

TELEGRAPH AND TOLL SERVICES.

TELEGRAPH SERVICES.

Telegraph business continues to increase at a steady rate, although the volume of traffic is still below the highest point reached in 1920.

During the year the number of telegrams lodged for transmission was 5,117,498, an increase of 551,488, or 12·08 per cent., over the number handled the previous year. The revenue derived from the messages was £313,070, an increase of £24,295, or 8·41 per cent. The average number of telegrams sent per head of population of the Dominion was 3·25.

INLAND CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR GREETINGS TELEGRAM SERVICE.

There was a marked increase in the number of inland Christmas and New Year greetings telegrams handled. These special telegrams, which were accepted between the 14th December and the 6th January, increased by 25 per cent. in both volume and revenue compared with similar traffic during the previous season.

The following figures indicate the growth of greetings traffic in recent years :—

Christmas and New Year Period.			Number of Greetings Telegrams lodged.	Revenue.
				£
1933-34	..	..	161,089	4,027
1934-35	..	..	228,367	5,709
1935-36	..	..	272,525	6,813
1936-37	..	..	341,624	8,540

BIRTHDAY AND CONGRATULATORY TELEGRAMS.

The system of birthday and congratulatory telegrams introduced in September, 1935, is becoming increasingly popular. Returns indicate that, on an average, 12,000 such telegrams are handled monthly at permanent offices alone. No additional charge is made for these messages, which are delivered to the addressees on specially designed ornamental forms enclosed in envelopes to match.

TELEGRAPHIC WEATHER REPORTS.

Owing to the development of commercial aviation in the Dominion there was during the year a further increase in the work required of the Department in the preparation and despatch of weather reports to the Dominion Meteorological Office in Wellington, the number of weather reports dealt with daily increasing from 131 to 154. The number has more than doubled in the last two years. Departmental officers now act as observers at thirty places in the Dominion, this work being performed by the Department gratuitously.

OPENING OF ADDITIONAL MACHINE-PRINTING CIRCUITS.

In pursuance of the policy of the Department to extend the use of machine-printing apparatus with a view to expediting the handling of telegraph traffic, teleprinter installations were completed and brought into operation during the year between the following places: Wellington-Hawera, Wellington-Stratford, Wellington-Dannevirke, Wellington-Marton, Christchurch-Ashburton, and Dunedin-Gore. In addition, an extra teleprinter outlet was provided between Christchurch and Greymouth, and a teleprinter circuit was established between Christchurch and Dunedin.

TELEGRAPH BATTERIES AND POWER SUPPLY.

The universal battery system for the supply of electric current for telegraph circuits was installed during the year at Whangarei, Stratford, Hawera, Marton, Dannevirke, and Invercargill. As a result of these installations many large- and medium-sized batteries of primary cells have been dispensed with at the offices named and at a number of smaller out-stations, and this change-over will result in considerable economy in maintenance costs.

CONCESSIONS IN OVERSEAS TELEGRAM SERVICE.

During the period 14th December to the 6th January, inclusive, reduced rates were applicable to Christmas and New Year greetings telegrams addressed to Empire countries. The special rates were as under :—

To Australia .. .. .	..	1s. 6d. for ten words ; 2d. each additional word.
To Canada, Fiji, and certain Pacific Islands ..	..	2s. 6d. for ten words ; 3d. each additional word.
To Great Britain and other Empire points ..	..	4s. for ten words ; 5d. each additional word.

During the Easter period, 22nd to 29th March, letter-telegrams of a social nature were exchanged between New Zealand and the United Kingdom at the reduced rate of 5s. 7d. for ten words and 6½d. for each additional word.