cadre for the clerical establishment of the Post Office (including Railway Mail Service and Divisional offices) and it would be an advantage to divide this cadre into two grades. Further, we are of the opinion that there should be one basic scale of pay for each Circle, with compensatory allowances for special localities.

376. The recruitment to the proposed cadre should be by a competitive examination. The minimum qualification required of a candidate should be a pass in the Matriculation or an equivalent examination. The age of the candidates should be between 18 and 23.

377. The examination should be held in each Circle annually under orders of the Postmaster-General. In order to keep down the number of candidates at an examination, those who have merely secured a pass in the University examination may be rejected in the preliminary weeding out. In order to retain the competitive nature of the examination we suggest, that the candidates in a Circle be divided into groups according to areas in which they are to be employed and their position in the examination results determined accordingly.

The subjects for the examination should be—

- (1) Dictation in English,
- (2) English Composition in two parts with a short essay and letter writing,
- (3) Arithmetic,
- (4) Geography, and
- (5) *Viva Voce*.

378. Each candidate should be required to pay a fee of Rs. 10. The examination should be held simultaneously at convenient centres, to be fixed by the Postmaster-General. The papers should be set, by selected officers employed in the Circle and the Postmaster-General should personally scrutinise and approve of them, before they are adopted. These officers should receive an honorarium, for setting the

examination papers and valuing the answer papers on the sanctioned scale. Candidates who fail in the dictation test, should not be allowed to proceed further with the examination. The period which should elapse between the dictation paper and the remaining papers should be fixed by the Postmaster-General, with due regard to the largest number of candidates appearing at a centre.

379. The *Viva Voce* examination should be conducted by the selected divisional officers referred to above. A Postmaster-General may, however, at his discretion depute an officer from his office to conduct this examination at any particular examination centre.

380. The valued papers should be forwarded to the Circle Office, where the results will be compiled and the candidates selected for the different divisions will be borne on a waiting list, to be maintained in the divisional offices. The number of these candidates should be restricted to the average number of vacancies which are expected to occur during the year plus 25 per cent. The names of such of the approved candidates who have either not been absorbed in the permanent vacancies or have not officiated in temporary vacancies during the year will be removed from the waiting list, but they would be eligible to sit for the competitive examination to be held the following year provided that the age limit permits.

381. On appointment a candidate will be on probation for a period of one year, at the expiry of which he should pass a departmental examination, before he can be confirmed. We are against the present system of prolonged periods of probation. In deserving cases only, one year's probation may be extended by six months and if a candidate fails to pass the prescribed examination within this period he should be removed from the service.

382. The recruitment to the Upper grade of the proposed cadre should be by promotion of the selected candidates from the Lower grade. We are not in favour of any direct recruitment to it.

383. All the officers who have given evidence before us have condemned the present system of promoting postmen to the clerical establishment. An extremely simple test is at present prescribed and on passing his test, the postmen become eligible for promotion to the lower division cadre to the extent of 50 per cent. of the vacancies. The men thus promoted have proved unfit for clerical duties. We are convinced that the arrangement is extremely unsatisfactory and should be discontinued. We would, however, suggest that such of the postmen who are enterprising enough to equip themselves with the minimum educational qualification required of a candidate may be permitted to sit for the proposed competitive examination for recruitment to the clerical establishment. They should not be required to compete with the outside candidates. The minimum qualifying standard for them should be 40 per cent. marks in each of the subjects with an aggregate of 50 per cent. on the total. 20 per cent. of the clerical appointments available in any year should be reserved for these officials so that every 5th vacancy in a year will go to these officials. If in any year the required number of candidates does not become available it should be made up from the outside.

candidates and there should be no waiting list for qualified postmen for promotion. No postmen with less than five years' service or above the age of 30 should be permitted to sit for the examination.

384. We suggest that promotion to the postmen's class from the lower grade staff should be confined to those who have received education upto the primary standard or its equivalent.

385. Some of the witnesses who have appeared before us have laid stress on the necessity of giving some training to new recruits before they are actually employed. They maintain that, in practice, a reserve clerk is required to do a full day's work from the date of his appointment and cannot be expected to perform satisfactorily the duties entrusted to him without receiving some previous training.

386. The question of training recruits for the Railway Mail Service was considered by the Director-General and in his letter No. Es. B-278-1/33, dated the 5th July 1933, it was ordered that all selected candidates for appointment as sorters or clerks should be trained for three months on furnishing security, and that no allowance will be payable to them during such training. It was further stated, that the recruitment of candidates in post offices and Railway Mail Service against actual anticipated permanent vacancies and the arrangement of giving them a short spell of training without allowances did not constitute a breach of the orders of Government regarding the stoppage of employment of unpaid probationers or apprentices (*vide* para. 2 of Director-General's letter No. SA-268 (2), dated the 4th December 1929 and Rules 239 (a), 246 and 247 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume IV.

387. The present position about the training of recruits is not clear to us, as the above rules apply both to Post Office and the Railway Mail Service and our information is, that the entertainment of unpaid probationers whether recruited under Rule 239 (a) or 239 (b) of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume IV has been definitely stopped everywhere. We also find, that at a meeting of the Posts and Telegraphs Board on the 5th July 1930 it was held, that Rule 239 required modification as it conflicted with the orders of Government. There is nothing to show that the Board's recommendation, that the question of the deletion or modification of this rule should be examined has been acted upto and we suggest that the matter may be investigated.

388. If it is held that the orders contained in this rule conflict with those of the Government (*vide* Director-General's Circular letter No. SA-179 (i), dated the 17th January 1930) then we would suggest that the question of opening training schools for the Railway Mail Service may be re-considered. The employment of untrained staff on sorting duties is detrimental to the efficiency of the service.

389. The recruitment to the Superintendents' cadre is at present from the following two sources:—

(a) By open competition from the examination held by the Public Services Commission, and

(b) by promotion from subordinate ranks from the Departmental candidates who have passed the prescribed examination for Superintendents' grade.

390. Fifty per cent. of the appointments are at present reserved for the departmental subordinates. A waiting list of the approved candidates is maintained by the Director-General, Posts and Telegraphs, and alternate vacancies permanent or officiating, are given to them as they occur. There has been a considerable deterioration in the tone of the Service, by the arrangement which admits of a clerk or an inspector officiating as a Superintendent for a short time and again reverting to his substantive post. We are of the opinion, that there should be no reservation for the departmental candidates and it should be unnecessary to maintain a long list of the approved candidates which takes many years to work off. We are in favour of reversion to the old arrangement according to which promotions to the Superintendents' grade were rare and were confined to officials of outstanding merit, not above the age of 35. It is no use promoting subordinates to Superintendents' cadre at an age of 45 and over as has been the practice in the past. Officials with subordinate mentality developed during a long period of employment in a subordinate capacity, cannot be expected to prove a success as officers and a stage has now been reached when it is imperative, that steps should be taken to improve the general tone of the Service.

391. On appointment to the Department these officers should be required to undergo practical training both as Superintendents of Post Offices and Railway Mail Service. If the separation of the Railway Mail Service from the Post Office as recommended by us is adopted, selected officers among the new recruits who show special aptitude for the Railway Mail Service work should be drafted to that branch of the Department. On confirmation as Superintendents of Post Offices or the Railway Mail Service they will be treated as 1st class officers in the same manner as officers of the Superior Telegraph Engineering.

SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY'S

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BOMBAY

## CHAPTER XII.

## Time Test and its Application.

392. The time tests by Mr. Bewoor were accepted by the Government of India in the Industries and Labour Department in their letter No. 277-Est.-B.]28, dated the 24th April 1930. They concern the Post Office, the Railway Mail Service and the Dead Letter Offices. The acceptance of these time tests did not imply that they were to be applied as if they were rigid mathematical formulæ for determining the strength of any particular office. They were intended as a guide in such matters and were required to be supplemented by an intelligent appreciation of the actual conditions and circumstances of each office.

393. The Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs in his letter No. 484-Est.-A.]32, dated the 17th June 1932 intimated the decision of the Government that for purposes of determining reduction in strength of establishments either in the Post Office or Railway Mail Service sections or mail sorting offices or Dead Letter Offices in consequence of a fall in traffic, the Bewoor Time Test should be used as a guide, the actual staff necessary being fixed in accordance with the instructions referred to before. It was also ordered that no increase in the strength to such establishments should be sanctioned on the basis of these tests and to this extent the orders relating to the Bewoor Time Test were to be treated as held in abeyance.

394. The Director-General prescribed in January 1932 the revised standards for regulating the staff in the accounts branch of Head Post offices. At that time it was also ordered that the staff sanctioned for dealing with the receipts for articles charged with customs duties should be transferred to the accounts branch and work not strictly of an accounts nature, *viz.*, appointments, promotions, leave, transfers, etc., together with the staff doing this work should be transferred from the accounts to the correspondence branch of a Head Post office. It was also mentioned therein that the staff for the correspondence work relating to postal traffic was provided for in the Bewoor Time Test which did not however make any allowance for work connected with appointments, etc., in Head Post Offices. The Heads of Circles were permitted to examine the requirements of each first class Head office and fix the staff necessary for administrative correspondence work.

395. We have checked the staff sanctioned for the following offices, and in doing so we have applied to the statistics of each office the methods prescribed in the Bewoor Time Test :—

1. Delhi General Post Office.
2. Rohtak Head Office.
3. Gurgaon Head Office.
4. Meerut Head Office.
5. Bombay General Post Office.
6. Calcutta General Post Office.
7. Patna Head Office.

8. Lucknow Head Office.
9. Rohtak Mandi Sub-Office.
10. Kalbadevi Sub-Office.
11. Mandvi Sub-Office.
12. Girgaon Sub-Office.
13. Burra Bazar Sub-Office, and
14. Beadon Street Sub-Office.

396. In addition to these, statistics relating to the work done in most of the sorting mail offices have been examined. The statistics were either compiled during the Committee's visits or obtained officially. In none of the cases was any office found to be working with any serious shortage of staff. The staff employed was generally found to be adequate according to the Bewoor Time Test except in the case of Presidency towns where very wide departures from the results of the application of the Bewoor's Time Test are found to prevail. The conditions of work in the Presidency towns are, however, abnormal and would demand special considerations after a careful and prolonged study of the local requirements.

397. In the course of our investigation we found that in the larger post offices and sorting mail offices in the Punjab and N.-W. F. Circle there exists a system according to which every official in the registration and parcel departments works as if he were an independent unit and exchanges registered and parcel lists with every other official in the same branch. This system involves a repetition of the same operation in respect of transferred articles. It is claimed that it enables the Department to fix responsibility on a particular official in case of any shortage. It has, however, the effect of giving exaggerated figures for the purpose of determining the staff of those departments. For example, the registration and the parcel abstracts of Delhi R. M. S. showed that 3,333 and 2,314 articles respectively were dealt with on the 23rd of April 1934. Actually these figures included 1,452 and 921 articles exchanged between the officials themselves in the departments concerned. The procedure followed involves a good deal of labour which, in our opinion, is avoidable. Rule 156 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI permits station registered and parcel lists being prepared from office to office and it does not appear that the preparation of registered and parcel lists for exchange of articles from one official to another within the same department is either necessary or warranted by rules.

398. The one-man system, as the above procedure is called, appears to have been introduced in the Punjab in 1927. A statement is given below showing the number of cases in which the registered and parcel abstracts could not be tallied with both before and after the introduction of this system.

	1927.	1934.	
January .. ..	23	6	1 remained untraced.
February .. ..	17	4	2 Do.
March .. ..	27	4	1 Do.
April .. ..	11	4	2 Do.
May .. ..	16	5	1 Do.



It will be seen that even with this elaborate system, the occurrence of such cases is inevitable in large offices. We suggest that the system referred to should be abolished.

399. Services of the operative staff in Post offices are utilised in performing outdoor duty in connection with the escorting of cash remittances and mails. A provision exists in the staff hour statement for such duty. We realise that such a provision is unavoidable in the case of cash remittances. With regard to the mails, the Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs issued instructions in 1926 that escorts for this purpose should be stopped. On a representation from the Postmaster-General, Bombay, that escorts were provided in only three towns and that as the bulk of the mails was very large the escort by a postal official was found to be necessary, the Director-General allowed the system to continue. In so far as Calcutta is concerned there is a clear provision in the Agreement with the mail contractor that postal officials should escort the mails. This is also recognised in para. 2 of Rule 444 (as corrected by correction slip No. 79, dated the 1st December 1930) of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume II.

400. We find that the staff detailed below is employed on this work in Bombay and Calcutta :—

Bombay G. P. O.—9 mail clerks (whole time).

Calcutta G. P. O.—32 clerks, 15 sorting postmen and 18 packers,  
6 Treasurer's assistants.

In Calcutta the staff referred to above has other official duties to perform besides escorting mails and cash in mail motor vehicles. According to Clause 11 of the Agreement (Form M-51) a contractor is entirely responsible for the due and safe custody and delivery of mails entrusted to him. It appears to us therefore that the exchange of mails with the different town offices is clearly the business of the contractor and it should not be necessary for the Departmental officials to accompany the mails. The statistical figures of the Mail Department of the Calcutta General Post Office show that the staff spends 114 hours 45 minutes per day on out-door duty for escorting mails. This is equivalent to 18 clerks. In the Sorting Department 23 hours, 20 minutes are spent on such duty which is the equivalent to 3 clerks so that at least 21 clerks are employed solely on this work in Calcutta.

401. It has already been explained that the Bewoor Time Test provides for all correspondence work relating to the postal traffic and this is also clear by a reference to pages 53, 58, 63, 69, 71 and 73 of the report on the time tests. It is, however, seen that the staff of the correspondence department has been sanctioned outside the time test in several cases particularly the Presidency offices. The number of clerks so employed in Bombay, Madras and Calcutta is shown below :

Bombay—35.

Madras—30.

Calcutta—102.

We find that in each case full benefit has been taken of the co-efficient provided for the different branches, and as this co-efficient is intended to cover the correspondence relating to Postal traffic of the branch concerned, we are not convinced that even allowing for the staff required for the administrative work, the sanction of additional staff outside the time test for correspondence is justified. In our opinion this matter requires investigation.

402. Rules 583 to 586 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume IV relate to the opening of Press sorting offices. The application of Bewoor's Time Test to the number of articles posted in a few of the Press sorting offices would show that there is a great deal of unoccupied time of the staff and therefore a waste of man power.

Office.	Time.	Staff employed.
(a) Pratap Sorting Office, Lahore .. .. .	2 hrs. 33 mins. 46 sec.	1 sorter.
(b) Bandemataram Sorting Office .. .. .	4 1 47	1 Do.
(c) Zamindar Sorting Office, Lahore .. 3	38 51	1 Do.
(d) Tribune Sorting Office, Lahore .. .. .	7 47 15	2 sorters.
(e) Civil and Military Gazette Sorting Office, Lahore .. .. .	3 31 22	1 sorter.
(f) Pioneer Sorting Office, Lucknow .. .. .	3 18 46	1 Do.

We suggest that the Heads of Circles should review the cases of these and other Press sorting offices from time to time with the object of deciding whether their work cannot be equally well done at the nearest post office or Railway Service office without the employment of extra staff.

403. The adjustment of entries in the V. P. journals is ordinarily made in the office of payment of the money orders relating to the value payable articles. (There exists, however, in Bombay and Calcutta a system according to which the work in connection with the adjustment of V. P. entries in the journals of all the 'delivery' and 'no delivery' post offices is concentrated in the General Post Office. A separate branch is formed in each of these two offices.) In Calcutta there are two supervisors and 36 clerks working in the V. P. Claims branch. In Bombay two supervisors and 23 clerks are employed on this work. Out of the 23 clerks in Bombay, 10 are sanctioned outside the time test, 8 on account of correspondence and 2 on account of out door duty. Likewise out of the 36 clerks in Calcutta, 9 are employed in correspondence (presumably outside the Time Test) and 2 for out door duty. The reasons for concentrating this work in the

General Post Offices are not clear to us, but our considered opinion is that no staff for this work should be sanctioned outside the time test. (If the General Post Offices cannot manage it without the extra staff, we would suggest that the work be decentralised to the Town delivery offices. Cases of other offices where similar procedure is followed should also be examined.)

404. We have attempted to review the work done in the determination of the staff for the several sorting offices. In doing so we have noticed that the attendance of Railway Mail Service sets varies from 4 to 14 hours. According to the Time Test the hours of attendance in a mail office should be based on certain definite principles according to which the hours of duty are to range between 6 and 8. We have found cases in which staff hours have been arbitrarily fixed. The staff based on these hours is either inadequate or unjustifiably excessive. For example, Bangalore City R. M. S. II has total work for 117 hours, 55 minutes and 13 seconds. The staff hours statement shows the attendance as from 15-00 to 21-30, i.e., 6½ hours. Out of these 26 minutes are allowed for rest, etc., and half an hour for preparation of work papers and other miscellaneous work leaving 5 hours 34 minutes as the net time available for work. On this basis 21 sorters would be justified and are actually employed. If the attendance of the set be fixed at 7½ hours the net hours available per sorter would amount to 6 hours 49 minutes. In that case only 17 sorters would be required.

405. In Lalmanirhat R. M. S., the hours of attendance which were formerly 16-30 to 6-30 hours are now fixed as from 16-15 to 20-15 and 22-0 to 5-30 hours giving a total of 11½ hours attendance. We feel that such long hours of attendance are undesirable and they should be reduced according to the standards laid down by Mr. Bewoor either by a re-arrangement of sets or by giving extra staff. We suggest that the matter should be looked into.

406. Certain sorting offices, for example, Meerut Cantonment R. M. S. and Bara Banki R. M. S., function as Branch offices inasmuch as they book money orders, maintain Branch office account book and submit daily accounts to the Head offices. They are not, however, shown as such in either the Post and Telegraph Guide or the List of Indian Post Offices. As they are not in any way different from other Branch offices, it is suggested that their names should appear in the postal publications. On a reference being made to him the Postmaster-General, United Provinces, has informed us that the arrangement in the Bara Banki Mail Office is a relic of the old days when the Railway Mail Service was a separate organisation. Now that the matter has been brought to his notice, he proposes to withdraw the money order work from that office. We venture to suggest that unless there are strong reasons against it, the facility at present provided for the public should not be withdrawn from Bara Banki Mail office. In the case of Howrah R. M. S. we find that the public can do registration work in that office. On an average a little over 100 articles are registered per day. In our opinion there appears to be justification for a small post office being opened there which office would transact all Postal business and prove a great convenience to the travelling public.

497. A study of the following figures representing work done in the Sorting Department at the General Post Offices at Bombay and Calcutta and the staff employed will be found interesting.

Item.	Bombay.	Calcutta.
Bags received .. .. .	527	346
Bags opened .. .. .	511	355
Articles received in sorting .. .. .	138,811	249,978
Articles posted for despatch :—		
English .. .. .	98,611	88,863
Vernacular .. .. .	9,931	15,892
Articles posted with certificate of posting .. .. .	925	896
Bags closed .. .. .	621	602
Bags despatched .. .. .	612	610
Labelled bundles .. .. .	6,667	1,263
Locked bags .. .. .	81	20
Average number of letters per labelled bundle .. .. .	36	280
Average number of letters per bag opened .. .. .	471	1,000
Staff employed—		
Operative .. .. .	112	132
Supervisory .. .. .	7	5

The above figures include 26 additional hands sanctioned in the Bombay General Post Office to cope with the rush of work. In the Calcutta General Post Office on the other hand, the present strength seems to have been justified according to the Time Test. The disparity is remarkable and the matter requires investigation.

498. The total operative and the supervisory staff employed at Calcutta and Bombay is as follows :—

	Bombay.	Calcutta.
Operative staff including Lower Division clerks .. .. .	463+	829+
.. .. . sorting postmen.	22	22
Gazetted Assistants .. .. .	4	4
Upper Selection Grade Assistants .. .. .	5	6
Lower do. .. .. .	44	41
Time Scale Supervisors .. .. .	15	7

499. It will be seen from the above that the proportion of the supervisory staff to the operative staff is much higher in the Bombay General Post Office than in Calcutta. The matter may be looked into.

410. Following defects and anomalies have been noticed :-

- (a) Our observations showed that in some cases departments such as Deposit, Bag and Store, and *Poste Restante* are treated as outside the Time Test while these are covered by the Bewoor Time Test.
- (b) In one case work done in connection with receipts for articles charged with customs duty was shown under the registration or parcel department although under the Director-General's orders a separate provision for this has been made in the accounts formula.
- (c) In one of the Town Sub-Offices the work hours have been found to include the time occupied in the sale of stamps although a separate staff of stamp vendors has been sanctioned for the purpose.
- (d) The attendance of the staff in some offices has been fixed at less than the prescribed period, viz., 8 hours by day even when the attendance is continuous.
- (e) In some cases additional claims have been made under rest and refreshment and admitted.
- (f) A staff of 6 clerks is employed in Calcutta for the sorting of money orders, the number of money orders received daily being 5,770. No time factor has been prescribed for money order sorting in post offices but according to the Railway Mail Service standards the work in Calcutta General Post Office would amount to 16 hours justifying employment of a little more than 2 clerks. The provision in the Calcutta General Post Office therefore appears to be excessive.
- (g) Work not strictly relating to accounts is still performed in the accounts branch in some offices.

411. We have questioned several Departmental witnesses on the subject of adequacy or otherwise of the present Time Test prescribed for the different branches of the Department. Opinions are sharply divided on the subject. While some of them maintain that the provision at present is adequate others complain of its inadequacy in regard to some of the operations; yet others describe the present scale as liberal particularly in regard to co-efficient. We have had no time to make a detailed examination and are therefore not in a position to express our opinion. (Our suggestions regarding simplification of procedure in different branches will require a re-examination of the whole question of time factors for the various operations in these branches and we suggest that this may be done after the proposed changes, if approved, are adopted. We would suggest that as in England and other European countries, the revised Time Test which may be drawn up should be treated as a confidential document.)

412. Our efforts to devise a time test for the postmen showed widely differing results in different Circles and in different offices. We do not therefore think it desirable to lay down a standard for the fixation of

the postmen staff. For reasons almost similar, we do not recommend the laying down of a formula for the determination of the staff for the offices of the Postal and Railway Mail Service Superintendents and the Circle Offices.

413. In his G. O. No. 3, dated the 17th June 1930 the Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs laid down a formula for calculating the staff required for the Accounts Branch in Head Post offices but it appears that while it has been found suitable for some of the offices it is quite inadequate for large offices. A flat rate of 10 units is totally inadequate for large sized Head Post offices. The question of modifying the formula in such a way as to make it equitable to all offices has been considered by us, and we are of the opinion that this is feasible if—

- (a) one unit is allowed for Extra Departmental mail carriers or Extra Departmental Delivery Agents. The present provision of half a unit is not justified as we cannot see any reason why the time allowance should not be the same as for the Extra Departmental Branch Postmasters. The establishment work in both the cases is the same.
- (b) 5 units are allowed for each entry in the various schedules (including Income Tax schedules, Treasury accounts and Not Payable contingent bills) on the analogy of the units allotted for entries in the customs duty schedules.
- (c) The same allowance, viz., 3 units, is given in the case of inferior servants as in the case of postmen. Service rolls, leave accounts, etc., for both these classes of officials have to be maintained in the same form.

414. With the above modifications we feel that the formula could be made applicable to all Head offices.)

415. The following formula which has been drawn up on the lines of the formula suggested for determining the staff of the account branch of a Head Post office may be made applicable to the account staff of the Railway Mail Service :—

1. Inferior servants and Mail Guards	..	..	..	3 units each,
2. Sorters and other non-gazetted superior staff	..	..	..	5 Do.
3. Head Record Office	..	..	..	10 units.
4. Sub-Record Office	..	..	..	5 units.
5. Entries in extra duty allowance and outstation allowance bill	..	..	..	2 units each.
6. Entries in contingent bills	..	..	..	5 units.

416. (According to staff hour statement for operative staff in Railway Mail Service Mail offices and Railway Mail Service Travelling sections (App. C-2) in Bewoor Time Test 30 minutes are allowed per sorter, viz., 15 minutes for the preparation of work papers and 15 minutes for miscellaneous work. This time appears to be excessive in the case of stationery offices, and in the opinion of the Committee it may be cut down to 15 minutes in all.)

417. (According to para. 109 (1) of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume V the names of the post towns of destination of articles addressed

in the vernacular have to be transcribed into English by the office of posting before they are sent to intermediate sorting offices or sections for disposal. Mr. Bewoor on page 36 of his Report on the Revision of Time Test in the Post Office has allowed a time factor of 0.3 minute per article for disposal of such articles in the offices of posting. This time factor should ~~in our opinion~~ be allowed only in the cases covered by the rules cited above and not in the case of articles addressed in the vernacular which are sent to destination included in direct station mail bags or station bundles. It may be observed that in actual practice the transcription of vernacular destination into English is not possible in the case of late clearances especially those from the street letter boxes.)

418. Rule 550 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume IV lays down the standards for the number of telegraph messages which a clerk in a combined Post and Telegraph office should be considered capable of dealing with. It has been suggested that a clerk employed on signalling duties with little or no clerical work should be able to deal with more than 80 messages a day and that this standard should not be less than 90. We have given the suggestion our careful consideration and come to the conclusion that the present standard need not be raised.

419. The rule referred to above does not make any provision for the number of messages which a postal clerk may be expected to dispose of in his daily term of duty in offices in which no signalling work is done and the booked messages are transferred by hand to the Central Telegraph Offices. We find that the Postmaster-General, Bombay, has laid down that for this class of work a clerk should be able to deal with 100 foreign messages or 150 inland messages. We consider these standards fairly reasonable and suggest that they may be adopted. We would here like to point out that in the Bombay General Post Office 250 to 300 messages are booked per day and transferred to the Central Telegraph Office. Four clerks are sanctioned for the purpose. This number seems to be excessive according to the standard prescribed by the Postmaster-General, but as these clerks have also to issue wireless licences the present sanction is perhaps justified.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

## Standards for determining the Status of Post Offices.

420. The Postal Committee of 1920 recommended that the "number of appointments in the higher grades of the subordinate Postal Service should be determined solely with reference to the number of charges as are such as reasonably should carry a pay above the time-scale of pay recommended for the ordinary clerical work of the Post Offices". Having considered each class of appointment separately, their recommendations were that "the appointments which should be classified as supervisory or otherwise important and be graded above the time scale, are all Head Postmasters, Deputy and Assistant Postmasters, Head clerks of branches and Senior Accountants in Presidency offices and Sub-Postmasters in charge of offices in which five or more clerks are employed or in which monetary transactions are exceptionally heavy".

421. The above recommendations were accepted by the Government of India (Department of Commerce) in their Resolution No. 6458, dated the 23rd September 1920, and the principle laid down by the Committee has been followed in creating new appointments in the higher grades.

422. In 1926 a general review was made of the pay of the Head and the more important Sub-Offices as a result of which the number of appointments in the Rs. 250—20—350 and Rs. 175—10—225 grades were increased by 11 and 12 respectively, an equal number of appointments, viz., 23, being abolished in the Rs. 145—5—170 grade. It was further decided to convert nine appointments of Postmasters on Rs. 145—170 into the ordinary time scale. Full effect has not been given to the latter decision and some of the appointments in the lower selection grade have been retained for special reasons advanced by the Heads of Circles concerned.

Based on the accepted recommendations of the Postal Committee of 1920, the Director-General laid down the following standards for the creation, retention or abolition of appointments in the Gazetted ranks of Post-masters and the supervisory appointments in the selection grade :—

- (a) No Head Office should ordinarily be in charge of a gazetted postmaster unless it has more than 30 time-scale clerks (including sorting postmen).
- (b) No Head Office should ordinarily be in charge of a postmaster on Rs. 250—20—350 unless it has more than 15 clerks.
- (c) A Sub-Office should ordinarily be placed in the Rs. 250—20—350 grade if the postmaster has 25 or more time-scale clerks (including sorting postmen) to control.
- (d) A Sub-Office should be placed on Rs. 160—250 grade if the sub-postmaster has to control 5 (and not more than 24) time-scale clerks (including sorting postmen).

423. Slight modifications in the above standards have been under consideration of the Director-General, Posts and Telegraphs, since 1927, but for one reason or another, they are remaining undisturbed. This circumstance coupled with the fact that retrenchments in the staff have



been carried out in the different Circles on different ideas, is responsible for the several anomalies that exist to-day. Some of these which have come to our notice are detailed below :—

(i) Offices with 30 time-scale clerks and less but in charge of an officer in the grade of Rs. 350—650 :—

Patna .. .. . 30 clerks.

(ii) Offices with more than 30 clerks but in charge of an officer in the grade of Rs. 250—350 :—

Baroda .. .. . 32 clerks.

Srinagar .. .. . 33 ..

Alipore .. .. . 31 ..

Barisal .. .. . 37 ..

Comilla .. .. . 31 ..

Sylhet .. .. . 31 ..

Hyderabad (Sind) .. .. . 37 ..

Sukkur .. .. . 33 ..

(b) (i) Offices with 15 clerks and less, but in charge of an officer in the grade of Rs. 250—350 :—

Monghyr .. .. . 15 clerks.

Shillong .. .. . 14 ..

(also treated as I class)

Aden .. .. . 15 clerks.

(also treated as I class).

Pegu .. .. . 15 clerks.

(ii) Offices with more than 15 clerks but not in the grade of Rs. 250—350 :—

Bhagalpur .. .. . 16 clerks 160—250

Arrah .. .. . 19 ..

Sholapur .. .. . 20 ..

Bhavnagar .. .. . 17 ..

Nasik .. .. . 23 ..

Multan .. .. . 19 ..

Gurdaspur .. .. . 16 ..

Sargodha .. .. . 18 ..

Jammu Tawi .. .. . 23 ..

Abbottabad .. .. . 19 ..

Dera Ismail Khan .. .. . 21 ..

Kohat .. .. . 18 ..

Gujrat .. .. . 16 ..

Fyzabad .. .. . 20 ..

Saharanpur .. .. . 18 ..

Bankura .. .. . 16 ..

Chinsura .. .. . 17 ..

Dibrugarh .. .. . 20 ..

Jorhat .. .. . 18 ..

Fabna .. .. . 16 ..

Gauhati	..	..	..	..	16 clerks 160—250.
Akola	..	..	..	..	24 " "
Amraoti	..	..	..	..	22 " "
Bilaspur	..	..	..	..	20 " "
Guntur	..	..	..	..	16 " "
Nellore	..	..	..	..	16 " "
Vizagapatam	..	..	..	..	16 " "

(c) (i) Sub-Offices with 25 clerks or more but not in Rs. 250—350 grade :—

Bangalore City .. .. . 25 clerks.

(ii) Sub-Offices with less than 25 clerks but in Rs. 250—350 grade :—

Amherst Street .. .. . 23 clerks.

(d) Offices with less than 5 clerks but placed in selection grade :—

Nepal .. .. . 4 clerks.

Viceroy's Camp .. .. . 1 clerk.

424. A review of the pay of Deputy Postmasters was also made in 1926 when it was decided that " in head offices in the Rs. 175—10—225 grade there should be a second supervisory appointment on Rs. 145—5—170 in the shape of a Deputy Postmaster ".

425. A combined selection grade of Rs. 160—10—250 was introduced in 1923 in place of the two selection grades of Rs. 145—5—170 and Rs. 175—10—225. This change necessitated certain modifications in the accepted standards. Further it made it inevitable for both the postmasters and their deputy postmasters to be placed on the same scale of pay.

To systematise the arrangement for the creation of deputy postmasters' appointments for Head and Sub-Offices it was laid down that a Head office will not have a deputy postmaster unless the total staff of time-scale clerks and sorting postmen exceeded 8 and that a Sub-Office will not be given a deputy sub-postmaster if the total staff of time-scale clerks and sorting postmen did not exceed 10.

426. The following anomalies in the scale of pay sanctioned for deputy postmasters in Head Offices have come to our notice :—

(a) 58 clerks are employed in the Cawnpore Head Office but the deputy postmaster in this office is in the lower selection grade, viz., Rs. 160—250.

(b) In the Rawalpindi Head Office where the number of clerks employed is the same as in Cawnpore, the deputy postmaster is placed in the grade of Rs. 250—350.

(c) In the Bangalore Head Office where the number of clerks employed is not more than 46, the deputy postmaster is placed in the grade of Rs. 250—350.

(d) This scale of pay is also sanctioned for the deputy postmaster in the Simla Head Office where the number of clerks employed is even less, i.e., 36 clerks.

427. In Director-General's Memorandum No. 1361-Est.A/32, dated the 5th October 1933, the sanction of the Governor General in Council has been communicated, to the grant of a special pay of Rs. 20 a month to an official in the ordinary time-scale of pay, in the Post Office and Railway Mail Service, who is required to perform entirely supervisory duties, and is designated "supervisor" in consideration of the fact that he is required to shoulder responsibilities heavier than those attaching to an ordinary time-scale post.

Detailed instructions on the subject are contained in Director-General's Memorandum No. 1361-Es.A/32, dated the 9th November 1933, which require that when the number of clerks or sorters under the direct supervision of a supervisor does not exceed 10, he should ordinarily be in the time-scale.

428. The following anomalies have come to our notice:—

(a) Offices where time-scale supervisors are employed even when the staff controlled is more than 10—

Office.	Time scale supervisor.	Staff controlled.
Dacca Head Office .. .. .	1	13
Chittagong Head Office .. .. .	1	13
Calcutta General Post Office:—		
Registration Department .. .. .	1	28
Do. do. .. .. .	1	15
Letter sorting Department .. .. .	1	13
Money Order Department .. .. .	1	12

(b) Selection grade posts which are either not supervisory or which are considered by the Postmasters-General concerned to be necessary to be retained in the selection grade—

	Staff controlled.
Baroda H. O. .. .. . 1 Assistant Postmaster Rs. 160—250.	6
Belgaum H. O. .. .. . 1 Do.	10
Poona H. O. .. .. . 1 Do.	6
Do. .. .. . 1 Do.	5
Simla H. O. .. .. . 2 Do.	19
Agra H. O. .. .. . 1 Do.	10
Dead Letter Office, Lahore .. 3 Head clerks on Rs. 160— 250.	30
Calcutta G. P. O.—	
Deposit Department .. 1 Head clerk on Rs. 160—250	8
Do. .. 1 Do.	8
Sub-Accounts Department .. 1 Do.	8
Mail Department .. 1 Do.	7
Nagapatam .. .. . 2 Assistant Postmasters on Rs. 160—250.	

429. In addition to the above there are several departments in the Calcutta General Post Office where a strict application of the present instructions on the subject would result in either additional selection grade posts having to be sanctioned or the existing selection grade appointments being converted into time-scale supervisors. This applies equally forcibly to the different departments of the General Post Offices in Bombay and Madras.

430. The general instructions regarding the selection grade appointments apply also to the Railway Mail Service and we believe that their strict application to this branch of the Service may result in an addition to or a reduction of the selection grade posts sanctioned for this branch of the Department.

431. The adoption of some of the recommendations made by us to simplify the procedure would necessitate a reconsideration of the time allowances at present made for certain operations, and affect the staff requirements of various offices. During the time at our disposal it has not been possible for us to examine the question of suitability of the standards referred to in this Chapter, but we suggest that the anomalies wherever existing may be removed by the application of these standards. All cases in which special treatment is claimed being referred to the Director-General for orders.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## Accounts.

432. The structure of the system of accounts in India is simple but there is room for expediting the process of compilation and urgent necessity for eliminating some of the checks and counter-checks which are exercised at present. The procedure adopted in the Branch, Sub and Head offices is as follows.

433. A Branch Postmaster is supplied with a single type of receipt book printed in the vernacular, and he issues receipts from this book for all registration, parcel, and money order transactions of his office. Branch offices which are specially authorised to perform registration and parcel work independently of their accounts offices use the ordinary journals for these purposes. The daily account of every Branch Postmaster gives details of all these transactions. This account together with the registered letters, parcels (except in the case of offices authorised to work independently in regard to these two items) and money orders is submitted every day to the Sub or Head office with which the Branch office is in account. The Sub or Head Postmaster in charge of the office has carefully to check all these transactions, and to incorporate them in his own accounts. He issues regular receipts from the respective journals for each of the transactions shown in the Branch office accounts and forwards them to the Branch offices concerned together with a B. O. slip acknowledging the correctness of the Branch office accounts. The Branch Postmaster has to paste all these receipts to the counterfoils of the receipts already granted by him to the public.

434. The Sub-Postmaster sends a daily account to his Head post office in which he shows all the transactions of his own office as well as the Branch offices in its accounts jurisdiction. The Head Postmaster checks all these accounts and acknowledges their correctness in Sub-Office slips to all the Sub-offices in its accounts jurisdiction. The Head Postmaster also arranges to post all the Savings Bank transactions in the ledgers maintained in his office for all the depositors having accounts with offices under its accounts jurisdiction.

435. All Head offices send their cash accounts once a month to the Audit office but the period of submission of the money order and Savings Bank accounts varies. Some offices send their Savings Bank accounts daily and others weekly, while the money order accounts are generally sent twice a month.

436. The four Audit offices of the Department are located at Calcutta (for Bengal and Assam, and Bihar and Orissa Circles), Delhi (for the Punjab and N.-W. F., and the United Provinces Circles), Nagpur (for the Central, the Sind and Baluchistan, and Bombay Circles), and Madras (for the Madras and Burma Circles). The Deputies Accountant General who control these offices are in charge of the audit and accounts of all the branches of the Posts and Telegraphs Department, *viz.*, Post Office (including Railway Mail Service), Telegraph Traffic, Telegraph Engineering, and Wireless. The entire staff of these Audit offices although paid by the Posts and Telegraphs Department is under the administrative control and orders of the Auditor General in India.

437. We are of the opinion that considerable simplification could be effected if post offices were divided into two categories only, *viz.*, Branch and Main offices. Offices doing Savings Bank business to be styled as Main offices, the remainder to be Branch offices. Every Main office would function as an independent accounting unit.

438. As suggested in paragraph 322 all Branch offices should be supplied with registered journals and the present system under which a Head or a Sub-office has to issue another receipt for the registered articles booked at Branch offices should be discontinued.

439. A Branch office would submit its daily account to the Main office with which it is placed in account. The latter office should incorporate in its own accounts the transactions of all the Branch offices in its accounts jurisdiction, and submit a daily account to a Circle Accounts office which should be established at the headquarters of each Circle.

440. Circle Accounts Offices would replace the present Audit offices in the matter of exercising the necessary internal check on the accounts of the various branches of the Posts and Telegraphs Department with regard to salary, travelling allowance and other bills in the same manner as the present Audit offices do. They would also take over the account compilation work, which is at present scattered about in various Head Post offices. We consider it essential for the success of this scheme that the Circle Accounts Offices should work and function in the same way as the present Head Post Offices. They will be closed only on Post Office holidays and their staff will be paid on the same scale as the Post Office staff. Both at the time of their formation as well as later on, their staff should, as far as possible, be recruited from post offices. A certain percentage of the lower Supervisory and the Inspectors' appointments in these offices should be reserved for the Post Office employees who pass the prescribed test.

441. All Main offices, which are in charge of departmental officials, and are situated at a station, where a branch of the Imperial Bank or a District or Sub-Treasury is located, should be permitted to have an independent drawing account and furnished with the necessary Letters of Credit by the Circle Accounts Office. All other offices should remit their surplus cash to, or obtain necessary funds from, other post offices which will be specially designated as "Cash offices". The latter would be in charge of senior departmental employees, and one of their important functions would be to regulate the movements of cash in the offices placed under their cash jurisdiction, and to keep them supplied with stamps as required. To enable the cash offices to see that the cash requirements of such main offices as are under their jurisdiction are genuine, it would be necessary to provide that the daily accounts of such main offices are sent through the cash offices. The Postmaster-in-charge of the cash office can generally scrutinise the accounts to see that the remittances of cash already made were justified by payments of money orders or withdrawals from Savings Bank accounts. This check may subsequently be abolished if experience shows that the submission of the daily account direct to the Circle Accounts Office does not present any difficulty.

442. With the introduction of the system suggested by us the check at present exercised by a Head Post Office on the money order transactions of a Sub-Office will be entirely eliminated. Its absence, in our opinion, will not be of any consequence as the check on money order transactions

carried out in the Circle Accounts office would be as detailed and thorough as in the present Audit offices.

443. The simplification in Savings Bank work will be very appreciable. At present a Head Post Office carries out a thorough check of all the transactions in the offices in its jurisdiction, and posts them in its ledgers specially maintained for this purpose. These transactions are incorporated in its accounts and sent to the Audit office, where the same detailed checks are again carried out and similar postings made in the ledgers maintained in that office. In order to illustrate that the working of the present system means heavy expenditure on additional staff we may mention that in the Calcutta General Post Office 13 men are employed for carrying out the preliminary check on Savings Bank transactions of the offices in its jurisdiction and posting them in its ledgers. Just across the walls a staff of 27 men is employed in the Audit office to 'audit' these very transactions and to post them in the card ledgers maintained in that office. Our observations lead us to the conclusion, that for every clerk employed in a Head Post office for the preliminary check of Savings Bank accounts of the offices under its jurisdiction and the posting of the ledgers, there are at least two men in the Audit office for the final audit and posting of the ledgers maintained therein. We are unable to see any advantage in this system of duplicate checks involving maintenance of two sets of ledgers and are of opinion that it should be abolished. Similarly, in the case of cash certificates, one of the two checks at present applied to the Sub and Branch office transactions would be eliminated under our scheme.

444. The extravagance of the present system has been recognised and has formed the subject of discussions on several occasions in the past but it has not been possible to arrive at a satisfactory solution. In 1912 the Audit office ledgers were actually abolished, but they had to be restored in 1916 at a considerable cost and dislocation of work, as a number of frauds were attributed to this change. The main reason for the failure of this experiment was that the posting of the ledgers was carried out in the same office and by the very men, who actually dealt with the public at the counter, and had an opportunity of falsifying the entries in all the records (*viz.*, pass books, Savings Bank journals and the ledgers) at the time that the transactions took place. The Audit office had no means of checking the entries in any of these documents, and of tallying them with one another.

445. A few years ago another suggestion for the abolition of the Head office ledgers was made by the Accountant-General, Posts and Telegraphs, but was turned down partly on the ground that the anticipated reduction of cost was small and largely on account of the serious objection that the interval between the actual occurrence of the transaction at the counter of the post office and its posting in the ledger maintained in the Audit office would be considerable. *Prima facie* such a system cannot but be called unsound and might lead to frauds.

446. The method suggested by us is not open to either of the above main objections as the posting of the ledgers would be by a different set of men working under the control of an Accounts officer in a different atmosphere, and by providing for a daily despatch of accounts by the  
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Main offices to the Circle Accounts offices and the posting of the transactions in the ledgers of the latter immediately on receipt we overcome the objection regarding the delay in such postings.

447. We suggest that a suitable number of Inspectors of Accounts on the lower selection grade scale of pay sanctioned for the Post Office officials should be attached to each of the Circle Accounts offices. They should take over the inspection of Post Office accounts. They will have no other duties to perform, and they should, therefore, devote their whole time to inspection work. One of their important functions should be to test-check some of the entries in the Savings Bank journals received in the Circle Accounts office with the pass books which may become available during their inspections, and thus ensure that the balances shown in the latter are the same as shown in the Accounts office ledgers. During the inspection of offices the Inspectors of Post Offices at present do apply a check, but it is confined to the pass books and the copies of the Savings Bank journals which are retained in the post offices. Our proposal to compare the entries in the pass books with those in the copies of the journals received in the Audit offices would be more useful, as we are given to understand that the dishonestly inclined officials in Sub and Branch offices manipulate the figures in the two copies of the journals—the correct figures being retained in the office copies to ward off the Supervising Officer's check and the fictitious figures communicated to the Head offices. Frauds committed by such tactics remain undetected for quite a long time. The proposed inspections by Accounts Inspectors would be more effective in checking such frauds.

448. Under the present system a depositor having an account at a Sub or Branch office receives for every deposit an acknowledgment from the Head office concerned. Subscribers having accounts at a Head office have to be content with the entries made in their pass books. Under our scheme there will be no such discrimination and all subscribers will receive acknowledgments from the Circle Accounts offices. These acknowledgments will be sent in the account bag of the Main office concerned. We have every reason to believe that under the system suggested by us the Department will not be deprived of any of the checks at present exercised by a Head Post office and the Audit office while the detailed examination of accounts by qualified Accounts Inspectors will go a long way towards elimination of frauds.

449. We gather from the report of Rai Bahadur S. C. Gupta, Postmaster-General, United Provinces Circle, that the system suggested by us is practically the same as in the United Kingdom and other European countries visited by him, and we have no doubt or misgivings about its superior efficiency. His report also reveals the fact that Savings Bank depositors in those countries enjoy other conveniences in connection with deposits and withdrawals which cannot be given by the Indian post offices at present because the ledgers are kept at Head offices. With the system suggested by us, deposits could be permitted at any office within the Circle and transfer of an account from any one office to another in the same Circle would be as easy as it is at present in the case of offices under the same Head Post office.

450. We have considered the possibility of adopting the system which prevails in the United Kingdom and some other European countries of



allowing a depositor to make withdrawals from his account up to a prescribed limit from any post office, but we fear that the introduction of any such improvement is likely still further to add to our cost of Savings Bank audit which is already high. In our opinion economy could be effected in this respect by the use of machines in Account offices. We have dealt with this aspect of the case along with the question of Money Order audit.

451. Some of the witnesses with whom the Circle Accounts office scheme was discussed felt that if the functions of the present Head Post offices with regard to Savings Bank transactions were transferred to the proposed Accounts office, delay would occur—

(i) in connection with the opening of an account, and subsequent renewal of pass books, and

(ii) at the time of closing of an account.

These objections can be met as follows :—

(i) Every Main office will keep an imprest of pass books, their number being regulated according to the average monthly or quarterly consumption of such pass books in each office. All such offices will maintain an account of this imprest in a register which will be designed to facilitate duplication by means of carbon process. One copy of the entries in this register will be removed and forwarded to the Circle Accounts office whenever the imprest has to be replenished.

452. A depositor would be given his pass book as soon as his account is opened at any of the Main offices. In the office journal for the day the space in the column "Account No." would be left blank against the new account and the depositor's application for the opening of the account will be forwarded to the Circle Accounts office with the request that the account number may be communicated by the return of post. On receipt of this information the account number would be posted in the space left blank in the office copy of the journal for the day when the account was opened.

453. A new depositor would be requested to present at the post office his pass book after 4 or 5 days for the account number being entered on it. If he fails to do so the needful can conveniently be done on any subsequent date when the pass book is presented for further transactions. The required information will be ascertained by a reference to the office copy of the journal of the day when the account was opened. Such references to the Sub-office journals (or Head office ledgers) are required even under the present procedure and no extra work will be involved by our proposal. There need be no objection to a depositor making a deposit or withdrawal before receipt of the account number from the Accounts offices. The only precaution that will have to be taken in such cases would be to indicate in the daily journal the date of opening of the account.

454. With regard to the renewal of pass books it will not be necessary for the Main offices to make any reference to the Accounts offices. They

will issue a new pass book, recover the old one and pass it on to the Accounts office.

- (ii) In every case when an account has to be closed a reference to the Circle Accounts office instead of the Head office will be necessary. In the case of offices situated at a distance from the Circle Accounts Offices the postmasters might, if necessary, be authorised to ascertain from the Accounts offices the amount standing to the credit of a depositor including interest. This aspect of the question was discussed with a very experienced Postmaster-General and he made light of it by suggesting that in the few cases in which real inconvenience might be caused, the post office officials would not be so lacking in imagination as not to suggest to the depositor the alternative of withdrawing the balance to his credit in the pass book *minus* four annas (the minimum deposit). This petty amount together with the interest on the total deposit could be withdrawn at a later date.

455. At present when an account is opened at a Sub or Branch Post office, the application with the necessary papers is sent to the Head office, which issues the pass book after assigning a ledger number to the new account. When all the available space in a pass book is filled up, it is sent to the Head office, which issues a fresh one in its place. During this interval of transit, the depositor cannot make any deposit or withdrawal. When an account has to be closed, the depositor presents the pass book to the Sub or Branch Postmaster, who has to send it to the Head office where the balance (including interest) is written in it and on the return of the pass book the amount is paid to the depositor. If the account is at a Head Post office, these delays do not occur, and fear has been expressed that if in this respect all offices are placed on the same level as the present Sub and Branch offices the system would become unpopular. We do not share this apprehension as according to the procedure prescribed by us the depositors will not be deprived of any of the facilities at present enjoyed by them. On the contrary the facilities at present confined to the depositors having direct dealings with the Head offices will be extended to those dealing with Sub and Branch offices. This should add to the popularity of the Savings Bank system.

456. Under the system proposed by us the Head offices functioning as Main offices will conduct their Savings Bank business in the same way as the present Sub offices, *i.e.*, withdrawals will be made by reference to the journals instead of the ledgers which will be transferred to the Circle Accounts offices. For purposes of easy reference we suggest that an additional column may be provided in the form of the journal in which column each transaction will be given a serial number of the day. This number will be reproduced against the particular transaction in the pass book to which it refers.

457. There will be no compilation of accounts in Head offices and it will not be necessary to maintain a Head office cash book in any of the offices.

458. The only change in the working of the present Sub-offices (to be styled Main offices), will be in regard to the entering of the interest in depositors' pass books. At present this work is done in the Head offices

where the pass books have to be sent for the purpose. The interest is calculated for each account by the present Audit offices and interest statements sent to the Head offices. We suggest that the Accounts offices should send to all Main offices the interest statements from which they will make the necessary entries in each pass book. The Account offices should be authorised to call for a number of pass books from time to time for purposes of test check.

459. We have suggested an extension of the extra departmental system. The Main offices will draw the fixed allowances for the extra departmental agents employed within their respective jurisdiction. The preparation of salary bills of departmental employees and other establishment work connected with such staff will be done in the offices of the Superintendents of Post Offices. The present system under which a Head Postmaster has to draw the salary of the staff attached to the office of a Superintendent of Post Offices is anomalous and we feel that considerable simplification would be effected by adopting instead the practice obtaining in the Railway Mail Service and transferring all establishment and staff work in a Division to an Accounts Branch in the office of the Superintendent of Post Offices.

460. We are convinced that the adoption of the changes suggested by us would result in increased efficiency and tend to bring about smoother working for the following reasons :—

- (a) Audit objections will be more quickly settled as there will be no intervention of Head Post offices.
- (b) The number of such objections would reduce considerably as the compilation of accounts will be done in the Circle Accounts offices, and all the initial documents will be available in those offices.
- (c) Accounts inspections would be more efficient. At present these are carried out by Superintendents and Inspectors, who are not trained in accounts. These officers have to content themselves with the records available in the post offices and have no means of finding out whether correct accounts have been submitted to audit offices. Under the proposed system competent officials taking with them the original accounts and vouchers as received in Accounts offices would visit all the Main offices, audit the post office accounts and give such guidance and instruction to the post office staff as may be necessary. The Accounts office staff will also learn to look at things from the point of view of the man at the counter, and this mutual realisation of each other's difficulties will lead to greater co-operation.
- (d) The Circle Accounts Offices would take over as much work from the budget and accounts branch of the Circle offices as can be conveniently transferred to them. Remittances to or from the Town Main offices at Headquarters will also be arranged by a cash branch of the Accounts office. In addition all miscellaneous accounts work of the type of the Telephone Revenue Account and the Money order work at the Bombay Foreign Post office will be transferred to these offices.

- (e) There would be opportunities for more intimate contact between the Head of the Circle and of the officer in charge of Accounts offices. The former will consult the latter freely in all accounts matters. At present the Head of a Postal audit office is naturally inclined to look at every question principally from an auditor's point of view. This angle of vision must necessarily change when he realises that his primary function is that of an Accountant.

461. We are satisfied that the formation of the proposed Circle Accounts Offices holds out promise of considerable simplification of procedure and consequent reduction in working expenses. The proposal is based on the conviction that the primary checks and postings carried out in a Head Post Office are sufficient for our requirements and we could be quite content with them if we were assured that the staff employed on the work had no direct dealings with the public. The proposed Circle Account Offices meet that condition. Their formation means the elimination of the duplicate audit checks, and the employment of the more expensive staff for the purpose in the audit offices.

462. At present the greater portion of a Superintendent's time at the inspection of a Head or Sub-Post Office is devoted to accounts. It is a wasteful method. Our proposal secures us a cheaper and more efficient agency for accounts inspection of offices. We also feel that our highly paid Superintendents should not be wasting their time in the checking of parcel and registered lists. They should instead concern themselves more with the administrative inspection of lines and offices, and their number appreciably reduced. In this connection, we would like to point out that the necessity for relieving the Superintendents of the Accounts inspection work has been realised and is referred to in the following extract from the Ryan Committee's Report :—

“ The Committee understand from the Accountant-General that he has under consideration proposals for the introduction of a scheme of Local Audit, with perhaps four or five local audit groups in each postal circle. It has been suggested that under such a scheme the superintendents of post offices might be relieved of work which could be better done by trained audit inspectors, and that their numbers might be correspondingly reduced. The pay of the audit staff would probably be lower than that of the superintendents whom they would replace. This idea needs elaboration and examination by Government in the light of both and executive requirements before any definite opinion could be formed ; but it appears to the Committee to be probable that such a measure would be conducive both to improved efficiency and economy. It is suggested that the question be pursued and that the decision be allowed for in the revision of the postal divisions recommended in the preceding paragraph.”

463. Our suggestions also mean that the present Head Postmasters will cease to be in charge of the cash and accounts transactions of the entire district. Their pay will therefore have to be refixed in relation

to the work dealt with in their own offices and the reduced cash jurisdiction. There will no longer be any need to retain the status of first class Head offices, and all the Post offices at present under their control should be transferred to the Divisional Superintendents of Post Offices. The staff dealing with the compilation and checking of accounts in the Head offices will be merged in that of the Central Accounts office.

464. Our suggestion aims at centralisation in one office of the entire staff required for dealing with accounting and compilation work of each Circle, the establishment for the purpose being withdrawn from the Head Post offices and the present combined Audit and Accounts offices. This would mean the exclusion of the staff required for audit work which in our opinion should be a separate unit.

465. The strength and the pay and allowances of the staff employed in the present combined Audit and Accounts offices is determined by the Auditor General in India, but under the system suggested by us he will be concerned only with the audit office while the Accounts Branch will be under the Financial Adviser, Posts and Telegraphs.

466. We are unable to say what staff will be required for audit purposes but judging by the staff employed on Army audit we have no doubt that the cost of the separated Audit and Accounts offices for the Posts and Telegraphs Department will be less than that of the present combined offices.

467. Most of the witnesses with whom the question was discussed have stressed the desirability of having one office for the audit of Money Order transactions of the country. At present the work is divided between the four Audit offices and this leads to a good deal of extra work in Post offices. Money orders paid in a Post office have to be sorted out according to the Audit circles of offices of issue and entered in separate paid lists which are forwarded for audit to the Audit offices in whose jurisdiction the Post offices of issue are situated. Thus every Head Post office has to deal with all the four Audit offices so far as Money order transactions are concerned.

468. The question of centralisation of this work has been considered on a previous occasion and abandoned chiefly because it was difficult to find suitable accommodation for the large staff required for the purpose. From the figures collected by us we find that at present on account of a fall in traffic, about 600 clerks in all are employed in the four audit offices in connection with money order audit. This number is not too large and the problem is therefore not a very serious one. According to our proposal the work of the present Audit office at Delhi will be decentralised on the formation of the Circle Accounts offices. The accommodation at present used for this office would become available and could be utilised for the proposed Central Money Order Audit office.

469. The only alternative to having a Central Money Order Audit Office would be to attach Money Order Audit sections to each of the proposed Circle Accounts Offices. All money orders paid and issued in these offices while those originating in one Circle but paid in another could be audited in a Money Order Clearing Accounts Office. From our cursory observations of some Issue and Paid lists of money orders it

appears that a very substantial proportion of the money orders issued by an office are for payment within the Circle. The number which will have to be dealt with by the Money Order Clearing Accounts Office would therefore not be large, and such an office could easily be located in Delhi.

470. We have been greatly impressed by the figures kindly supplied to us by the Financial Adviser which show that the average income at the rates in force during 1933-34 for a money order transaction was 0|4|0 while its cost was 0|4|9.98 in 1930-31, 0|5|1.36 in 1931-32 and 0|5|9.52 in 1932-33. This proves at once that we are handling this traffic at a loss.

471. The charge which the Posts and Telegraphs Department receives from the Finance Department for each Savings Bank transaction is 0|7|0 representing the expenses incurred in the Department. In addition the Finance Department meets the actual cost of the work performed in the Posts and Telegraphs Audit offices and in the Central office in connection with the Savings Bank transactions.

472. It will be seen that these costs in connection with these two classes of business are very high and every avenue of economy should be explored. One way in which economy could be secured is by the utilisation of machinery in our Audit offices, and this question now requires serious consideration. We understand that some years ago this idea was actually taken up so far as money order audit is concerned but it was given up owing to the high cost of the Hollerith machines which were then proposed to be installed. By the kind courtesy of Mr. D. C. Campbell, the Director, Railway Clearing Accounts office, we have had an opportunity of seeing these machines at work. We are satisfied that they are not at all suitable for our requirements. This type of machine is chiefly meant for tabulating and working out the earnings of the different railways which are a party to the scheme, while all that we require is a simple machine for sorting out paid money orders according to offices of issue.

473. We learnt that the cards used on these machines cost Rs. 5|3|0 per thousand and that an operator coded 1,500 invoices or punched 1,000 cards per day. The columns on these cards provide for the following information regarding the through goods traffic :—

- (a) No. of an invoice,
- (b) Month of the year,
- (c) Year,
- (d) Date of the month.
- (e) Route taken,
- (f) Name of station from,
- (g) Name of station to,
- (h) Commodity,
- (i) Weight,
- (j) Name of forwarding railway with its rates in pies,

- (k) Name of intermediate railway with its rates in pies,
- (l) Name of receiving railway with its rates in pies,
- (m) Whether paid or to pay, and
- (n) Total freight.

In the case of the money order audit the particulars required would be the following :—

- (a) The No. of the money order,
- (b) Date of issue,
- (c) Amount,
- (d) Name of office of issue, and
- (e) Name of office of payment.

474. It will thus be seen that the size of the card to be used for the money order audit would be about half that of the card used in the Railway Accounts office. Its purchase price should therefore be much less. Further as the number of punches required for our use would be 19 against 45 on the railway, the clerks operating the machine in the Money Order Audit office would be able to give a much higher output than is obtained in the Railway Clearing Accounts office. This output may safely be taken to correspond to that obtained in America, which is said to be 3,000 per operator per day.

475. We have also seen the working of accounting machines in the Savings Bank sections and comptometers in money order audit in the Audit offices visited by us. We do not know what economy, if any, was effected by the installation of machines in the Savings Bank sections, but as we have pointed out the staff employed in the audit offices for final audit and posting of ledgers is very large. With regard to the comptometers used for Money order audit our information is that more mistakes are committed by the staff operating them than by the post office staff in totalling the Money Order issue and paid lists. This type of machinery, in our opinion, is not suitable for this class of work.

476. We are of the opinion that the machinery installed should be suitable for all the processes involved in the audit of these transactions. Installation of such a machinery would greatly simplify work and expedite its disposal. We understand that in the United States of America very much larger volume of work in connection with the audit of Money orders is handled more expeditiously than in India. This is done with the help of machinery and we would suggest that suitable machinery may be installed in India. In order to obtain the best possible results it is desirable that the methods practiced in the audit offices of a few of the countries using machinery for audit purposes should be studied by one or two officers who may be specially deputed for the purpose.

477. It may be conceded that the use of machinery will have the effect of throwing out of employment the men doing the work on the "head and hand" methods, but in order to cheapen the service and thus attract more business it is essential that the working expenses should be reduced. And we may safely hope that the cheapening of the service

will result in growth of the postal business and thus lead to employment of more staff.

478. The working of the Telephone Revenue Accounting offices was generally reviewed by us, and we gathered that the procedure regarding the preparation of bills is not uniform in all the Circles.

479. The Accounts Officer, Stores and Workshops, Calcutta, who is also in charge of the Telephone Revenue Accounting office explained to us the way in which he prepares a Trial Balance Sheet to ensure that bills are made for every Trunk Call ticket received in his office. He told us that he had submitted to the Director-General a draft manual prescribing the procedure to be followed in all Revenue Accounting Offices. We are of the opinion that a Manual on the lines suggested by him should be issued as early as possible, and the preparation of the Trial Balance sheet made compulsory in all offices where it does not exist at present.

480. The standard for calculating staff for the Accounting offices is 1 clerk for 4,000 rent bills per annum and 1 clerk for 26,000 truck tickets per annum. The Postmaster-General, Burma considers this standard to be too high if no staff is allowed for other duties in these offices. He has suggested that the standard should be modified as follows :—

1 clerk for 2,000 rent bills per annum,

1 clerk for 13,000 truck tickets per annum, to cover all operations.

481. The staff in the United Provinces Circle office is based on the standard of 4,000 and 26,000 referred to above and we suggest that it may be retained or the new standard used in the Delhi office for the preparation of the bills adopted in all offices.

482. (At present salary and travelling allowance bills of offices situated at the headquarters of an audit office are subjected to pre-audit. It appears to us that this procedure throws a certain amount of avoidable work on the offices concerned and is not of much utility. We therefore suggested to the Director-General, Posts and Telegraphs in our unofficial note No. P.E.C.-25, dated the 31st May 1934 that the system may be abolished wherever it exists.



**CHAPTER XV.****Acknowledgments.**

483. We are greatly indebted to Mr. S. P. Varma, Financial Adviser, Posts and Telegraphs, for very kindly furnishing us with detailed information regarding the financial position of the Department in respect of the expenditure incurred on each of the Postal transactions and the revenue derived therefrom. He further obliged us by appearing before us on the 19th of November 1934 and enlightening the Committee on points arising from the information contained in his note.

484. In the course of our enquiry we have often had to collect information from different sources at short notice. We are conscious of the fact that compliance with our requests has thrown a great deal of heavy work on the Circle Offices. And we desire gratefully to acknowledge the willing co-operation we have received from all concerned.

485. We are also obliged to the Posts and Telegraphs Directorate for affording us every facility in referring to the files dealing with the subjects under our investigation.

486. We wish to place on record our appreciation of the services rendered by the two stenographers placed at our disposal. They had very strenuous duties to perform in connection with the recording of evidence at different centres, and they have displayed great devotion to duty in all work entrusted to them.

M. L. PASRICHA.

RANG BEHARI LAL.

\*K. R. BAKHLE.

\*M. SABIHUDDIN.

\*J. N. DAR.

\*K. L. N. IYA.

\*Subject to our observations contained in the accompanying set of supplementary notes and 11 minutes.

K. R. BAKHLE.

M. SABIHUDDIN.

J. N. DAR.

K. L. N. IYA.

**CHAPTER XVI.****Summary of Recommendations.****CHANGES IN ORGANIZATION.****CHAPTER II.—CIRCLE OFFICES.****PARA.**

- 17 Appointments of Head Assistants should be abolished and the pay of the Office Superintendent, Burma, should be reduced.
- 20 Employment of post office clerks in Circle offices.
- 21 Circle office clerks should be on a higher scale than post office clerks.
- 25 Typing work in Circle offices may be done by section writers instead of whole time clerks.
- 27 Entries in character sheets should be made as required by Government of India (Home Department) Resolution No. 1568-1595-(Ests.), dated 14th September 1915. Promotion to all selection grade appointments should be by examination.
- 28—31 Minor Circles for (1) the N.-W. F. P., (2) Central Provinces and Berar, (3) Rajputana, (4) Assam, (5) Bihar and (6) Orissa.

**CHAPTER III.—STOCK DEPOTS.**

- 41 There should be only one selection grade appointment in each Stock Depot and the Managers should be placed in the lower selection grade.

**CHAPTER IV.—DEAD LETTER OFFICES.**

- 77 Directory offices to be established at the headquarters of each Circle.
- 87 Establishment of present Dead Letter Offices to be revised.
- 88 One Central Dead Letter Office to be established for the whole of India.

**CHAPTER V.—RAILWAY MAIL SERVICE.**

- 104 Formation of a separate Railway Mail Service Circle.
- 106—108 Sorting arrangements at Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Ballard Pier and Poona should be under the Railway Mail Service.
- 115 Replacement of Inspectors by Assistant Inspectors.
- 116 Additional Headquarters Inspectors to be appointed.
- 126 Redistribution of Railway Mail Service Divisions.

**CHAPTER VI.—FOREIGN POST.**

## CHAPTER VII.—DIVISIONAL ORGANISATION.

## PARA.

- 197—211 Mail overseers to be replaced by Assistant Inspectors.  
 206—208 Inspectors' and Superintendents' jurisdictions to be enlarged.  
 223 Ranges to be formed in the Major Circles.  
 230 Telegraph inspection of combined offices to be conducted by Telegraph Engineering officers.

## CHAPTER VIII.—ORGANISATION—GENERAL.

- 233 Town offices in Presidency towns to be placed under Divisional Superintendents.  
 234 Other towns under 1st class Postmasters to be also placed under Divisional Superintendents.  
 235 Direct recruits to lower division cadre to be absorbed in the new grades for clerks.  
 236 Men promoted from inferior ranks to be employed on routine work only.

## CHAPTER IX.—SIMPLIFICATION OF POST OFFICE METHODS.

*Nil.*

## CHAPTER X.—MISCELLANEOUS.

*Nil.*

## CHAPTER XI.—RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING.

- 375 One cadre for clerical establishment.  
 376—380 Recruitment examination.  
 381 Confirmation examination.  
 382 Promotion to upper grade.  
 386—388 Training of recruits.  
 389—391 Recruitment of Superintendents.

## CHAPTER XII.—TIME TEST AND ITS APPLICATION.

*Nil.*

## CHAPTER XIII.—STANDARDS FOR DETERMINING THE STATUS OF POST OFFICES.

*Nil.*

## CHAPTER XIV.—ACCOUNTS.

- 437 Post offices to be divided into 2 categories only.  
 440 Accounts offices to be established at the headquarters of each circle.  
 447 Accounts of Post Offices to be inspected by Inspectors of Accounts working under the Accounts office.  
 459 Preparation of salary bills in the offices of the Divisional Superintendents.  
 467 Establishment of a Central Money Order Audit Office.  
 476 Installation of suitable machinery in Audit Offices.  
 481 Standard for fixing establishment of Telephone Revenue Accounting Offices.

### Summary of Recommendations.

#### CHANGES IN METHODS OF WORK.

##### CHAPTER II.—CIRCLE OFFICES.

PARA.

- 13 Deputies Postmaster-General should receive certain cases direct instead of through Assistant Postmasters-General.
- 14 Cases should go direct to Postmaster-General through the Assistant Postmaster-General.
- 15 Director-General, Posts and Telegraph's orders that not more than one selection grade clerk may be employed in a section with less than 10 men should be enforced in Circle offices.
- 22 Certain financial and administrative powers may be delegated to Divisional Superintendents and 1st class Postmasters.
- 23 Assistant Postmasters-General may be authorised to deal finally with certain cases.
- 24 Pension cases of selection grade officials may be submitted direct to the Audit Office by Divisional Superintendents and 1st class Postmasters.

##### CHAPTER III.—STOCK DEPOTS.

- 42 The Postal Stock Depot at Moghalpura should be placed under the officer in charge of the Telegraph Depot.
- 44 The Branch of the Postal Stock Depot at Alipore should be placed under the Controller of Telegraph Stores.
- 46 Forms should be supplied by Government Presses direct to all offices except Branch Post Offices and Inspectors of Post Offices.
- 49 Selection grade Sub-Offices should obtain Money Order Receipt Books half-yearly.
- 52 Making up summer uniforms from material obtained from Indian Stores Department contractors and the distribution to be entrusted to the Jail Department.
- 54 Direct supply of articles by the Indian Stores Department contractors to indenting offices.
- 56 Bicycles and clocks should be obtained through the Indian Stores Department. Time-pieces for the use of the Traffic Branch should be obtained through the Controller of Telegraph Stores.
- 57 Stamps and seals should be supplied direct to the Indenting offices by the manufacturers.
- 58 Large post offices and Railway Mail Service Divisions should obtain their supply of jute and canvas bags direct from the Indian Stores Department contractors.

## PARA.

- 59 Departmental publications should be obtained by selection grade offices from the Government Press.
- 63 Abolition of system of maintaining Index of invoices despatched and issue of closing invoices.
- 66 Consumable articles should be obtained by Head and Sub-offices from the Divisional Superintendents or 1st class Post Offices once or twice a year. The latter should keep sufficient stocks of these articles.
- 67 & 68 Unserviceable articles of stock such as lamps, wicker baskets, bicycles and accessories should be disposed of locally.
- 70 Countersigning officers should be held responsible for the requirements indented for.

## CHAPTER IV.—DEAD LETTER OFFICES.

- 81 & 83-85 Undeliverable registered articles bearing senders' names, registered newspapers and unregistered packets (the names of senders of which can be found by opening them) to be returned direct to senders or agents in India by offices of delivery.
- 84 Undeliverable unpaid or insufficiently paid articles to be returned by all Dead Letter Offices to senders without the intervention of the Home Dead Letter Office.
- 90 Notice in form D. L. O. 15 to be issued by all Postmasters.
- 91 Unpaid and insufficiently paid inland postcards to be destroyed by Head Postmasters.
- 92 Open or insecurely paid letters to be sent out for delivery.

## CHAPTER V.—RAILWAY MAIL SERVICE.

- 109 Delivery offices should be assigned numbers as at Bombay.
- 110 Improved accommodation for Mail offices.
- 111 System of preparing unusual bag invoices to be extended.
- 112-I Mail agency work at certain offices to be transferred to Post Office.
- 112-II Conversion of certain Mail Agents to Mail Guards.
- 113 Abolition or reduction of second check of work papers.
- 114 Abolition of detailed Mail Lists in Record Offices.
- 117 Superintendents of Post Offices should be attached to Railway Mail Service for a period of not less than 5 years.

## PARA.

- 120 Van peons and porters of the Railway Mail Service should be treated as belonging to one cadre.

## CHAPTER VI.—FOREIGN POST.

- 133 Preparation of labelled bundles for certain offices in United Kingdom.
- 134 Avoidance of double handling of insured letters.
- 140 Extension of the Direct mails system and of direct bags.
- 147 Abolition of the Special train for Straits Mails.
- 149 Despatch of eastward mails by ordinary mail train.
- 150 Rangoon town delivery work to be done at Calcutta or in Rangoon.
- 158 & 159 Revision of sorting arrangements at Ballard Pier.
- 164 Scale of overtime allowances for Foreign Post employees.
- 172 Scale of allowances for volunteers required for dealing with Inward Foreign mails.
- 173 Abolition of overtime allowances to certain postmen in Bombay for Foreign mail delivery.
- 176 Standard for preparation of bags by Ballard Pier for inward foreign mails.
- 177 Opening of certain direct bags and bundles at Ballard Pier.
- 178 Despatch of outward foreign mails.
- 179 Splitting up of beats of Foreign mail sections.
- 180 Shifting of the Foreign Parcel section to Ballard Pier.
- 185 Time test for Foreign Registration and Parcel work.
- 186 Customs declaration on parcels received from the United Kingdom to be pasted on the parcels by the British Post Office.
- 187 Preparation of detailed parcel lists to be discontinued.
- 188 Omission of certain columns in form F. P. 1.
- 189 Discontinuance of register of Value payable articles received in respect of C. O. D. outward parcels.
- 190 Bulk entry for registered packets.
- 191 Discontinuance of certificates of payment for C. O. D. articles.
- 192 Discontinuance of issue of intimation of advice of money orders.

## CHAPTER VII.—DIVISIONAL ORGANISATION.

- 204 Second inspection not to be restored.

## CHAPTER VIII.—ORGANIZATION—GENERAL.

- PARA.
- 239 & 240 Revision of stamp vendors' agreements.
- 241 Scale of allowances to Extra-departmental Stamp vendors.
- 242 Replacement of departmental stamp vendors by extra-departmental men in Bombay and Calcutta.
- 244 Sale of stamps by telegraph branch of combined offices.
- 245 Sale of stamps in Mail offices.
- 246 & 247 Use of motor bicycles for clearance of letter boxes.
- 248 Extra-departmental delivery agents.
- 249—253 Arrangements for Mr. Postwallah and Shroff Mahajan Post Office in Bombay.
- 254 Delivery of parcels by contractors.
- 255 Combination of Parcel and Money Order delivery in large towns.
- 257--259 Opening of more booking offices.
- 260 Conversion of departmental Branch Offices into Extra-departmental Sub-offices.
- 266 Superintendents, their Head Clerks and Inspectors to ordinarily remain in their charges for 5 years.
- 267 Answers to questions in connection with inspection of combined offices need not go to the Postmaster-General.
- 268 Departmental offices to be inspected only once a year.
- 269 Reduction of one delivery in Bombay.

## CHAPTER IX.—SIMPLIFICATION OF POST OFFICE METHODS.

- 277 Full particulars of money orders not to be entered in Form M. O. 3 of money orders already detailed in Form M. O. 44.
- 279 Issue of cheques for payments of money orders in large offices.
- 280 Issue of chèques for other transactions.
- 282 & 283 Alteration of Telegraphic Money Order Advice form.
- 287 Bulk entry in Registered and Parcel lists.
- 291 Postmasters to issue notice to senders of leaky articles.
- 295 & 296 Entries on receipts for registered articles.
- 297 Raising of limits of value payable articles to be sent out through postmen.
- 298 & 299 Redirected parcel postage to be credited in cash.

- PARA.**
- 300 Size of inland parcels.
- 301 Preparation of acknowledgment form.
- 302 Senders' address on registered articles.
- 303 Modification of value payable money order form.
- 304 Discontinuance of *Nil* registered lists in Town Sub-offices.
- 305 Raising of limits of powers of Postmasters in deceased depositors' and investors' cases.
- 307 Omission of names of depositors in Savings Bank memos.
- 308 Power of opening of public accounts to be delegated to Head Postmasters in certain cases.
- 309 Closure of Savings Bank account without production of Pass Book.
- 310—312 Recopying of Savings Bank ledgers.
- 312 Opening of Savings Bank accounts for minors by legal guardians.
- 314 & 315 Index register for cash certificates.
- 316 Opening of joint Savings Bank accounts.
- 318 Abolition of (1) Postmen's postage account, (2) Memo. of taxed postage, (3) Memo. of forward postage and (4) Special error book.
- 322 All Branch offices to be authorised to do independent registration and parcel work.
- CHAPTER X.—MISCELLANEOUS.**
- 324 Postal publications to be sold through Treasury contractors.
- 326 Medical leave not to be shown in character sheets.
- 327 Village returns to be prepared in February and August.
- 328 Certificate of correction of Manuals.
- 330 Check of Post and Telegraph Guide by Postmaster.
- 331 Kit Inspection Reports.
- 332—333 Error extracts for petty irregularities.
- 334 Unusual bag invoice to be prepared by carbon process.
- 335 Monthly examination of Sub-account clerk in sorting list.
- 336 Inspection of first class Head offices by Deputies Postmaster General.
- 339 Penalty on mail carriers.
- 342 Supply of extract of List of Indian Post Offices to Railway Mail Service.
- 345 Use of dasuti bags in place of R. C. B. covers.
- 347 Despatch of parcel and packet bags by weighment system.



- PARA.**
- 349 Simplification of Inspection Report forms.
- 350 Employment of contractors for conveyance of mails on runners lines.
- 353 Extension of 'locked bag' system.
- 354-356 Combination and modification of certain statistical registers.
- 357 & 358 Return of acquittance rolls by Sub-offices.
- 359 Pension application of selection grade officials.
- 360 & 361 Extra duty allowance bill.
- 362 Not payable contingent bills.
- 364 Noting of accounts classification on vouchers.
- 365 Noting of periods of leave in Service Books.
- 366-368 Post Office Manuals—Rearrangement of.
- 369-372 Changes in Post and Telegraph Guide.
- 373 Abstract of postal information.

#### CHAPTER XI.—RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING.

*Nil.*

#### CHAPTER XII.—TIME TEST AND ITS APPLICATION.

- 398 Abolition of one man system.
- 399 Escort of mails by post office officials.
- 401 Staff for correspondence branch of large offices is sanctioned out of time test.
- 402 Review of work of Press sorting offices.
- 403 V. P. claims Department in Presidency offices.
- 404 & 405 Fixation of hours of attendance in Mail offices.
- 410 Defects and anomalies in application of Time test.
- 413 Time test for Accounts Branch of Post Offices.
- 415 Time test for Accounts branch of Head Record Offices.
- 416 Time allowance for sorting offices.
- 417 Transcription of destination on vernacular articles.

#### CHAPTER XIII.—STANDARDS FOR DETERMINING THE STATUS OF POST OFFICES.

- 431 Anomalies in application of existing standards to be reported to the Director-General.

#### CHAPTER XIV.—ACCOUNTS.

- 481 Standard for fixing strength of Telephone Revenue accounting offices.
- 482 Abolition of preaudit system.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## APPENDICES.

## APPENDIX A.

The following additional powers may be delegated to Superintendents of Post-Offices and 1st Class Postmasters :—

- ✓ 1. May employ pensioners in non-gazetted appointments in accordance with rules in the C. S. R., without the approval of the Postmaster-General.
- ✓ 2. May grant leave to selection grade officials up to four months and make local arrangements to fill up such officiating vacancies.
3. May purchase railway guides in required numbers for the use of their own offices. Superintendents may also purchase this publication for the use of their Inspectors and Head Offices subordinate to them.
4. May sanction refunds to public of value of coins and currency notes found in letter boxes or post office counter the value of which has been credited to Government in the accounts of the post office concerned.
5. May sanction advances from the General Provident Fund to officials in the selection grade strictly in accordance with the rules. All cases involving a departure from the rules should go to the Head of the Circle for orders.
6. May write off articles of dead stock the original cost of which does not exceed Rs. 50.
7. May introduce or withdraw a locked bag for a village.
8. May grant authority to post offices to do Savings Bank, Registration and Insurance work. No such facility may, however, be withdrawn from any office without the sanction of the Postmaster-General.
9. May sanction overtime allowance to the signalling staff in the Post office.
10. May sanction advances to Inspectors and Overseers for purchase of bicycles up to Rs. 100.
11. May sanction recurring contingent charges on account of Municipal and other rates and taxes except for their own offices.
12. May sanction delivery of mails by runners and mail peons and other inferior servants.
13. May change extra departmental agents who are schoolmasters whenever it is found necessary to withdraw the work from them.

14. May sanction the fixation of allowances to extra-departmental branch postmasters under the point system. All cases justifying a departure from this system should be referred to the Postmaster-General for orders.
15. May authorise post offices to sell British Postal Orders and Departmental publications.
16. May purchase maps plans, etc., up to Rs. 20 in each case.
17. May fix contingent amount of an office according to the formula. All cases not covered by the formula should be referred to the Postmaster-General for orders.
18. May exempt officials under him from furnishing fresh security under rule 220 (as amended by correction slip No. 202, dated 1st June 1933) Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume II.
19. May sanction house rents up to Rs. 25 and also shifting of a post office to a new building provided the total rent paid does not exceed Rs. 25 a month.
20. May condone breaks, etc., in service of menials and all officials they are competent to appoint.
21. May sanction diversion of mail lines within the Division where there is neither extra cost involved nor does it involve a change of budget heading. In the case of mail contract lines this power may be exercised only in respect of contracts the subsidy of which does not exceed Rs. 100 per mensem.

#### APPENDIX B.

The following powers may be exercised by Assistant Postmasters General on behalf of the Postmaster-General :—

(1) May sanction :—

- (a) claims from Departmental officials for actual expenses up to the limit of Rs. 10 for journeys within 5 miles ;
- (b) advance of Travelling Allowance and Pay to Gazette officers on transfer and advance of Travelling Allowance on tour except in cases in which a second advance is required before the first advance has been fully repaid ;
- (c) removal of an office on account of the outbreak of plague and expenditure of removal and rent connected therewith up to Rs. 200 in each case ;
- (d) advance from the General Provident Fund to non-Gazette officials of the Postmaster-General's office ;
- (e) refund of amounts recovered from sureties after the san have been recovered from the fine imposed on the offende Orders on the subject will not issue until after the expir of the period of appeal ;

- (f) in consultation with Director of Telegraphs house rent not exceeding Rs. 50 per month in each case. All cases beyond this limit to go to Director of Telegraphs or Postmaster-General for orders ;
- (g) municipal rates and taxes in respect of Departmental and rented buildings ;
- (h) torch and fuel allowance upto Rs. 5 in each case ;
- (i) payment of Policies, and surrender value of Policies in ~~un-~~contested cases or contracts for monthly allowances ;
- (j) Savings Bank payments of deceased depositors in ~~un-~~contested cases ;
- (k) payment of cash certificates of deceased holders in ~~un-~~contested cases ;
- (l) weightment system despatches involving an expenditure upto Rs. 50 half-yearly in each case ;
- (m) expenditure on the purchase of medicines up to Rs. 100 in the case of any one purchase ;
- (n) repairs to bicycles or tricycles when the charge does not exceed Rs. 50 per machine ;
- (o) payment of bills in respect of articles purchased through the Indian Stores Department and incidental expenses upto Rs. 100 in each case ;
- (p) expenditure on printing in private presses upto Rs. 20 in each case, subject to a maximum aggregate limit of Rs. 250 per annum ;
- (q) writing off the value of counterfeit coins accepted in postal transactions ;
- (r) the writing off of the value of useless or obsolete postage stamps and postal stationery.
- (2) May finally dispose of all proposals regarding revision of establishment of postmen, village postmen and inferior servants ;
- (3) may sign assignment of Life Insurance Policies ;
- (4) may dispose of cases relating to training of postal staff in telegraphy ;
- (5) may authorise branch offices to do registration work independently in addition to Savings Bank and Insurance work ;
- (6) may have the authority to sanction the posting of Accountants in Post offices without reference to Deputy Postmasters-General ;
- (7) may be authorised to submit monthly statistics to the Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs without reference to the Deputy Postmaster-General.

## APPENDIX C.

## INDIAN POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS DEPARTMENT.

\*Indent for the supply of uniforms for the offices in the Division.

First Class Head Office.

Government Telegraph Office.

Serial No.	Name of office.	Designation of officials.	No. of officials.	Date of last supply.	Date on which supply is due in the current official year.	Remarks.

Serial No.	Name of office.	Designation of officials.	No. of officials.	Date of last supply.	Date on which supply is due in the current official year.	Remarks.

\*To be prepared in quadruplicate.

No. \_\_\_\_\_

, DATED \_\_\_\_\_

Checked and submitted to the Postmaster-General, Madras, for approval and favour of causing supply. (Reference to P. M. G.'s letter No. S.U. \_\_\_\_\_, dated the \_\_\_\_\_.)

Superintendent or Postmaster.  
Divisional Engineer, Telegraphs.  
Officer-in-charge, G. T. O.

No. \_\_\_\_\_, MADRAS, DATED THE \_\_\_\_\_ 1933.

Approved and forwarded to the Superintendent,  
returned

Jail,  
Division,

for favour of  
for information

compliance:  
and necessary action.

for Postmaster-General.

N.B.—Measurements for uniforms will be sent by the Divisional Officers direct to the Superintendents of the Jails concerned in standard sizes.

## APPENDIX D.

*Invoice for goods supplied to Government Departments.*

The Postmaster-General, Madras .. .. . Dr.  
 To The Superintendent, Central Jail, Vellore.

Date.	Particulars.	Quantity.	Rate.		Value.			
			Rs.	a. p.	Rs.	a. p.		
17-1-1933	Supplied to the Superintendent of Post Offices, Bangalore Division.—							
	Khaki coats .. .. .	51	0	4	6	14	5	6
	Khaki trousers .. .. .	51	0	3	0	9	9	0
	Khaki blouses .. .. .	75	0	3	6	16	6	6
	Khaki shorts .. .. .	67	0	2	6	10	7	6
	Chapkans .. .. .	2	0	5	0	0	10	0
	Forwarding charges .. .. .					1	1	6
						<u>52</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>0</u>

Rupees fifty two and annas eight only.

(Sd.)

Major, I.M.S.,

STATION CENTRAL JAIL, VELLORE,

Superintendent.

Dated the 17th January 1933.

Accepted and countersigned and debited in the accounts for the month of January 1933.

*Instructions for countersigning officer.*

It is essential for accounting purposes that the entries below be filled in. Failure to do so will result in unnecessary delay and return of this invoice for compliance :—

1. Head of charge (Major minor sub-head primary and secondary units) .. J. II Liveries and uniforms.
2. Month and year to which the charge relates .. .. . January 1933.
3. Designation of the account officer by whom the charge is adjustable .. Deputy Accountant-General, Posts and Telegraphs, Madras.
4. Name of the province to which debitable. Madras.

(Sd.) K. M. ASLAM,

for Postmaster-General, Madras.

## APPENDIX E.

Statement showing particulars of indents for Liveries and uniforms forwarded to the Central Jail, Vellore.

1933-34.

Names of Divisions and offices.	Case marks.	Dates of despatch of indents to the Jail.	Date of supply by Jail.	Remarks.
Madras General Post Office	S. U. 59	4-9-33	6-12-33	
G. P. O. Sorting Madras	S. U. 2/G. P. O.	15-8-33	12-1-34	
S. R. M. 'M' Division, Madras	S. U. 2/RMS	8-8-33	31-1-34	
Malabar Division	S. U. 2/Malabar	26-8-33	10-1-34	

## APPENDIX F.

P. and T. Manual, Volume III.

## SCHEDULE OF ADMINISTRATIVE POWERS.

Schedule 3:

The following administrative powers may be exercised by Range officers.

1. Transfer by way of exchange officials on the same time-scale of pay from one division to another.
2. Order recovery of loss from officials whom they are empowered to appoint.
3. Censure officials whom they are empowered to appoint.
4. Reduce to a lower grade or to a lower stage in the grade or stop the promotion of any official whom they are authorised to appoint.
5. Dismiss officials whom they are authorised to appoint.
6. Place under suspension an official whom they are competent to appoint.
7. Accept resignation of an official whom they are authorised to appoint.
8. Inspect books and accounts of the Sub-account Department of first class head offices.
9. Verify balances of first class head offices.
10. Take possession of records of Post offices.
11. Grant casual leave to all officials under control.
12. Execute and sign contracts on behalf of the Department upto Rs. 500. No contract, the amount of which exceeds Rs. 250 a month to be entered into or renewed by a Range Officer without first submitting the draft of the contract to the Postmaster-General and obtaining sanction to its execution.



## APPENDIX G.

## SCHEDULE OF FINANCIAL POWERS.

*Schedule II.*

The following powers may be delegated to Range Officers :—

1. Creation and abolition of posts of postmen, village postmen and lower grade staff.
2. Grant of boat allowance subject to a limit of Rs. 15 a month in any one case.
3. Expenditure for the carriage of mails upto Rs. 250 per mensem in each case.
4. Advances of the following classes upto Rs. 100 in each case :—
  - (i) For the purchase of horses, camels, bicycles, motor-cycles
  - (ii) For the erection of huts to non-gazetted officials serving in plague infected areas.
  - (iii) For the purpose of house building.
5. Other advances as laid down in Article 337, Posts and Telegraphs Initial Account Code, Volume I.
6. Travelling allowance as for a journey on tour to a Government servant to procure a medical certificate of fitness for field service.
7. Expenditure of a non-recurring character of the following classes :—
  - (i) payment up to a limit of Rs. 30 in each case for the provision of escorts for conveyance of cash.
  - (ii) hot and cold weather charges,
  - (iii) emergent purchase of stationery usually supplied by the Stationery Office upto Rs. 25 per annum.
  - (iv) purchase of furniture and fittings for offices upto Rs. 100 for each article within Budget Allotment.
  - (v) charges up to Rs. 50 in each case for replacing repairing, cleaning, oiling or shifting electric light fittings or fans in an office accommodated in a rented building.
  - (vi) charges in connection with the removal of an office on account of an epidemic up to Rs. 250 in each case.
  - (vii) grant of concessions for anti-rabic treatment at a Pasteur Institute, and
  - (viii) purchase of telephone directories required for official purpose.
8. The following classes of recurring expenditure :—
  - (i) recurring payments of Municipal and other rates and taxes,
  - (ii) fixed stationery charges within the admissible maximum,
  - (iii) rent for rest houses, runners huts, accommodation for placing mail chests at Railway stations subject to a limit of Rs. 20 per mensem in each case.

- (iv) torch allowance, fuel allowance, light allowance, allowance for oiling and cleaning bicycles up to Rs. 10 per mensem in each case, and
- (v) allowance for winding clocks for dusting the offices and supplying drinking water up to Rs. 15 per mensem in each case.
9. Writing off of the value of useless or obsolete envelopes or post-cards in quantities less than a complete packet.

### SCHEDULE III.

#### *Schedule of Financial Powers.*

10. Contingent expenditure up to Rs. 20.
11. Expenditure on the objects specified below :—
- (i) embedding or removing cash chests by local contract up to a limit of Rs. 20 in each case,
  - (ii) repairs to runners' huts or stage huts up to Rs. 20 in each case,
  - (iii) registration of leases in respect of buildings hired for Post offices,
  - (iv) purchase of maps and preparation of plans, charts and sketches not obtainable from the Survey office at a cost not exceeding Rs. 10 in each case,
  - (v) employment of punkha pullers,
  - (vi) repair of vehicles, bicycles or tricycles up to a limit of Rs. 20 in each case,
  - (vii) obtaining copies of judgments and other legal proceedings upto Rs. 20 in each case,
  - (viii) repairs to punkhas and purchase of earthen pots and khas tattis up to Rs. 20 in each office,
  - (ix) fixed stationery charges for an office or R. M. S. section up to a limit of Rs. 5 a month, and
  - (x) emergent purchase of articles of stock not ordinarily available in Stock Depots at a cost not exceeding Rs. 5 in each case.
12. Advances of both pay and travelling allowance to all officials serving under them.
13. Payment of registration fees for all instruments executed within the Range.
14. Closure of a Savings Bank Account without production of pass book.
15. Refunds up to a limit of Rs. 10 in the following cases :—
- (i) refund of postage on articles maliciously sent unpaid for the purpose of annoying the addressee,
  - (ii) refunds of coins and currency notes found in letter boxes or post office counters and credited to account,

- (iii) refund of amounts overpaid by or short paid to a member of the public and found excess in the accounts of the post office, and
- (iv) refund of commission on money order wrongly accepted by a post office for transmission to a place where there is no Money Order exchange.
16. Pay and allowances claimed on behalf of a non-gazetted officer provided that the amount involved does not exceed Rs. 500 and the claim is not disputed and is not more than one year old.
17. Powers to sanction ordinary pensions (including gratuities) in respect of officials on time-scale of pay.
18. Execution of contracts in standard form relating to the business of the post office managed by Contractors when the monthly expenditure involved does not exceed Rs. 100.

#### APPENDIX H.

The duties laid down in the following rules of P. and T. Manual, Volume VIII will be performed by the Range Officers :—

Rules 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 15, 18, 19, 21, 25†, 26†, 27†, 36, 38, 41, 48, 49, 51, 59, 64, 70, 78, 79, 85, 99, 100, 101, 103\*, 104, 105, 106, 107, 109, 111, 111\*|1, 112, 113, 118, 121, 124, 125, 127, 128, 130, 131, 136, 138, 139, 140, 141†, 142, 143, 144, 145\*, 147, 148, 149, 150, 152, 154, 171\*, 174\*, 175\*, 176\*, 177\*, 181, 189, 190, 192, 193, 220, 221.

#### APPENDIX I.

##### RULE 196, P. AND T. MANUAL, VOLUME VIII.

The following table shows the periodical returns and documents that will be submitted by Range Officers :—

Description of return.	To whom submitted.	Periodicity.	Date of submission.
1. Superannuation List (Est. 51)	Head of the Circle ..	Yearly ..	1st September.
2. Returns of pending pension cases (Est. 52).	Do. ..	Monthly ..	1st of each month.
3. Statement of pensions and gratuity cases finally disposed of.	Do. ..	Monthly ..	1st of each month.
4. Gradation List (Est. 27 or Est. 28).	Do. ..	Yearly ..	January of each year.
5. Annual Report .. ..	Do. ..	Yearly ..	Before 1st May each year.
6. Copy of Inspection Remarks in H. O. Order Books.	Do. ..	Twice a year ..	Immediately after inspection.
7. Statement of Inspections of Head offices.	Do. ..	Yearly ..	15th April.

\*Through the Divisional Superintendent.

†For Sub offices.

‡Also by P. M. G.

## APPENDIX J.

## RULES 196 AND 197, P. AND T. MANUAL, VOLUME VIII.

The following is a table of the periodical returns and document which will be received by the Range Officer :—

Description of return or documents.	From whom received.	Periodicity.	Date on which due to be despatched by submitting officer.	How disposed of.
1. Diary .. .. .	Divisional Superintendent.	Fortnightly	1st and 16th of each month.	Filed in Range office.
2. Copy of punishment register	Do.	Monthly	10th of each month.	Do.
3. Statement of complaints ..	Do.	Do.	1st of each month.	Figures included in the monthly summary submitted to P.M.G.
4. Return of pending pension cases.	Do.	Do.	Do.	Included in the return submitted to P. M. G.
5. Statement of pension and gratuity cases disposed of.	Do.	Do.	Do.	Do.
6. Statement of proposed monsoon charges.	Do.	Yearly	1st April	Included in the statement submitted to P. M. G.
7. Copy of inspection remarks in Order Books of Sub-Offices.	Do.	Twice a year	Immediately after inspection.	Filed into Range office.
8. Statement of inspections ..	Do.	Yearly	15th April	Do.

## APPENDIX K.

The duties laid down in the following rules of P. and T. Manual, Volume VIII will be performed by Divisional officers :—

Rules 98, 102, 108, 117, 119, 120, 121, 122\*, 123, 126, 129, 132, 133, 134, 135, 137, 141†, 146, 153, 154, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 172, 173, 179, 180, 189, 190, 191, 192, 194, 195, 216, 217, 220, 221, 236‡, 240.

\*Copy to be kept in Range office.

†For Branch offices.

‡120 days for actual inspection work.

APPENDIX L.

SAVINGS BANK, CASH CERTIFICATES AND GOVERNMENT SECURITIES DEPARTMENTS.

Month.	Date.	Savings Bank Department.				Cash certificate Department.				Government Securities Department.		Remarks.
		Deposits at the office.	Withdrawals at the office.	Deposits in sub-offices in account.	Withdrawals in Sub-offices in account.	Cash certificates issued at the office.	Cash certificates discharged at the office.	Cash certificates issued at sub-offices in account.	Cash certificates discharged at sub-offices in accounts.	Government securities purchased.	Government securities sold.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
			•									

**APPENDIX M.**

**Est. 78 (c).**

**MONEY ORDER DEPARTMENT.**

Month.	Date.	Ordinary Money Orders.		Telegraphic Money Orders.		British Postal Orders.		Transactions of Sub-Offices in account.				Remarks.
								Ordinary Money Orders.		Telegraphic Money Orders.		
		Issued.	Paid.	Issued.	Paid.	Sold.	Paid.	Issued.	Paid.	Issued.	Paid.	
	<b>Total</b>											

*Summary.***(A) Supplementary Notes.**

- (1) Status of Superintendents.
- (2) Restoration of Railway passes.

**(B) Notes of dissent.****(1) Circle Offices.**

- (i) Abolition of Head Assistants in Circle Offices.
- (ii) Formation of Minor Circles.

**(2) Railway Mail Service.**

- (i) Reorganisation.
- (ii) R. M. S.
- (iii) Abolition of Check of work papers.

**(3) Divisional Organisation.**

- (i) Creation of Assistant Inspectors.
- (ii) Enlargement of Divisional Charges.
- (iii) Enlargement of Sub-Divisions.

**(iv) The Range System.****(4) General Organisation.**

Withdrawal of Control of Town Sub-Offices from Presidency  
Postmasters and First Class Postmasters.

**(5) Accounts.**

Establishment of Circle Offices.

**SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES.****Status of Superintendents.**

When recommending the reduction of the status of Superintendents of Post Offices and Railway Mail Service the Posts and Telegraphs Sub-Committee of the Retrenchment Advisory Committee examined the grounds advanced for the maintenance of the first class status enjoyed by this class of officers ever since 1870. The Committee did not however combat the grounds but based their recommendation on financial consideration.

The reduction of status of Superintendents was brought about from the 1st January 1932 and the savings effected under the head Travelling Allowance in J. 1 for the whole of India is only about Rs. 71,000 annually or Rs. 5,916 on an average per month including the Travelling Allowance

of Superintendents, which can by no means be a lion's share, as will be seen from the following figures :—

	Rs.
1930-31 .. .. .	5,58,000
1931-32 .. .. .	4,89,000
1932-33 .. .. .	4,20,000
1933-34 .. .. .	4,26,000

This saving is not worth the feeling of discontent engendered in the minds of a very useful class of officers of the Department, resulting in loss of efficiency. We give below an extract from the opinion expressed by the Postal Officers' Association :

“ In this connection one important point emerges, and that is the baneful effect on the efficiency of the department brought on by the status of the Superintendents having lately been reduced to II class in the matter of T. A. Bearing in mind the qualifications demanded of a Superintendent it is essential that the first class status should be restored to this class of officers. The nature of the Superintendent's duties is such that constant touring is necessary for effective and efficient administration. In the Districts the Superintendent is the chief administrative officer of the department, whose status is almost on a par with the District officers of the Local Government. It is therefore not surprising that the Superintendent is disinclined to suffer the humiliation of travelling with non-gazetted subordinates whom he has to control and the loss of prestige in the eyes of other District Officers.”

We fully endorse the views of the Postal Officers' Association and recommend the restoration of the status of Superintendents of Post Offices and Railway Mail Service to 1st Class at least for the purposes of journeys on tour.

M. SABIHUDDIN.

K. R. BAKHLE.

J. N. DAR.

K. L. N. IYA.

#### Restoration of Railway Passes.

We venture to hazard an opinion that efficiency in the R. M. S. has patently suffered, due to the withdrawal of Railway passes. One important witness, who held charge of R. M. S. divisions for many years and is now on the verge of retirement has stated, that the reason for this deterioration is, that travelling in these days is not as convenient as it used to be. Superintendents are made to travel in second class while they used to get 1st class. In long journeys, one would go in Mail Vans for 2 or 3 hours and then after taking rest in the 1st class would go again to the van. He further added rather pathetically “ In the Mail



Van, I used to check a lot of packets. As a matter of fact I would do sorting myself. The travelling is not now convenient". This sort of feeling is quite general amongst R. M. S. officers. A Superintendent, R. M. S. holds charge of R. M. S. arrangements of half of a major province, like Bombay or the Punjab and of an entire minor province like the C. P. He has thus to travel very extensively. But, since the withdrawal of Railway passes, he does not enjoy the same amenities as he used to do before, his prestige with Railway staff and what is of more consequence, with Railway officers with whom he has to come in contact has materially suffered. He tries to avoid travelling as much as possible and is content to jog along. His surprise visits to mail offices and mail vans have been reduced to an absolute minimum. It may be added *inter alia*, that even officers of Audit and Accounts Service, and Police attached to Railways are given Railway passes which have been withdrawn from R. M. S. officers. We understand, that Railway passes, which were withdrawn from Audit Officers, working in Railways, have been restored to them, on reconsideration. It may also be stated here that according to rule 441 of P. and T. Manual, Volume VIII, a Superintendent, R. M. S. is required to proceed post-haste to the scene of the occurrence of any interruption to the Railway Mail Service, on receipt of intimation of the break or accident. But, in the absence of a Railway pass, he can not often do so now, to the detriment of the Department, for want of funds and has to wait till an advance is sanctioned, for purchase of Railway tickets, especially when the venue of the accident is hundreds of miles away, from the Headquarters. Some-time in the middle of his journey in one direction, he suddenly receives a telegraphic message reporting a break or a serious loss, at the other end and finds himself stranded for want of money. In such cases, he has either to apply to the P. M. G., for advance of T. A. and wait for his sanction by telegram or order an Inspector to take up an important enquiry. The difficulties are real and palpable. We are, therefore strongly of opinion, that with due regard to the efficiency of the Service, Railway passes may be restored to 14 Superintendents, R. M. S. and 14 Headquarters Inspectors, who are constantly on the move.

M. SABIHUDDIN.

K. R. BAKHLE.

J. N. DAR.

K. L. N. IYA.

## NOTES OF DISSENT.

### Circle Offices.

We are not in agreement with our colleagues in their conclusions and suggestions on the following subjects :—

(i) Abolition of Head Assistants in Circle Offices.

The Circle offices at Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Lucknow and Lahore have got a very large staff (over 100 clerks excluding those in Dead Letter Office and Stock Depot) and in our view there must be a second in command to the office Superintendent to control such a large body of clerks and inferior servants. In such Circles where more than one Head Assistant is employed we think one such appointment can be brought under reduction without loss of efficiency.

(ii) Formation of minor Circles.

1. It has been suggested that minor circles should be formed for N.-W. F. and Assam with Headquarters at Peshawar and Shillong respectively. It is also proposed to split up the present Central Circle into 2 minor Circles with Headquarters at Nagpur and Ajmer respectively. With the separation of Orissa, the Bihar and Orissa Circle is suggested to be split up into 2 minor Circles with Headquarters at Patna and Cuttack. Each of these minor Circles is proposed to be placed under a Director of Posts and Telegraphs.

2. There is at present only one Circle under a Director who belongs to the Telegraph Engineering Service. The idea underlying the suggestions is presumably to have more Circles of the type of Sind and Baluchistan Circle.

3. Unity of Control was not discussed with some Heads of Circles ; The Postal Postmasters-General with whom the subject was discussed were definitely opposed to it. Two out of three Postmasters-General who originally belonged to Telegraph Engineering Service observed that the whole system of recruitment would have to be changed and that none but Engineers would have to be recruited ; that it would deprive an officer of that specialised knowledge which the present system gave, that he would lose touch with the technical portion of his duties, that no other country had tried this system ; that fusion was not possible particularly because special staff was required for the development of telephone service and the installation and maintenance of high speed telegraph apparatus, that it was feasible to relieve the present day Divisional Engineers Telegraphs of the responsibility of maintaining unimportant telegraph lines and concentrate all highly paid officers in the maintenance of important lines and apparatus, i.e., lines carrying trunk telephones and circuits. We entirely agree with their views.

4. A technical officer is more costly than a non-technical one. If a technical officer is placed in charge of Postal Branch which is considered to be non-technical, he will either not be able to devote as much time and attention to Postal matters as their importance deserves or the costly technical knowledge will be wasted.

5. The Heads of minor Circles when they happen to come from the Telegraph Engineering Branch may be Junior Officers with little administrative Experience or knowledge of the Department. Very senior officers of the Department would be called upon to work under them, an arrangement not conducive to smooth working. It is common knowledge that a telegraph Postmaster-General is a very senior and experienced officer on the verge of retirement and has well paid and efficient Deputies and Assistants to assist him in his onerous duties.

6. The Heads of minor Circles will not be able to represent the interests of the staff with the same force as those of the major Circles. This was recognised by the Ryan Committee of 1924-25 and its importance has been realised by our colleagues as they have suggested the re-organisation of the Railway Mail Service under an officer of the status of a Postmaster-General.

7. We are not aware what economy was brought about under the formation of the Sind and Baluchistan Circle. There is a feeling however that the administration of that Circle is causing much inconvenience.

8. There were 2 minor Circles in the past and they were amalgamated into the present Central Circle probably because they did not work well. There was a sort of minor Circle with Headquarters at Shillong which was abolished only very recently.

9. The creation of minor Circles would react on the working of the Directorate.

10. We are of opinion that the proposed arrangement is not conducive to economy or efficiency and are therefore opposed to any idea immediate or prospective of placing the Postal Control in the hands of those who have not specialised in Postal matters.

(iii) Reference has been made to the creation of Ranges with which idea we do not agree for reasons to be found later.

M. SABIHUDDIN.

J. N. DAR.

K. L. N. IYA.

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I am of opinion that minor Circles will be an improvement but for reasons given in paragraphs 4 and 5 of the preceding note of dissent I consider that the minor Circles can be better managed by officers from the Postal side.

K. R. BAKHLE.

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## Railway Mail Service.

### Re-organisation of Railway Mail Service.

The Railway Mail Service was created under a Superintendent in 1870 and the head of that Branch came to be known in 1890 as Inspector General of Railway mail Service and he worked also as Assistant Director-General. A deputy to assist him was given in 1905. In the year 1907, the Railway Mail Service was split up into 4 Circles each under an Inspector-General. The number of Circles was reduced to 3 in 1917, and with it the designation of Inspector-General, Railway Mail Service and Sorting was substituted by Deputy Postmaster-General, Railway Mail Service and Sorting. The Ryan Committee of 1924-25 considered the question of once more placing the Railway Mail Service as a whole under the control of a single officer of the status of Postmaster-General and preferred to recommend the placing of the then existing Deputy Postmasters-General under the control of the Postal Postmasters-General. The Railway Mail Service Circles were amalgamated with the Postal Circles from 1927 gradually.

In recommending the placing of Railway Mail Service under the Postmasters-General and thus make it an integral part of the ordinary Postal Administration, the Ryan Committee observed :—

“ The present isolation is the cause of a number of administrative difficulties and is not conducive to economy. In loss and fraud cases both the Railway Mail Service and the Post Office are frequently concerned and the final settlement of such cases and the definite fixing of responsibility is greatly complicated by the fact that the 2 staffs concerned are under separate control, and considerable friction between the 2 branches frequently results. Further the distinction of control makes co-ordination of policy and effort almost impossible.”

It will thus be seen that the Railway Mail Service has had several vicissitudes in quick succession and the present system has not been tried sufficiently long to show up the defects of the system especially so as there are several other factors which have contributed to the alleged loss of efficiency in the Railway Mail Service. The other factors referred to above are—

- (i) aloofness on the part of some Circle officers to visit frequently the Railway Mail Service Offices and sections and come into touch with the staff and the conditions of work.
- (ii) Short tenure of superintendents. The Postal superintendents are now required to be in charge of Railway Mail Service Divisions for 3 years. The knowledge that they shall go back to Post Office after 3 years acts as a handicap in their taking a keen interest in learning the sorting arrangements.
- (iii) The withdrawal of Railway Passes and the Reduction of status of Superintendents to II Class.
- (iv) Abolition of training classes.
- (v) Inadequate attention paid to the Examination in sorting prescribed to be held every half year.

- (vi) Want of facilities to learn and commit to memory the names of sub and branch offices by the cessation of supply of extracts from the Lists of Indian Post Offices and the Posts and Telegraphs Guide. While we admit that some of the causes will be effectively removed by the formation of a separate Railway Mail Service Circle under a Postmaster-General, we think, that most of the defects are capable of being remedied without such a change.

With the formation of a separate Railway Mail Service Circle, the administrative difficulties referred to by the Ryan Committee will recur and the friction referred to becomes still more acute under the proposal of transferring the sorting work of Calcutta and Bombay General Post Offices to the new Railway Mail Service Circle. It may be added that the sorting work at these places is at present done smoothly and efficiently. There is evidence on record that in Calcutta General Post Office the sorting was under the Railway Mail Service but as it did not work well the sorting work was transferred to the control of the Post Office. The Post Office and Railway Mail Service work are closely inter-related; indeed the Railway Mail Service is described as the artery of the Postal system. It seems to us that if the Postal Circles are divested of the Railway Mail Service Control and the control of Telegraph Engineering and Telephone continues to remain under them it would not be logical. The proposed change is not likely to lead to efficiency or economy. Mr. (later Sir) G. P. Roy observed that the most rational organisation would be to amalgamate the Railway Mail Service with the Post Office and the Telegraph traffic with Telegraph Engineering and that this would ensure as far as the Department is concerned a homogeneous organisation and unity of control in its 2 main branches. We are in entire agreement with this view.

K. L. N. IYA.

M. SABIHUDDIN.

#### Railway Mail Service.

1. We are not in favour of divisional and sub-divisional charges as proposed in this report. There are at present 14 Railway Mail Service Divisions in charge of Superintendents, R. M. S. to these will be added Sections now under Superintendent Foreign Post, Sections in Sindh and Baluchistan Circle, Sorting work now done under the supervision of Presidency Postmasters at Calcutta, Madras and Bombay.

2. Each of the 4 Superintendents proposed for the whole of India will have as vast a jurisdiction as each of the late Inspector General of the defunct four Circles had. It will not be possible for the proposed Superintendent to inspect twice a year all important Sections and Mail offices under him, which will be not less than 100, and to examine half yearly in test sorting all sorters under him whose number will be 1,600. Out of 365 days in the year, after deducting 52 Sundays and some 18 other holidays, he will have 295 working days in which time it will be physically impossible to examine 3,200 sorters in test sorting only let alone inspections, investigation, sorting and other administrative work.

3. At present Head Record offices form part of Superintendents office. The proposed sub-divisional officer will do the same work as the present Head Record Clerk in respect of the account branch and in addition will exercise the power of Superintendent in regard to grant of leave, transfer of staff and issue of tour orders. Issue of Tour Orders and sorting orders should not be placed in the hands of 2 different officers. The sub-divisional officer will not be moving out nor will have any inspectors under him ; it will not be possible for him to make successful arrangements for receipt and delivery of high officers' camp mail.

4. The distribution of offices and sections for inspection between Superintendent and Inspectors is made by the Head of Circles. Now that the entire Railway Mail Service will be under one head it is not imperative that R. M. S. units of administration should be so large as to ensure that arrangements made in one part of the unit do not clash with those of others. Since all sorting orders effecting through Sections will be issued by the Director of Mails who will have control over all these units there is hardly any danger of a clash.

5. The proposal to have a separate cadre of Inspectors for checking sorting work and another for investigation is wasteful and not calculated to increase efficiency.

6. We are of the opinion that the existing Divisions can be so re-adjusted as to make it possible for the R. M. S. to take over the sorting work of the 3 General Post offices at Bombay, Calcutta and Madras.

J. N. DAR.

K. R. BAKHLE.

We agree with paragraphs 1 to 5 only.

K. L. N. IYA,

M. SABIHUDDIN.

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#### Abolition of Check of Work Papers.

I do not agree to the proposal contained in paragraph 113 of this report regarding abolition of check of work papers by Record Clerk or Sub-Record Clerks as laid down in Rule 132 of Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VII. The check which the Head Sorter is required to apply as laid down in Rule 27 of Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VII is not carried out and the only check the Head Sorter applies is that prescribed in Rule 68 of the same Volume. In excluding the hours of attendance of sorters in Record Offices from the weekly working hours which determine the number of sets of each section due weight was given to the fact that the work required of sorters during their attendance hours at Record Offices as laid down in Rule 26 of Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VII was not strenuous and that sorters should not be detained in Record Offices a minute longer than absolutely necessary. If the checking of work papers by Record Clerks is done away with and Head sorters are required to check files of work papers of their sets strictly in accordance with the instructions laid down for Record clerks in Rule 132 of

Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VII they will have to put in after each trip, roughly speaking, extra two to three hours in addition to their present attendance hours at Record Offices. In spite of this additional attendance the check of their own work papers by sorters themselves will not be of any value and cannot be regarded as satisfactory. It will lead to manipulation of records and pave way to frauds which would come to light too late to be detected. The work papers after check are kept in the custody of the Record Clerk. If the Record Clerk is not required to apply check to the work papers it is hard to imagine how he can be held responsible for the correctness or completeness of the work papers. This question of abolition of check of work papers by Record Clerks was referred to all Heads of Circles and they were all unanimously opposed to it.

J. N. DAR.

### Divisional Organisation.

#### Creation of Assistant Inspectors.

It has been suggested that a new class of officials designated assistant or Sub-Inspectors should be created in the Post Office to be recruited from the clerical class and paid Rs. 20 as special pay. The assistant Inspectors' duties are proposed to be those which are now performed by overseers and inspection of branch offices which is at present done by Inspector of Post Offices.

A Sub-Inspector, in our opinion, will not be an efficient substitute for overseers duties which involve strenuous and arduous physical labour entailing long journeys on foot. He is primarily responsible for the efficient working of the mail lines employment of runners and disbursement of pay to the Road Establishment. He verifies payment of money orders by village postmen and cash balances of the Branch Offices. The Sub-Inspector will not also be fully equipped for the duties of inspection of Branch offices. An Inspector who inspects these offices should be a man of ability and well acquainted with the procedure of the department to be able to instruct Branch Postmasters in their duties. He should also be in a position, when necessary, to take up immediate investigation in any loss or fraud case on his own initiative. A clerk of the Post Office ordinarily takes 10 years to be conversant with the procedure of the various departments of the Post Office. The present recruitment of Inspectors is made by a careful selection and a stiff examination. We feel that the Sub-Inspector will be unnecessarily costly and unfit for the duties of overseers and in efficient, for those now performed by Inspector of Post Offices. In fact he will be an unnecessary link in the chain and a fifth spoke of the wheel. It must be remembered, that the supervisors on time scale pay with Rs. 20 special pay work under the direct supervision of another Head of the office while the Inspectors or assistant Inspectors will work all by themselves. The considerations which apply to the former are not therefore applicable in the latter case.

#### Enlargement of Divisional Charges.

2. It may be observed that inspection and verifications alone do not constitute the entire work of a superintendent of Post Offices. He is required to control a large staff scattered all over the division, conduct personal

enquiries in a number of loss and fraud cases, and to attend courts in postal prosecutions. He must also attend to public complaints which are more or less 800 per annum in a division besides other multifarious duties.

The principle of fixing divisional and sub-divisional charges on the basis of days of inspections is not, in our opinion, sound and we do not at all subscribe to the reduction of number of divisions and sub-divisions from 103 to 68 and 307 to 232 respectively. We are however, prepared to propose that rule 236 of Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VIII may be modified and a superintendent may be required to spend not less than 100 days on actual inspection as against 85 days prescribed at present. We also agree that an Inspector should spend at least 120 days in a year on actual inspection of offices. There has only lately been a considerable reduction in the number of divisional and sub-divisional charges and if any further reduction of these charges can be made possible by applying this formula with due regard to other important duties of these officers necessary action may be taken. We also do not see eye to eye with the proposal of reducing the number of inspections and verifications by superintendents. A superintendent should always remain in close and personal touch with his subordinates. The present arrangement under which he has to inspect all the Head Offices under his control (including verification of first class Head Offices) and to inspect selection grade sub-offices and sub-offices with one or more clerks as well as a few other sub-offices should not be disturbed. But a superintendent may be required to inspect at least 5 per cent. of Branch Offices as against 10 per cent. prescribed in rule 238 of Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VIII.

We are emphatically of opinion that it will be a false economy, if verifications of Head Offices are withdrawn from Superintendents and Inspectors of Post Offices and if the former are required to inspect only Selection grade Sub-offices and a few others. The statement given below will show that frauds and defalcations increased by leaps and bounds when second inspections were suspended and dropped as soon as they were restored.

Statement showing the Number of Postal officials implicated in offences punishable by law and the total amount involved from the year 1920 to 1928.

Year.	No. of postal officials implicated.	Amount.	Remarks.
1920-21	519	1,06,233	Second inspection suspended June 1920.
1921-22	554	88,767	No second inspection.
1922-23	531	1,20,941	Do.
1923-24	511	1,16,999	Do.
1924-25	569	1,32,942	Second inspection restored in June 1925.
1925-26	460	1,30,942	
1926-27	418	95,036	
1927-28	381	72,982	

In fact, inspections by Superintendents and Inspectors have very salutary effect. And here we venture to quote *in extenso* a few extracts from the



Report by the Posts and Telegraphs Department Committee (1924-25) which consisted of Mr. Ryan (afterwards Sir Thomas Ryan), a Financial Expert, who later officiated as Director-General, Sir Ganen Roy (then Mr. G. P. Roy) an experienced and Senior Postmaster-General who rose to be Director-General and Mr. Booth, I.C.S., Senior Postmaster-General of outstanding abilities.

“ The curtailment of inspections and of the movements of Postal Superintendents may have produced some small economy by saving in travelling allowances but the increase of frauds and consequent progressive demoralisation of the staff seems to be high price to pay for this result.

“ The vital necessity of inspections if a Superintendent is to perform his duties efficiently and the desirability that he should acquire a first hand personal knowledge of local conditions and of offices in his charge has long been recognised by the Department. Paragraph 291 of the Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume II contains specific instructions on the subject.

“ The close personal supervision by the Superintendents of his staff in all parts of his division must result in increased efficiency and the consequent diminution of public complaints and frauds. To curtail a Superintendent's movements and inspections in order that he may have more time to deal with complaints or fraud cases, seems merely to inaugurate a vicious circle.”

“ Apart from these regular inspections to be followed later by subsidiary inspections directed to specific points only, the Committee are of the opinion that Superintendents should be encouraged to move about in their divisions as much as possible and should be given a free hand to inspect any office at any time.”

3. *Enlargement of Sub-Divisions.*—An Inspector of Post Offices should be thoroughly conversant with his sub-division as laid down in rule 264 of Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VIII and if only one or two inspectors remain in a division and the rest are replaced by Sub-Inspectors it will not be possible for the former to make themselves acquainted with the character of their subordinates and to make sifting departmental enquiries. We are not in favour of the account branch of a Post Office being inspected by an account Inspector and the Telegraphs branch by a Divisional Engineer Telegraphs or his subordinates. Too many inspecting agencies are not needed both in the interest of efficiency and economy. Such a system must obviously be wasteful, one officer visiting a place for inspection of the account branch, another for the inspection of the Telegraph branch and yet another for the remaining other branches or visiting the same place at the same time for investigation. A complete report on the inspection of an office as a whole showing its working in all its branches, which is a most desirable thing will not be available. Almost all the superintendents of Post Offices and all the Inspectors of Post Offices have sufficient telegraph training and a working knowledge of the traffic branch and can very well look after combined offices without the aid of an outside agency, as they have been doing so far, without any loss of efficiency and without any

extra expenditure to the department. The divisional or sub-divisional officers of Post Offices should be in close and personal contact with their subordinates in all the branches of the offices under them, and should not be, for the smooth and efficient working of their charge as a whole, divested of their responsibility on the account or the telegraph side of any office under them.

In the course of our enquiries it came to our notice that it was only in one Circle (Bengal and Assam) that Superintendents of Post Offices were asked by a local order to restrict their inspections to Head Offices and Selection Grade Sub-Offices.

Statement showing the number of complaints of each category received in each Circle for 1933-34.

Circle.	Money Order.				Registered articles of letter mail and parcels.				Total.	Unregistered letters.	Savings Bank, Cash Certificates and Life Insurance.	V. P.	Complaints against postal officials.	Insured articles.	Miscellaneous.	Telegraph Traffic.		
	Mispayment.	Delay in payment.	Non-payment and short payment.	Non-receipt of acknowledgments.	Delay in delivery.	Non-receipt.	Wrong delivery and abstractions.	Non-receipt of acknowledgments.										
Punjab and N. W. F.	161	575	130	2,426	3,292	740	89	..	1,996	2,825	1,725	..	1,001	263	..	172	..	
Bombay	..	227	736	58	3,729	5,053	608	..	125	8,227	4,082	4,810	4,301	1,473	329	227	12	81
				Mis. 303			Mis. 122											
Central Provinces..	..	..	..	..	1,173	..	..	..	..	177	896	40	..	..	..	270	..	
Burma ..	..	..	..	..	4,371	..	..	..	..	1,903	1,007	1,212	655	..	163	205	274	
												47 Br. Postal Orders.						
Bihar and Orissa	180	171	1,416	1,158	3,045	84	201	46	196	527	1,102	246	195	..	108	416	59	
				Mis. 120														
Sind and Baluchistan.	..	..	..	..	816	..	..	..	..	1,376	375	8	..	..	..	107	..	
Madras ..	..	..	..	..	4,141	..	..	..	..	4,256	3,227	184	964	..	369	..	1,395	
United Provinces..	162	238	1,576	2,036	4,493	18	694	88	1,223	2,032	1,092	292	323	455	318	161	..	
				Mis. 481														
Bengal ..	923	2,354	6,192	11,321	20,896	2,038	2,298	256	4,472	9,064	7,936	3,589	4,604	430	636	444	..	
				Mis. 106														

Mis.—Miscellaneous.

The attached statement shows that in that Circle the number of complaints was considerably higher than in other Circles and we cannot help connecting the two together.

We have recommended simplification of methods in several cases ; we have also recommended the extension of Extra-Departmental agency system in several spheres. If these are to work successfully, we feel that it is most essential to see that adequate inspecting agency is provided. It is both undesirable and inadvisable to weaken the inspections in any manner. We also feel that the present Inspectors of Post Offices are saddled with a lot of correspondence work and it is necessary to afford relief to them in this respect.

In this connection, we might add that one of the high officers of the Department who has made a recent study of the Postal systems in different countries observed that the area is so vast in our country that we should not depart from the system we have at present of having Inspectors, Superintendents, etc., that our communications are defective and so supervision we must have and strict supervision because our subordinates are not educated very much as in other parts of the world and they have not acquired that sense of responsibility as in other countries, and that we cannot do without the superior staff nor can we reduce them.

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### The Range System.

In considering the proposed re-organisation, we are handicapped by the following disadvantages :—

- (i) This was not included in the questionnaire, and
- (ii) was not discussed with the Heads of Circles, nor were their views ascertained otherwise.

As we had no sufficient time to examine this scheme fully, we give below a few disjointed observations, which will supplement our remarks already made under another scheme of formation of minor circles.

The employment of two agencies, one for purely inspection work and the other for investigation, is wasteful as two officers will, at one and the same time, be visiting one and the same place or going over the same line for inspection and investigation respectively. This method will not be conducive to increased efficiency as one set of Inspectors doing inspections only will never make successful investigating officers. Similarly an Inspector, who has not performed inspection work can hardly detect a fraud or understand the method employed and intricacies involved in fraud, abstraction and loss cases. We are definitely of opinion that separation of inspection from investigation work is bound to deteriorate the existing efficient arrangement under which both investigation and inspection work is carried on by one and the same Sub-Divisional Inspector.

We have already discussed elsewhere the unsuitability of an Assistant Inspector to perform the duties of an overseer whom he is proposed to replace. We doubt very much whether he can perform the inspection work as expected of him, *viz.*, inspection of 15 offices in a month throughout the year which we consider to be well-nigh an impossible feat. Leaving out of count, Sundays and Post Office holidays without ever returning to Headquarters, an Assistant Inspector must complete, in 24 or 25 working days of a month, inspection of 15 Branch Offices in hilly tracts at Kumaun or Kashmir or in sandy deserts of Sind and Rajputana by travelling throughout the year either in fair season or during the monsoons.

The fixation of the number of Inspectors and Assistant Inspectors on the sole basis of number of days actually required for inspection of offices is in our opinion also faulty.

The inspection of accounts branch of Main offices by Accounts Inspectors will be wasteful for the reasons given elsewhere. The Accounts Inspectors cannot verify any Savings Bank transactions with vouchers in their possession as they cannot have pass books pertaining to those vouchers readily available to them in offices which they inspect. The service books, service rolls, pay bills and acquittance rolls as well as contingent and other bills will not, under the proposed account scheme be maintained by post offices.

At present Inspectors of Post Offices complete inspection of a Branch Office in all its branches in one day whereas the Accounts Inspector is allowed to devote two days to the inspection of accounts branch only. Thus for the inspection of a Branch office, the number of which is far larger than all other offices taken together three or four days in all—one by Assistant Inspector, 2 days by Accounts Inspector and one day by Divisional Engineer Telegraphs or Engineering Supervisor in case of a combined office—will be required as against one or two days under the present system of inspection by Inspectors of Post Offices. It is also extremely doubtful whether the Accounts Inspectors will be able to devote to actual inspection work as many as 15 days out of 24 working days in a month throughout the year. The amount of travelling allowance which will be spent on the journeys of 3 officers, *viz.*, Assistant Inspectors or Inspectors of Post Offices, Accounts Inspectors, Divisional Engineer Telegraphs or Telegraph Engineering Supervisors will be very heavy and in no way commensurate with the work turned out by each individually. To restrict the inspection of Superintendent of Post Offices to only Head Offices and Selection Grade Sub-Offices and to make his inspections "very much simpler" by entrusting inspection of accounts branch and traffic branch of combined offices to other agencies is not, to our mind, a wise policy. Besides the standard of number of days spent on actual inspection, there are other factors to determine the strength of Divisional Superintendents and to fix their jurisdiction. The extent of a Division should take into account the staff controlled, the number of offices comprising the Division, the nature and demands of the people, the volume of correspondence and the facilities for movements, etc. Roughly speaking, each Divisional Superintendent will have under him the staff, etc., now controlled by 4 Superintendents of Post Offices. Making allowances even for the increase of work which will devolve on Superintendents by the proposed delegation of

powers as also for the decrease of work that may be brought about by the several recommendations, we feel that the Divisions will be quite unwieldy and the scheme is unworkable.

It is argued, that by taking away inspections of accounts branch and telegraph traffic, the Superintendent's inspection of an office has been made simpler and thus by curtailing the number of days now allowed for the inspection of an office, a Superintendent of Post Offices should take up more offices and his jurisdiction should be increased. The inspection has not been made simpler by dividing it amongst different officers but more complex and less effective. The fact that Divisional Engineers, Telegraphs, or their subordinates can take up inspection of telegraph branch of combined offices in addition to their own duties indicates that they have spare time, and, logically speaking, it will be well utilized in their own sphere of duty if their jurisdiction is enlarged.

The enlargement of jurisdiction of Superintendents of Post Offices by limiting their inspections to Head Offices, selection grade Sub-Offices and a few other offices only, so as to reduce the number of existing 130 Postal divisions to 30, for the whole of India and Burma, will in our opinion be entirely unworkable. Moreover, it may be observed *en passant* that the Government of India announced in Resolution No. 830/833, dated the 24th January 1912 issued by the Department of Commerce and Industry as follows :—

“ The Government of India earnestly desires, that in such steps as may be taken towards the amalgamation of the 2 services (Posts and Telegraphs) all possible protection should be afforded to the personal interests and prospects of the existing staff of both Departments in all grades.”

Now the prospects and personal interests of Postal officers will be greatly jeopardised if minor Circles are created under Divisional Engineers, Telegraphs.

It may also be added, that it has been suggested in the chapter on “ Organization ” of this Report as follows :—

“ We consider that Departmental post offices should be inspected only once a year. The Superintendents of Post Offices should, however, exercise as at present their discretion in the matter of a second inspection of an office which is suspected to be not working satisfactorily.”

But we are at a loss to understand how the second inspection of an office can possibly be taken up with a largely depleted staff of Superintendents and Inspectors of Post Offices proposed in the Report.

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**GENERAL ORGANISATION.****Control of Town Sub-offices in large towns.**

It has been suggested that the town sub-offices should be cut away from the control of the I Class Postmasters and Presidency Postmasters and placed under superintendents of Post Offices as separate division. The present arrangement enables co-ordination in the working of the town sub-offices and the Head office, in the matter of mail arrangements, regulation of cash and in attending to public complaints. We hold the view that the proposal gives rise to considerable amount of friction between two officers and is not at all conducive to efficiency. It may also be of interest to learn from the Report of Rai Bahadur S. C. Gupta that in Great Britain the town offices are under the control of Head Postmasters. We have not had the advantage of the views of various Heads of Circles and in our opinion the adoption of this measure is a retrograde step and we cannot therefore agree with our colleagues in this respect. There is however no objection to the replacement of Inspecting Postmasters by Superintendent of Post Offices under the control of the Presidency Postmasters.

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**ACCOUNTS.****(Establishment of Circle account offices.)***Present arrangements.*

1. Post offices are for account purposes divided into 3 classes, viz. :-

(i) Branch offices which render daily accounts to what is technically known as their "accounts office" which may according to administrative orders be either a Sub-office or Head Office.

(ii) Sub-offices which render daily accounts for themselves and their branch offices to their head offices.

(iii) Head offices which render periodical accounts for themselves and the sub and branch offices within their jurisdiction to the Audit office concerned.

2. The account unit is the Head Post Office which incorporates in its accounts the transactions of the Sub and Branch Post offices under it. On the first of each month, a Cash account is sent by each Head Post Office to the Deputy Accountant General concerned. In addition to the monthly cash account, the Head Office sends daily, weekly or fortnightly as the case may be to the Deputy Accountant-General concerned, Journals of Money Order, Savings Bank and Cash Certificate transactions of its own and its sub and branch offices supported by vouchers.

The monthly transactions of a Head Post Office are posted in the audit office into a classified Abstract which brings out the monthly totals of receipts and payments of all kinds under each detailed and minor head of accounts. The next compilation is made in the Detail Book for each Postal Circle which is posted from the classified Abstracts of the Head Post office composing the Circle.

3. It will be seen that the arrangement of Head and Sub-Post Offices is modelled after the District and Sub treasuries. The present system enables the elimination of a large number of errors committed in the preparation of accounts by subordinate offices and is therefore necessary for efficient work. Under the system, the transactions of subordinate offices relating to Money Order, Savings Bank and Cash Certificate Departments are once checked in the Head Offices and again in the audit office. We take it that it is this duplicate check which the proposed establishment of Circle account office aims at removing.

#### *Proposed Arrangements.*

4. In the proposed scheme, Post Offices are divided into two classes, Main and Branch. Every Post Office performing Savings Bank work will function as a main office and all others will be branch offices in account with some main office. The main offices will forward their daily accounts to the Circle account office at the Headquarters of each Circle where the accounts will be compiled. The audit will in effect be separated from accounts and the latter is proposed to be placed under the Financial Adviser. Besides the Circle accounts offices at the Headquarters of each circle, there will be a Central money order audit office, or in the alternative a money order clearing accounts office where the audit of money orders issued in one Circle and paid in another would be carried out. It has been suggested that suitable machinery after selection in western countries be installed in Central Money Order Audit Office. A proposal to have audit Inspectors to take over all inspection of accounts work in Post Offices is also made. The work in connection with the preparation of Pay Bills is proposed to be transferred to Superintendents of Post Offices. Foreign money order accounting and Telephone Revenue Accounting are also proposed to be taken over by these accountant offices. The scheme claims to be economical and efficient. These aspects will now be examined.

#### *Economy.*

5. Experiments so far tried have shown that the separation of accounts from audit always resulted in Extra Expenditure. In more than one case, the accounts which were separated from audit have been again amalgamated. It is therefore doubtful whether the proposal now put forward will result in economy.

6. So far as accounts and sub-accounts work is concerned, the existing work is redistributed between the office of the Superintendent and the Circle accounts office. There is therefore no saving. A portion of the staff from audit office dealing with the preparation of classified accounts will also be drafted into the Circle account office. By a consideration of this fact one cannot expect a Saving of staff but only a redistribution of the existing staff. The Head Offices are at present sending their accounts once a month and in the proposed arrangement, they will have to send daily. There is therefore additional work.



7. As for money order transactions, there is a duplication of work only in respect of sub-office transactions, i.e., Sub-Office transactions are once checked in the Head Office in detail before the figures are incorporated in the Head Office accounts and they are re-checked in a curtailed form in the audit office. This duplication can be avoided even under the existing system. The Head Offices may cease to exercise a detailed check in respect of Sub-Office transactions and the existing audit offices may continue to exercise the check as at present or may be called upon to exercise the check in the manner intended to be done in the Circle Account office. As regards the Head Office transaction, there is no duplication of work even under the existing procedure. In case the Circle Account Office proposes to exercise a detailed check including the check of comparison between copies of money order receipts and issue lists, the new arrangements will involve additional work so far as Head Office transactions are concerned. It will thus be seen that the duplicate check can be abolished under the existing procedure while under the proposed arrangements there is a certain amount of additional work.

8. The question of double sets of ledgers stands by itself and should be considered on its own merits. In so far as Savings Bank transactions are concerned, the proposed arrangement has got the following defects :—

- (1) In spite of all special arrangements that may be made delays to some extent are unavoidable owing to time of transit particularly between the offices situated far off and the Circle account offices. Further when one Central office has to deal with the transactions of thousands of offices scattered all over a Circle delays are sure to happen in Circle account offices in the receipt and disposal of correspondence on the subject. The very magnitude of the office will detract from promptitude.
- (2) The proposal includes a suggestion to issue Service telegrams in cases in which depositors close their accounts and to reduce the number of such telegrams it has been suggested that the depositors should be advised to leave some nominal amount in their accounts thereby allowing time for the Post Office to get instructions by Post from Circle account office regarding interest etcetra. But the depositors with small balances are not likely to wait for the closure of their accounts and in the case of those with big balances, the interest may be a considerable amount, the payment of which they would desire to have immediately. In this manner the issue of service telegrams will be necessary in a large number of cases and this is an additional cost. There will also be some inconvenience to the public in spite of the proposed arrangement for the issue of service telegrams.
- (3) Under the existing arrangement the specimen signatures of Depositors who have transactions at Head Office are compared only once in the Head Office itself ; under the proposed arrangement, the specimen signatures will have to be compared in all cases and to this extent the proposed arrangement carries extra work with it.

- (4) The preparation of Savings Bank acknowledgments for deposits made in the present 252 Head Offices would be an additional work and there would thus be a substantial increase in Service correspondence the increase of which was viewed with great alarm recently.

9. (a) In respect of Cash Certificates there is no duplicate record prepared in Head Office. The continuity of serial numbers is checked in the Head Office in respect sub-Offices issue transactions. The correctness of amounts credited and debited on Cash Certificates issued and discharged at sub-Offices is checked once in the Head Office and again in audit office. It is not necessary to disturb the existing procedure if it is intended to dispense with one of the 2 checks.

(b) Under the proposed system, Cash Certificates shall have to be supplied by Circle Office or Circle account office. In either case separate books of invoice will have to be maintained for Cash Certificates supplied to main offices which number over 3,000 in some Circles. We would thus be introducing a procedure of centralising this work while in the case of stock Depots. We have recommended decentralisation.

10. In so far as Foreign money order work and Telephone Revenue accounting are concerned, there is only redistribution of work and therefore no savings can be expected in the new scheme.

11. As against the savings that may accrue under the proposed scheme by (1) the reduction of status of Postmasters, (2) by the enlargement of jurisdictions of Divisional Superintendents, and (3) by the abolition of one set of ledgers, extra expenditure under the following heads would be necessary if the new scheme is brought into effect :—

- (a) The Head Postmasters are at present required, to check personally the accounts of subordinate offices in addition to their other duties. Separate staff for this work would be required in the Circle account office.
- (b) Investigation, enquiries Inspection will be divorced from accounts inspection with the result that the audit Inspectors and the administrative officers would be traversing the same area over again, resulting in overlapping of work and extra expenditure on Travelling Allowance.
- (c) The account bags and cash bags generally move together under the present arrangements. In the proposed scheme, additional bags shall have to be introduced in a very large number of cases for the movement of cash.
- (d) Cases of deceased depositors in Post Office Savings Bank are at present disposed by Postmasters and it has also been suggested elsewhere to delegate greater power to them so that the work would be decreased substantially in Circle offices. In the proposed scheme, references to Circle account office at least twice in respect of each such case would be necessary once for ascertaining the balance on the date of death and a second time for the calculation of interest. There would thus be an increase in dead weight correspondence.

- (e) Acquittance Rolls go at present in account bags and are returned in them to Head Offices. Under the proposed arrangement these will have to go from offices of Superintendent of Post Offices to main offices and again from Circle account offices to offices of Superintendent. Thus the dead-weight correspondence would further increase.
- (f) Under the proposed arrangements, thousands of account bags would be moving daily to and from Circle account offices and they shall travel over long distances, e.g., 3,125 account bags would be going to and from Calcutta every day. It is just possible that this would necessitate additional mail van accommodation.
- (g) More service telegrams over long distances would be frequently passing in connection with frequent changes in the rates of exchange for Foreign money orders and British Postal Orders.
- (h) When work in connection with the Savings Bank deceased depositor's cases, Pay Bills, Acquittance Rolls Service Records and Security Bonds is transferred to Superintendent's offices, there would be a demand for mere space involving payment of additional rent.
- (i) The Post Office staff work on the basis of 8 hours a day. The accounts offices and the Superintendent's offices generally work for shorter hours. The transfer of any work from the Post Office to either the Circle account offices or the Superintendent's offices will necessarily mean more staff, i.e., more expenditure.
- (j) When the Circle Account Offices are placed under the Financial Adviser, his office shall necessarily be in the Imperial Secretariat Buildings where the expenditure on House Rent is not negligible.
- (k) Under the proposed scheme, every main office shall prepare a bundle or bag for Dead Letter Office and in case the Central Dead Letter Office proposed elsewhere materialises several thousands bundles would be daily going to Central Dead Letter Office necessitating more mail van accommodation.
- (i) Any restrictions or delay in the withdrawals will tend to make the Post Office Savings Bank unpopular.

#### *Efficiency.*

12. "The Postmaster is not only responsible for the correctness of the accounts rendered by the subordinate offices which are incorporated in his own accounts but he should also ascertain from their accounts whether the subordinate Postmasters understand and perform their duties in an efficient manner. He is expected to bring to the notice of the Superintendent or Inspector any laxity or continued or repeated irregularity noticed by him and to report to the Superintendent the names of subordinate Postmasters who are incompetent. If he has reasons

to doubt a subordinate Postmaster's honesty, *e. g.*, if he believes that credit is not given for Postage recovered on insufficiently taxed articles or that money is otherwise misappropriated he shall communicate his suspicions to the Superintendent or Inspector. The Postmaster should always be prepared to co-operate with the Superintendent in applying tests to detect fraud prevent detention to articles and the like." We feel that the existing organisation is best adapted for the performance of the duties detailed above and the proposed Circle account offices can only be responsible for the correctness of the accounts. In our opinion they will not be able to exercise the close control which the Postmasters do at present.

13. "One of the most important duties of a Head Postmaster is to make satisfactory arrangements to provide his sub offices with funds and relieve them of collections in excess of their authorised maximum balances." Under the proposed scheme, the daily accounts would be going to the Circle account office while the Cash would be moving between main offices. The cash offices will not be able to exercise any satisfactory check unless separate accounts and elaborate checks are prescribed for the purpose.

14 (a). The unit of account proposed is an office which performs Savings Bank work. Out of a total of 23,781 Post Offices 11,377 were not performing Savings Bank work on 1st April 1934. The unit may be a branch office in charge of extra Departmental agent, a sub office or a Head office like the Calcutta General Post Office. The Circle account office would be treating all these alike in the matter of check over daily accounts. Thus the minute check which is now exercised over the account of small offices will no longer be possible in the new scheme and this will tend to inefficiency.

(b) The proposed unit is not a constant but a variable, Savings Bank powers are granted to or withdrawn from Postmasters very frequently by the administrative and with each such change, the main office becomes a branch office and *vice versa*.

15. The present Head Offices are convenient units for the supply of (i) Money Order receipt books (ii) British Postal Orders (iii) Postal publications for sale (iv) Cash Certificates (v) Director-General's Circulars, etc. They also afford quick means of effecting transfer of Cash Certificates from one person to another and of sanctioning discharge of Cash Certificates held by minors.

16. The Inspecting and investigating officer is at present one and the same. Under the proposed scheme the audit Inspector shall report to the administrative officer through his head office and then the administrative machinery moves, surely a procedure which is not conducive to efficiency.

17.(a) The existing organisation affords excellent avenue for reaching the masses and popularising new ventures like the Cash Certificates, Government Loans, Postal Orders, etc. It also affords ready and convenient means to instruct Postmasters in villages and small towns in that the Head Postmasters are often approached for local guidance. This would not be possible in the new scheme.

(b) The Postmaster's duties described in Rule 57 of Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI are reproduced below :—

In Head Offices Postmasters are required to keep themselves acquainted with the actual time of arrival of the mails despatched by them to their Sub-Offices so that they may be in a position to give correct information when enquiries are made of them by officers who travel in the interior. It is not sufficient for a Head Office Post-Master in such a case to be content with giving the prescribed timing of the mail he should give the actual time that the mail takes at the season of the year when the enquiry is made so that the officer making the enquiry may show when he may really expect to receive mails at the sub-office.

18. The Pass Books are sent to Head Offices at least once a year and the check of balances entered in the Pass Books with those in the ledgers is rightly considered to be of very great importance. (Rule 492 of Posts and Telegraphs Manual, Volume VI). This check would no longer be possible in the new scheme. In our opinion this involves great risks of loss and fraud.

#### *General.*

19. The question of a central money order audit office was considered in the Post on the recommendation of Messrs. Price Waterhouse & Co., Chartered Accountants, who specially came to India and examined the Post Office Accounts system in about 1920. It was then found that there would be little or no savings on the Post Office side. We are not aware of the circumstances under which the proposal was dropped. We have however no objection to its adoption if it results in economy.

20. (a) The abolition of Head Office Savings Bank ledgers was considered on no less than 3 occasions. First in 1909 on the recommendation of Postal accounts Committee then in 1920-21 on the recommendation of Chartered Accountants Messrs. Price Waterhouse & Co., and latest in 1929-30 on the initiative of the Government to cheapen the cost of Savings Bank work. After a thorough practical study of the question the scheme was pronounced to be unsound in principle inasmuch as it would lead to great delay and risk of fraud and dishonesty in Savings Bank transactions thus causing inconvenience to the General public and also result in a serious disadvantage to them. It was not adopted on account of (i) small total economy (ii) increased risk of loss to Government and (iii) inconvenience to public. The methods suggested to overcome delay in the new scheme are not in our opinion quite safe and all these objections therefore hold good even today.

(b) The question of Central Savings Bank was also considered and given up on account of increase in cost.

21. Reference has been made to cost of money order and Savings Bank transactions being high. In so far as money order transactions are concerned, the cost is not arrived at on the basis of the actual staff employed on that class of work but on time factors allowed by the Bewoor Time Test. We need hardly say that in many offices, the staff employed on money order work is less than what is permissible under

the Time Test. As for Savings Bank transaction, this question was specially examined and it was found that even in countries where the accounting work is centralised, the cost of Savings Bank transaction was much more than what it is in India. We need hardly add that with the introduction of new scales of pay the cost would gradually go down.

22. For reasons explained above we consider that the centralisation of accounts in the manner proposed is not conducive to economy or efficiency. The Posts and Telegraphs Department has always been looked upon with respect and trust by the public. The Postmasters as a rule serve as an example to subordinates in their honesty, devotion to duty and service to the public and to reduce their status is highly undesirable. We offer some proposals which tend to bring about a certain amount of economy without loss of efficiency.

#### *Suggestions.*

23. We have already observed that it is uneconomical to transfer any work from the Post Offices to either the Superintendent's offices or the proposed Circle accounts offices. It therefore follows that if any work which is now done in audit offices is transferred to Post offices or steps taken to reduce the work in audit offices, economy can be secured. We venture to make the following suggestions for the consideration of Government :—

- (i) The preparation of classified abstracts, can with advantage be transferred from the audit offices to the Head Post Offices. On the Telegraph traffic and Engineering sides, classified accounts are sent to audit offices and there is no reason why on the Post Office side this work should not be done. Perhaps the present accountants in the post Office may require guidance or training for not more than a month. With the classified abstracts prepared in Post Offices, the elaborate procedure recently prescribed for reconciliation of fluctuating charges will be greatly simplified if it is not rendered altogether unnecessary.
- (ii) We would also suggest that it should be possible to reduce the check of totals of lists of money orders by comptometers in audit offices to a considerable extent as is done in respect of check of money order commission.
- (iii) If 27 men are actually required in Calcutta audit office to do the work performed by 13 men in Calcutta General Post Office the methods adopted in the audit office would require an investigation with a view to simplification. We suggest this should be done.
- (iv) There is a feeling in the minds of some that the Post Office accounts are prepared more for the convenience of audit than for the requirements of the Department. As an example we may observe that there are scarcely any official in the Postal Branch of the Department who is granted a fixed Travelling Allowance. The audit requires a certificate on every Travelling Allowance Bill that the official is not in receipt of a fixed Travelling Allowance. We feel

that it should not be impossible to get the audit officers view problems from the accounts point of view, appreciate the increase of work which is otherwise avoidable and remedy the situation.

- (v) We would recommend the introduction of Pay in slips in place of Savings Bank acknowledgments if on enquiry it is found that the number of illiterate depositors is very small.

24. The example of U. S. A. which is referred to in the matter of accounts should lead to the logical conclusion of one Central account office for the whole of India, which is unthinkable. The use of machinery in a country where labour is both cheap and plentiful is of doubtful value. We are reminded of the Ryan Committee's observation that the Foreign organisations when plucked up by the roots and transplanted to this country fail to flourish.

25. Summarised our conclusions are : the present system of accounting is simple, economical and efficient that some economy can be brought about by the adoption of the suggestions made, that the proposed scheme is fraught with great risks of loss to Government and inconvenience to the public and that it will neither be economical nor will it conduce to efficiency.

26. The Joint Parliamentary Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform (1933-34) observe that " in India, Accounts and Audit are carried out by a combined staff so that the Auditor General has functions in relation to Accounts as well as to Audit. An experiment was tried in recent years in one Province of separating Accounts from Audit but was abandoned on the ground of expense. It is desirable that the present centralised system of Audit and accounts should be maintained ".

27. The proposal was included in the questionnaire. Many of the witnesses observed that they could not understand the full scheme. Several Postmasters-General and almost all the Service Associations were definitely opposed to it. One of the Postmasters-General remarked that he had studied the accounts system in 3 or 4 western countries and that in his opinion there is no other system to beat our Post Office accounts system which is absolutely perfect. One of the associations expressed the apprehension that the present four Audit Offices managed by 12 officers (4 Deputy Accountants General and 8 Assistant Account Officers) would be replaced by 18 officers of nearly the same grade besides one or two for Central Accounts Office.

28. In these circumstances, we are by no means convinced of the need or utility of Circle Account offices and are therefore opposed to the radical change in the system of accounts which has stood the test of time so admirably.

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*Minor Matters.*

- (i) Recruitment of Departmental candidates for appointments of Superintendents. We consider that the existing proportion should continue.
- (ii) Treatment of Time Tests as confidential. The Time Tests are not applied as rigid formulæ. There is no advantage in treating them confidential but it is likely to engender suspicion.
- (iii) Removal of Foreign Parcel work to Ballard Pier. We think this is not feasible.
- (iv) We are slightly in disagreement with paragraph 347 in the Miscellaneous chapter of the Report and in our opinion parcel bags should not be despatched by weighment system.

(Est.—173-1|35.)

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