

The oscillation of the wires on the Blenheim and Tophouse line, and the consequent chafing of the line-wire at the insulators, necessitated the overhaul of this line. The weak sections were cut out, and the main wire rebound throughout.

On the Tophouse and Reefton section considerable repairs were effected during the months of September and October, consequent on the injury the line sustained during a heavy snow-storm in the month of August.

Representations having been made by the settlers residing in the Motupiko and Upper Motueka Valleys as to their isolated position in respect to the telegraph, it has been decided to run a line of nine miles in length from Belgrove to the junction of the Motueka and Motupiko Rivers, to be worked by telephone. This line has been pegged off, and its construction will be proceeded with shortly.

A short line of a mile and a half in length, worked by telephone, has been constructed between the Nelson Post Office and the Port, which has proved of great convenience to the department and the public.

It is intended to run another wire on the existing poles between Motueka and Upper Moutere, and to open a telephone office at the latter place. The building is now in the course of erection.

The office at Blenheim was amalgamated with the post office in June last, and placed under the charge of the Chief Postmaster.

The office at Foxhill was moved to Belgrove, and combined with the railway terminus office at that place.

The telephones between Motueka and Collingwood continue to work in the most satisfactory manner, and without interruption.

All other lines on this section are in good order, and no special outlay has been made on them beyond the ordinary expenditure for maintenance.

AUCKLAND LINES (INCLUDING THE WAIKATO AND LINES NORTH OF AUCKLAND, AND AS FAR NORTH AS GRAHAMSTOWN VIA THE THAMES).

All lines have worked well in this district during the year, being entirely free from faults of any consequence.

The section between Auckland and Coromandel has required no special attention.

The Waikato line has been repaired from Mercer to Hamilton; the principal work that had to be done was clearing scrub and gorse, and rebinding and slackening the wires where chafed. The section between Kihikihi and Alexandra has also been overhauled. The poles in this section being all kauri, no less than 33 per cent. of them had to be blocked.

The Manukau Heads line is now being repaired, and has been examined as far as Waiuku. The defective kauri poles are being blocked with totara and puriri; fully 40 per cent. of the poles so far examined have required this treatment.

The northern lines have been overhauled from Port Albert Junction to Hokianga, and to Whangaroa, on the Mongonui line: about an average of 6 per cent. of the kauri poles have been blocked throughout, as well as a great deal of ti-tree cleared away from the poles and under the wires.

An ordinary office has been opened at Kamo on the Bay of Islands line, and Tokatea has been reopened as a telephone station. The office at Riverhead has been closed, being no longer required for railway purposes. A railway telegraph station will be opened at Taupiri as soon as the erection of the office is completed.

It has been decided to open telephone stations at the following places as soon as the lines are completed and a supply of telephones have been received: Aratapu, Devonport, Kaeo, Kirikiriroa, Kohukohu, Mangawai, Northcote, Takapuna, Tiki, and Turua.

The following extensions have been carried out during the year: Railway wire, Auckland to Drury, 22 miles of wire; railway wire, Green Lane, Ellerslie, and Papatoitoi loop-lines, 2 miles of line and 4 of wire; Thames to Paeroa, 16 miles of line and 21 of wire. During the erection of this line 5 miles of the main south line were removed on to the road, it having been erected along an old track now unused. Thames to Turua, 2 miles of line and 9 of wire; Coromandel to Tiki, 2 miles of line and 4 of wire; Auckland and North Shore, 10 miles of line and 17 of wire; Whangaroa to Kaeo, 5 miles of wire. Total extension, 32 miles of new line and 82 of wire, exclusive of the Auckland Telephone Exchange.

Sixteen miles of telephone-exchange wires have been erected in the City of Auckland, connecting sixty-seven subscribers.

FROM GRAHAMSTOWN TO TENUI (INCLUDING THE BRANCH LINES NAPIER TO GISBORNE, MAKETU TO OPOTIKI, AND WAIPIKURAU TO KOPUA).

Beyond the ordinary repairs by linemen little special work has been needed during the past year.

The overhaul and repair of the section between Thames and Waterford, and of that between Tenui and Waipukurau, referred to in last year's report as in progress, have been duly completed. On the former section, namely, Thames to Waterford, a few kauri poles still require butting with totara blocks, and this work will shortly be in hand, the materials for the purpose being now in course of delivery. For the maintenance of this, as previously mentioned, its ultimate removal to the superior route *via* Ohinemuri has been held in view, and such repairs as have from time to time been needed were restricted to those immediately contingent to upholding telegraph communication.

The other sections examined are Tauranga to Maketu, and Taupo to Waipukurau. No important repairs upon these sections were required, the work involved being principally cleaning and renewing insulators where necessary, together with removal of undergrowth from proximity to the poles, as a