

More telephone-line; Miller's Flat-Roxburgh metallic circuit; Tangoio-Koraki telephone-line; Otaki-Manakau metallic circuit; Te Puia Junction-Kahukura telephone-line; Riariaki telephone-line; Motuhora telephone-line; Brunswick Junction-Maxwelltown telephone-line; Tokoroa telephone-extension; Waingaro-Raglan telephone-line; Auckland-Thames-Paeroa metallic circuit; Thames-Hauraki Plains telephone-line.

In Central Otago, North Canterbury, and Marlborough snowstorms caused such damage that many miles of lines had to be rebuilt.

Reliable telegraph and telephone services have been maintained throughout the year. The telephone-exchange system is steadily expanding. Eight new exchanges were opened during the year, and one was closed. It was found necessary to provide additional switchboard accommodation at twenty-six others. The work of converting earth-working systems to metallic circuit is being systematically continued. The increase in the number of exchange connections for the year is 4,100.

The telegraph and interurban telephone system has been extended by the erection of 126 miles of poles and 451 miles of wire; 386 miles of poles and 1,164 miles of wire were added to the telephone-exchange plant; 3,749 miles of telegraph and interurban telephone-lines were overhauled and reconstructed.

Fourteen new coin-in-the-slot telephones were installed. This makes a total for the Dominion of 275 machines.

The policy of providing for telephone-exchange subscribers' circuits by means of underground cable is being continued, and during the year cables were laid providing for 6,511 miles of wire.

The party-line system was extended by the addition of 621 lines and 2,154 subscribers.

Provision has been made for communicating at any hour day or night with all coastal and isolated telephone-stations.

LANDS IMPROVEMENT.

Improved-farm Settlements.—The roading of the improved-farm settlements has now been completed. A small sum, however, is being provided on the estimates this year to meet special cases as they arise, such as the formation of deviations, &c.

Miscellaneous.—The only item calling for special mention under this head is that of £5,000 for the formation and construction of roads in Hauraki pastoral areas. This is an instalment on account of £20,000, which is the estimated cost of forming the roads and payment of claims for compensation. A commencement has been made with the survey of road routes in the Hauraki Peninsula, but owing to the absence of many of the surveyors on war service, and to the fact that the remainder were required for the subdivision of land for settlement by returned soldiers, only slow progress has been made. An endeavour will be made to prosecute this work as vigorously as possible during the coming year.

IRRIGATION AND WATER-SUPPLY.

IDA VALLEY SCHEME (INCLUDING GALLOWAY BRANCH).

The untouched portions of the Galloway distribution race have been constructed.

The survey of a drainage scheme for the lower parts of Galloway Flats was also completed, and another survey for a scheme of considerable magnitude for Ida Valley is in progress. Survey and borings for foundations were completed for a diverting weir in Dip Creek, and a further survey in connection with diverting additional catchment areas into Manorburn dam was carried out.

During the irrigation season water was supplied to twelve farmers in Ida Valley.

The revenue derived in water rentals for the past season was approximately £1,000, but shortage of farm labour prevented a more extensive use of the water.