

Block, Berhampore, Koputarua, Maharahara, Makuri, Mangahao, Mangaweka, Ngaturi, Plimmer-ton, Taita, Wallingford, Waimata Valley, Whenuakura, Wimbledon, and Worser Bay—and in connection therewith 52 miles of poles and 78 miles of wire erected.

Extra wire accommodation has been provided between Napier and Wairoa ($49\frac{1}{2}$ miles), and between Marton and Rata (11 miles), to meet the increased traffic on those sections. A main trunk wire (12 miles) was also run from Napier Telephone Exchange to Hastings for bureau purposes.

The erection of additional wires from Napier to Wanganui and Wanganui to New Plymouth has been commenced. This work has been undertaken for the purpose of giving more direct communication between the districts named, and also to relieve the pressure on the Napier-Wellington and Wellington-Wanganui lines.

In addition to the above, 7 miles of poles and 14 miles of wire between Upper Hutt and the Summit, and 8 miles of wire between Featherston and Greytown North, were erected for the use of the Railway Department. Pahiatua Railway (Scarborough) was also looped to the Pahiatua-Ballance wire, to provide a quarter of a mile of wire for the Railway Department's use.

In all, 59 miles of poles and 165 miles of wire have been added to the general system.

Maintenance.

The main lines are in a satisfactory condition, excepting the Paikakariki-Marton section, which was referred to in last year's report. The work of reconstruction is, however, now in progress, and will be completed during the next few months.

The Hawera new office and the Marton office, which were destroyed by fire, have been rebuilt.

Wheatstone Automatic Instruments.

Two additional sets of Wheatstone automatic instruments have been fitted up in the Wellington Telegraph-office to meet exceptional pressure of work, and they have frequently been of great service.

The corresponding instruments are at Auckland and Christchurch.

Telephone Exchanges.

Since last report two new exchanges have been opened in the district—viz., at Gisborne (necessitating the erection of 4 miles of poles and 25 miles of wire) and Masterton ($5\frac{1}{2}$ miles of poles and $16\frac{3}{4}$ miles of wire). A branch exchange has also been opened at Hastings, connected with the Napier Exchange; $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles of poles and $16\frac{1}{4}$ miles of wire were required to connect subscribers.

The steady increase of subscribers to the Wellington Exchange continues, the total number on the 31st March being 1,127, exclusive of bureaux (30)—an increase of 86.

The multiple switch-board, mentioned in last year's report, has arrived, and will be fitted up immediately. The enlargement of the building has been completed.

The exchanges at Palmerston North, Wanganui, New Plymouth, and Napier are in good order and working satisfactorily.

Cables.

The two new cables terminating at Oterangi Bay have been regularly tested, and give satisfactory results.

The old No. 4 single-core cable is working well, although the insulation tests are comparatively low.

NELSON DISTRICT.

Construction.

The following new lines have been completed during the year: Hende's Ferry to Okarito (33 miles) and Kumara to Kumara Railway-station ($4\frac{1}{2}$ miles).

A fourth wire has been run from Greymouth to Reefton (50 miles), making a total of $37\frac{1}{2}$ miles of poles constructed, and $87\frac{1}{2}$ miles of wire erected.

A copper wire (of No. 8 gauge) is in course of erection between Blenheim and Kaikoura, about 40 miles being completed.

Telephone-offices were opened at Birchfield, Kumara Railway-station, Okarito, The Forks, and Wataroa. One office was closed—at Owen Junction.

Maintenance.

The Greymouth to Reefton section was thoroughly overhauled when the new wire was run, and all shaky poles attended to. The work of overhaul was continued as far as Inangahua Junction (70 miles).

This section has also been well cleared of scrub. Scrub-cutting is a never-ending source of trouble and expense on the West Coast sections.

During the erection of the Blenheim-Kaikoura section of the new wire the main line there is also being thoroughly overhauled, and where deemed advisable some slight alteration of route has been made, which will lessen cost of maintenance and save time in searching for faults.

Exchanges.

The Blenheim and Greymouth exchanges show a slight increase in the number of subscribers, but Nelson remains stationary. All the exchanges are in good working-order.

The condition of lines generally throughout the district is good.