

From Taradale the telephone circuit has been extended to Puketapu, a distance of four miles.

From Hastings to Pakipaki four miles of iron poles have been erected alongside the railway-line for the accommodation of the Railway Department. The railway wire has also been completed as far as Tahoraite; total length, about 82 miles.

A racecourse-wire has also been erected between Napier and the Napier Park Racing Club's ground, a distance of two and half miles. The club pays interest on cost of construction.

A wire has been run between Waipukurau and Waipawa, connecting the residences of the house surgeon and the consulting surgeon in connection with the Waipukurau Hospital; length, $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

The following extensions are in progress: Line from Tahoraite to Woodville, 15 miles; and branch line from Woodville to Kumeroa, eight miles.

About four and a half miles between Waipawa and Waipukurau have been shifted to the road.

During the year some 213 poles between Waipukurau and Tenui have been butted.

Between Waipukurau and Takapau about 180 20ft. poles were removed for use in the Kumeroa line, and replaced with larger poles. This will increase the strength and wire-carrying capability of the line.

The following sections have been examined and repaired: Thames to Katikati, 57 miles.

Tauranga to Rotorua: This section, as well as that between Maketu and Opotiki, suffered considerably during the volcanic eruptions of the 10th June, 1886. 130 poles were butted, and the wires cut and replaced.

Napier to Tarawera section cleared, &c. Gisborne to Napier cleared, &c.

Wellington District.

The lines in this district call for no special remark.

The Cook Strait cables still remain in good working order, the Wanganui-Wakapuaka cable being exceptionally high in its insulation tests.

The termination of the subsidy given to the Eastern Extension Company for the cable between Wakapuaka and Sydney relieves the company of its obligation to lend to the Government its cable-repairing ship, the only expense to the Government being the maintenance of the ship and extra insurance risk. This being the case, it will be a matter for the consideration of the Government whether a cable-ship which could also be used for lighthouse purposes should not be obtained. Failing this, the only alternative when a cable-break occurs will be to hire one of the local steamers, an arrangement which will, without doubt, be found to be costly.

Nelson District.

A line has been erected between Waimangaroa and Denniston, two miles in length.

The lines have been generally overhauled, and are now in fair condition, excepting the Westport-Charleston section, which will require reconstruction at an early date.

Canterbury District.

Christchurch to Kaikoura: The Amberley-Christchurch portion of this section is now receiving a thorough overhaul.

Christchurch to Waitaki: The section has been overhauled, and all decayed poles have been stumped.

Rolleston to Loop-line: From Bealey to the Taipo River about 170 poles have been renewed.

Christchurch Railway to Amberley: This section will require immediate attention. About 200 poles will be dropped, stumped, and replaced.

Kaiapoi to Oxford and View Hill: About 75 poles in this section require stumping. The work will be put in hand as soon as possible.

Christchurch to Southbridge: About 90 poles in this section will be stumped and replaced shortly.

Christchurch to Akaroa: Many of the poles (about 70) in this section must be stumped and replaced by larger ones at an early date.

All the other sections in this district are in good order and repair.

Otago and Southland District.

The following new lines have been erected: Dunback to Macrae's, 13 miles; Abbotsford to Taieri Beach, 19 miles; Naseby to Hyde, 18 miles.

The principal maintenance-work has been as follows:—

Dunedin to Blueskin: Four miles of this section have been reconstructed.

Milton to Balclutha: One mile of this section has been reconstructed.

Milton to Lawrence: One mile of this section has been reconstructed on account of road deviation.

Clinton to Waikaia: 190 poles on this line have been condemned, and will be replaced shortly.

Palmerston to Hampden: Four miles of this section will shortly be reconstructed.

Dunedin to Mosgiel: Four miles of this section also will require reconstruction with stronger and longer poles.

Lawrence to Roxburgh: One and a half miles of this section will require reconstruction when the new bridge has been erected over the Clutha River.

All other lines in this district are in good order.

The usual circuit plans will be found attached to the report, showing in detail the number of instruments in each office and the several lines that are duplexed. The Dunedin and Blenheim duplex circuit, 500 miles in length, gives very satisfactory results, and is in operation on an average of eight hours daily. Since the new line to Auckland *via* Taupo and Cambridge has been finished the duplex between Wellington and Auckland has been in constant use, a distance of 480 miles