

Of the 3,811 connections, 358 are free, including bureaux.

Forty-five bureau-offices were established during the year, and the total number open at the end of the year was 105.

£19,155 11s. 5d. was received during the financial year for telephone-exchange subscriptions, compared with £18,571 7s. 8d. the previous year. The number of subscribers, as shown in the table, increased 23·61 per cent. over the number in 1892.

The working expenses, maintenance, interest on capital cost, and allowance for depreciation, amounted to £19,734 1s. 1d. for the year.

The total expenditure in connection with the telephone-exchange system up to the 31st March last was £107,254 1s. 3d.

The following information is extracted from the annual reports of District Inspectors of Telegraphs:—

AUCKLAND DISTRICT.

Construction.—The lines constructed in this district during the year have been—Kingsland, 3 miles of wire; Mount Albert, 5 miles of wire; Mititai, 1 mile of wire and 70 chains of submarine cable.

Maintenance.—498 miles of lines in various parts of the district have received a thorough overhaul. Over a thousand poles have either been renewed, stumped, or rebutted. 11½ miles of line were entirely reconstructed.

Provision has been made for the lighting of the Thames office by means of the electric light, the motive-power being obtained from the county water-race.

The lines generally in the district are in good order.

NAPIER DISTRICT.

Construction.—Under this head are comprised the following lines—namely: Blackburn, 3 miles; Wairoa Pilot-station, 2½ miles; Whakarewarewa, 3½ miles. Five new offices have been opened during the year.

Reconstruction.—Between Taupo and Oruanui 6 miles of poles have been renewed. Tarawera and Taupo, 160 butts have been fixed, and in the Town of Napier 20 new 35ft. poles have been erected on main line. The various sections throughout the district have undergone repairs.

Overhauling.—The principal sections overhauled were those between Waipukurau and Tenui, Napier and Taupo, and Wairoa and Napier. The Taupo and Cambridge Section is in progress of overhaul, and special attention will be required shortly to the portion between Katikati and Thames, and Otuparehuki and Rotorua.

Generally the lines in this district are in good working-order.

WELLINGTON DISTRICT.

The lines in this district, which extend from Wellington to New Plymouth on the west coast of the North Island, and from Wellington to Castlepoint on the east side, have given little or no trouble during the past twelve months.

On the 8th November the line from Feilding to Birmingham (Fowler's) was commenced, and was completed on the 16th December following.

On the 27th April the single-core cable across the Strait parted during a heavy southerly gale, and the three-core cable also broke down on the 15th May following, thereby throwing the whole of the telegraphic work between the two Islands on the single-core cable lying between Wanganui and Wakapuaka.

The telegraph staff showed themselves equal to the occasion, and gave evidence of great expertness, the average number of messages passed on the duplexed cable exceeding two a minute. At the suggestion of the Hon. Mr. Ward, Postmaster-General, negotiations for the purchase of a steamer were commenced, and the p.s. "Terranora" was purchased and fitted-up, and the repairs to the two broken cables were completed on the evening of the 2nd August. Since then both cables have remained in satisfactory condition. The insulation tests of the three cables will be found in the tables attached to the report.

NELSON DISTRICT.

Overhauls and Repairs.—A short length of line at Arahura has been shifted to the new railway bridge. The Hokitika—Stafford line has also been rewired. The wires have been raised on the Greymouth and Brunnerton Section (8 miles). Portions of the Motueka—Richmond Section have been rebutted. Necessary poles and butts for repairs between Belgrove and Westport are on the ground, and work will commence immediately.

No work of any magnitude has been necessary during the past year, and all lines in the district have worked satisfactorily.

CANTERBURY DISTRICT.

Christchurch—Kaikoura.—This section has been repoled to a distance of 4 miles from Christchurch. The line as far as Kaiapoi will require some attention during the coming year, and in all probability strengthening through to Amberley. The remainder of this section is in good order.

Christchurch to Waitaki.—Addington to Hornby has been repoled, and the overhauling and strengthening the other portion of this section is now in hand.

Rolleston to Loopline.—This line, between Darfield and Old John's, has been thoroughly overhauled. No further expenditure will be required this year.

Amberley to Waiatu.—This line will require an overhaul this year. Many poles require re-butting, crossings raised, &c.