

The value of each Press telegram averaged 10·12d., as against 11·18d. in 1898–99.

The bureau messages numbered 197,292, of the value of £5,482 17s. 7d., as compared with 143,940, of the value of £3,726 18s. 4d.—an increase of 53,352 in number and £1,755 19s. 3d. in amount.

The average value of each bureau message was 6·67d., as against 6·21d. in 1898–99.

The number of Government telegrams forwarded was 310,538, valued at £29,431 19s., as compared with 243,190, of the value of £25,500 5s. 10d.—an increase of 67,348 in number and of £3,931 13s. 2d. in amount. This unusual increase is mainly the result of franking privileges having been granted to mayors of boroughs and others in connection with the Patriotic and More Men Funds.

36,933 money-orders for £120,034 3s. 2d. were transmitted by telegraph, as against 35,204 for £114,622 13s. 1d. in 1898–99—an increase of 1,729 telegrams.

The number of forwarded telegrams to every hundred letters posted in New Zealand for delivery within the colony was 9·94, as against 9·12 in 1898–99.

The telegraph receipts for the financial year, including telephone-exchange subscriptions, private-wire rents, &c., amounted to £162,944 14s. 5d., compared with £145,294 13s. 7d. in 1898–99—an increase of £17,650 0s. 9d., or 12·15 per cent.

The expenditure, excluding cable subsidy, was £181,634 11s. 3d., as compared with £173,152 16s. 6d. for the previous year—an increase of £8,481 14s. 9d., or 4·9 per cent.

There were 6,910 miles of line and 19,228 miles of wire at the close of the year—an increase of 174 and 482 miles respectively.

The net expenditure out of Public Works Fund for telegraph extension was £26,771 7s. 9d., as compared with £28,550 14s. in 1898–99.

The number of private wires and subsidised lines was 248, compared with 201 in 1898–99. The amount received for rent, maintenance, &c., was £1,587 2s. 10d., as against £1,390 18s. 3d. in 1898–99.

The total number of telegraph- and telephone-offices open at the close of the year was 915. Of these, 234 were telegraph- and 681 telephone-offices.

Forty-two telephone-offices were opened and five closed. The following telephone-offices were opened :—

Burnett's Face.	Moawhango.	Te Tua.
Cabbage Bay.	Morere.	Tikitiki.
Cross's Creek.	Motupiko Railway.	Tikorangi.
Ellerslie Bureau.	Ngapaeruru.	Tiritiri.
Glen-iti.	Opaki.	Tokomaru.
Hangaroa.	Oriental Bay.	Totaratahi.
Heathcote Valley.	Otaki Railway.	Utiku.
Hilderthorpe.	Otipua.	Waerengaokuri.
Hokianga Heads.	Parapara.	Wai-iti.
Kaupokonui.	Rangitaiki.	Waikaka Siding.
Linton.	Seddon.	Waimahaka.
Makirikiri.	Sentry Hill.	Waipata.
Matamau.	Taihape.	West Plains.
Millerton.	Taneatua.	Wright's Bush.

The offices at Closeburn, Kimihia, Raumai, Rona, and The Camp were closed.

TELEPHONE EXCHANGES.

There were on the 31st March last twenty central exchanges and twenty sub-exchanges.

The following is a comparative return of the telephone-exchange connections for the years 1898–99 and 1899–1900 :—

Exchange.	Number of Subscribers or Connections :	
	Mar. 31, 1899.	Mar. 31, 1900.
Ashburton	102	100
Auckland	1,041	1,134
Blenheim	67	75
Christchurch	894	968
Rangiora	14	14
Dunedin	954	1,082
Balclutha	14	15
Kaitangata	6	6
Milton	19	20
Palmerston South	...	15
Port Chalmers	17	17
Feilding	...	78
Gisborne	123	145
Greymouth	86	94
Hawera	...	91
Eltham	...	9
Manaia	...	9
Invercargill	216	250
Bluff	22	22
Gore	54	58
Mataura	9	8
Otautau	15	22
Riversdale	12	13
Winton	8	13
Woodlands	5	5
Carried forward	3,678	4,263