

INTER-ISLAND TOLL SERVICE.

Prior to the laying, in the last week of March, 1926, of the telephone cable across Cook Strait toll communication between the North and South Islands was available between the hours of midnight and 8 a.m. From the 31st March, 1926, toll communication was made available continuously. Pending the installation of amplifying-apparatus the service will be an improvised one, and will be confined to calls from Wellington on the one hand and Blenheim, Nelson, Picton, and Seddon on the other. A full report of the laying of the cable appears at pages 27–28.

EFFECT OF EXTENSION OF HIGH-TENSION LINES.

The continued activity of electric-power Boards throughout the Dominion has involved the carrying-out by the Department of a considerable amount of protective work and the removal and readjustment of many sections of toll and telephone-exchange lines. In addition, a number of earth-working toll lines and exchange systems have been converted to metallic-circuit working in order to eliminate inductive interference from power-lines. The work involved in carrying out these modifications has to some extent hampered a more vigorous prosecution by the Department of its own telegraph and telephone developmental works.

MACHINE-PRINTING TELEGRAPHS.

The installation of machine-printing telegraph apparatus at Wanganui for communication with Wellington was completed on the 17th December in readiness for the Christmas traffic.

Steady progress was made with the scheme for linking up, by means of the multiplex machine-printing system, Wellington, Wanganui, New Plymouth, and Auckland via the west-coast lines, and Wellington, Napier, and Auckland via the east-coast lines. With the completion of this scheme multiplex channels will be available for telegraph traffic between the following places:—

Auckland–Christchurch.	Napier–Auckland.
Auckland–Dunedin.	Napier–Wellington.
Auckland–Napier.	New Plymouth–Auckland.
Auckland–New Plymouth.	New Plymouth–Wellington.
Auckland–Wanganui.	Wanganui–Auckland.
Auckland–Wellington (three routes).	Wanganui–Wellington.
Christchurch–Auckland.	Wellington–Auckland (three routes).
Christchurch–Dunedin.	Wellington–Christchurch.
Christchurch–Wellington.	Wellington–Dunedin.
Dunedin–Auckland.	Wellington–Napier.
Dunedin–Christchurch.	Wellington–New Plymouth.
Dunedin–Wellington.	Wellington–Wanganui.

In addition, it will be possible to provide a multiplex channel between Christchurch and Wanganui to meet any abnormal traffic requirements between those places.

MAINTENANCE OF LINES.

Notwithstanding heavy snowstorms in the Canterbury District and violent gales elsewhere during the year, telegraph and telephone communication was satisfactorily maintained, there being but few serious interruptions.

In April an exceptionally heavy rainstorm at Christchurch caused several aerial telephone cables to become inoperative, with the result that over a thousand subscribers were temporarily deprived of service. (The whole cable system at Christchurch is now being reconstructed preparatory to the Christchurch Exchange being converted to automatic working.)

A severe storm in the Auckland District in May resulted in the cutting-off of all communication between Auckland and Whangarei, and between Auckland and the east coast north of Waiwera, but within three days all services were restored.

In July a heavy snowstorm in the Canterbury District resulted in the interruption of all the main east-coast wires between Kaikoura and Clarence Bridge. Further heavy falls of snow occurred in August, all the Christchurch–Greymouth wires west of Springfield being interrupted. As a result of the same storm 60 exchange subscribers' lines at Methven were broken and 40 subscribers at Springfield were cut off. In all, about 100 poles were completely destroyed; and many miles of wire had to be replaced. Another snowstorm occurred in September, and was the cause of considerable damage on the West Coast, particularly between Bealey and Jackson's, and at Reefton. The damage on this occasion, however, consisted chiefly of broken wires, which were quickly replaced.

On the morning of the 27th January Morse and multiplex circuits in the Auckland District were markedly affected by earth currents of a very variable nature due to an auroral disturbance; but conditions soon became normal.

POLES AND WIRE.

During the year 170 miles of pole-line and 3,486 miles of wire were erected or acquired for telegraph and telephone (toll) purposes, while 53 miles of pole-line and 287 miles of wire were dismantled, or, in localities where no longer required by the Department, sold to settlers for use as private telephone-lines.