

TELEGRAPHS.

There was a falling-off in the telegraph business proper, although the gross receipts show a small increase.

1,765,863 telegrams of all codes were transmitted; a decrease of 69,531 telegrams compared with the number transmitted in 1887.

The number of ordinary and delayed telegrams forwarded was 1,366,478, of the value of £70,667 9s. 2d. The number dealt with in 1887 was 1,414,569, for £77,975 9s. 10d.

181,755 Press telegrams, of the value of £10,284 13s. 5d., were transmitted; an increase over 1887 of 6,553 in number, and of £2,254 11s. 7d. in value. The average value of a Press telegram increased from 11d. for the year 1887 to a fraction above 1s. 1½d. in 1888.

The comparative number and value of telegrams of all codes transmitted during the calendar years 1888 and 1887 are given below:—

	Ordinary and Delayed Telegrams.				Press Telegrams.				Government Telegrams.			
	Number.	£	s.	d.	Number.	£	s.	d.	Number.	£	s.	d.
1888 ...	1,366,478	70,667	9	2	181,755	10,284	13	5	217,630	23,164	13	11
1887 ...	1,414,569	77,975	9	10	175,202	8,030	1	10	245,623	30,205	11	10

The telegraph receipts for the financial year ended the 31st March last—including telephone-exchange subscriptions, private-wire rents, &c.—were £105,488 7s. 6d., compared with £103,653 19s. 7d. the previous year.

The expenditure for the same period (exclusive of £12,047 4s. 5d. charged against loan on account of construction) was £100,169 18s. 4d., against £98,270 12s. 1d. in 1887–88, or £5,318 9s. 2d. less than the revenue.

The value of the services performed by telegraph—inclusive of the cost of Government messages, £23,164 13s. 11d., and a sum of £823 4s., collected on money-order telegrams—was £129,476 5s. 5d. The expenditure, as already stated, was £100,169 18s. 4d., which left a credit balance of £29,306 7s. 1d. on the year's transactions; equal to 4·69 per cent. on the capital cost.

33,056 urgent telegrams, of the value of £4,544 11s. 8d., were forwarded; an increase over 1887 of 830 in number, and of £516 6s. 8d. in value.

475,776 delayed telegrams were transmitted, compared with 479,670 dealt with the previous year, and 415,977 in 1886. The public continue to make large use of the delayed system, more particularly between country offices, and the receipts from the ordinary messages are seriously diminished in consequence. The proportion of the delayed to the ordinary telegrams for the year was 53·42 per cent.

Government telegrams show a substantial decrease. They were 27,993 in number and £7,040 17s. 11d. in value less than in 1887. Table No. 24 gives the value of free telegrams sent by Government departments during the year.

The number of telegrams to each hundred letters posted for delivery in the colony was 9·05, compared with 9·80 in 1887.

16,464 money-order telegrams, for £56,878 15s. 10d., were forwarded, compared with 16,899, for £61,389 7s. 1d., in 1887. The commission amounted to £939 3s., and the telegraph fees £823 4s.

The number and value of money-order telegrams, forwarded from offices in the several postal districts, is given in Table 25.

A telegraph office has been opened at Cullensville.

Telephone offices have been established at—

Awatere	Marsden Point	Pouto (Kaipara Heads)
Cape Foulwind	Matakanni	Pukekararo
Clevedon	Matata	Rahotu
Cronaden	Mauriceville	Riwaka
Georgetown	Middlemarch	Scarrott's
Hakaru	New Brighton	Spring Grove
Hikutaia	Norsewood	Waiwera South
Hororata	Oakura	Wakapuaka (suburban)
Inangahua	Okato	Wangarei Heads
Kaiwarawara	Owen River	Wellsford
Little Grey Junction	Papakaio	Whirinaki.
Mangamahoe	Parua Bay	

A bureau has been established at Kaiwarawara.

At the close of the year there were 240 offices connected by telephone.

The number of offices, both telegraph and telephone, open at the end of the year was 473.

There are 33 bureaux open in connection with the telephone exchanges.

The offices at Castlepoint, Charleston, Papatoitoi, and Waitotara are worked by telephone instead of by Morse instrument, and at Brunnerton a Morse instrument has replaced the telephone.

The number of miles of line maintained was 4,790, an increase of 144 miles; and the average cost per mile for maintenance was £5 0s. 1d., compared with £4 13s. 9d., the cost for the previous year.

The expenditure out of loan for telegraph extension was £12,047 4s. 5d., being £10,937 1s. 8d. less than in 1887.