

	Ordinary Telegrams.				Press Telegrams.				Government Telegrams.			
	Number.	£	s.	d.	Number.	£	s.	d.	Number.	£	s.	d.
1880-81.	983,702	63,851	18	4	74,640	*7,430	2	7	246,370	27,021	3	8
1881-82.	1,094,638	68,435	18	5	121,211	7,089	9	9	222,923	22,737	16	4
Increase ...	{ 110,936 11·27 p. c.	4,584	0	1	46,571 62·39 p. c.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Decrease ...	{ ... ...	...	...	...	...	340	12	10	23,447	4,283	7	4
						4·57 p. c.			9·51 p. c.	15·85 p. c.		

In Table No. 22 the value of the ordinary messages for the year is put down at £69,049 3s. 7d.; which, however, included £613 5s. 2d. on account of telephone exchanges.

The Telegraph revenue from all sources was £78,116 18s. 8d., and the expenditure £87,457 18s. 4d. The expenditure, therefore, exceeded the cash receipts by £9,340 19s. 8d.; but taking into account the sum of £712 1s., fees collected on money-order telegrams, but not transferred, and £22,737 16s. 4d., the value of the Government telegrams, the gross earnings of the Telegraph amounted to £101,566 16s., or, in other words, the operations for the year resulted in an apparent profit of £14,108 17s. 8d., as may be seen by a reference to the debtor and creditor statement, Table No. 30. For 1880-81 there was a debtor balance of £1,355 4s. 3d.

The current year's revenue has been estimated to yield £85,000.

32,474 telegrams of the urgent code, of the value of £4,446 18s. 4d., were forwarded. The average value of each message was a fraction under 2s. 9d., against 3s. for the former year. Compared with the urgent telegrams forwarded in 1880-81, this class of messages fell off by 916 in number, and £555 15s. in value.

The number of delayed telegrams forwarded was 112,776, against 88,881 the previous year, an increase of 23,895, or 26·86 per cent. The increase, it may be remarked, was considerably higher than in any preceding year.

The value of the services performed for other departments, which amounted to £22,737 16s. 4d., was £4,283 7s. 4d. less than the previous year. This is satisfactory, because it has been evident that the wires are used too freely, if not needlessly in some cases, for the transmission of Government messages. A further and still larger reduction would follow were it the rule that brevity, consistent with clearness, should be observed in all public-service telegrams, and the wires never resorted to when corresponding by post would answer equally well. The Government telegrams forwarded last year were equal to nearly one-fifth of the number and one-third of the value of the ordinary messages, and over a fifth of the total number of ordinary and Press messages.

Table No. 21 gives the mean proportion for the whole colony of the number of telegrams sent to every 100 letters. It will be observed that the number of telegrams increased from 9·71 in 1880-81 to 13·00 in 1881-82, proving that there had been a decided recovery from the trade depression which prevailed during 1880-81. Dealing with districts, Westport had the highest average, with 37·17 telegrams to every 100 letters; and New Plymouth next, with 30·64; while Nelson had fallen from 31·97 to 22·33. The proportions for the four principal centres were—Auckland, 11·14; Wellington, 22·75; Christchurch, only 7·35; and Dunedin, 10·27. The number of districts having been increased from ten to seventeen, it is impossible to make any reliable comparison; but compared with former averages the mean proportion of 13·00 for the year was small. This fact was no doubt attributable to the increased frequency of mail communication. The comparatively high average for Wellington would be due to the large number of Government messages transmitted. The proportion for 1877-78 or the whole colony was 20·71, and 19·64 for 1878-79.

14,241 money-order telegrams, for £55,516 2s. 10d., were transmitted, at a total cost to the remitters of £1,637 7s. 8d., or 2·94 per cent. The fees for the telegrams amounted to £712 1s., and the balance, £925 6s. 8d., represented commission. The year's transactions showed a decrease of 256 orders, and £2,819 9s. 1d. in amount. Table No. 28 gives the number and value of these orders, sent from offices within each of the postal districts. Auckland continued to make by far the greatest use of the money-order telegraph system, having sent 19·80 per cent. of the orders; Wellington is next, with 13·05; Dunedin, 10·39; Christchurch, 10·41; Napier, 6·39; and Wanganui, 8·22 per cent.

Telegraph offices were opened at Albury, Belgrove, Kamo, Pungarehu, and Parihaka; and telephone stations established at Henley, Martinborough, Nuggets, and Tokatea. The number of telephone stations open was 19.

The offices at Foxhill, Okato, Rabotu, and Riverhead were closed.

The total number of stations, including telephone stations, open at the end of the year for the transaction of public business was 234, a net increase of 7 on the number for the previous year.

The number of miles of line maintained during the year had increased from 3,758 to 3,824; the average cost for maintenance per mile was £4 17s. 4d., against £6 6s. 7d. for 1880-81.

The number of miles of wire increased from 9,587 to 9,653, which with 2,820 miles of duplexed wire gave 12,473 miles as the available wire accommodation.

With a desire to place the service on a more satisfactory basis by improving the position of the employes in the matter of pay and status, it has been decided to introduce a system of classification, the need for which has become more apparent every day. The initial steps have already been taken, and it is hoped the work of classifying may be completed during the year.

Reference was made in last report to the introduction of the telephone, and to the possibility of extending the telegraph system, through its agency, to remote districts, which otherwise would not be accorded the benefits of telegraph communication. The results which followed this decision have been most encouraging.

Anticipating that the telephone would be an important factor in the future extension of the telegraph system of the colony, authority was obtained under "The Electric Telegraph Act 1875 Amend-

* Including £1,647 8s. 4d. for special wire charges.