

	Mar. 31, 1892.	Mar. 31, 1891.
Auckland	560	507
Napier...	143	125
Wanganui	74	60
Wellington	660	512
Hutt	2	...
Nelson...	53	49
Blenheim	48	46
Greymouth	51	31
Christchurch	524	446
Timaru	67	55
Oamaru	58	52
Dunedin	679	607
Balclutha	13	...
Milton...	8	...
Port Chalmers	10	10
Invercargill	100	72
Bluff	13	12
Gore	15	8
Riversdale	5	...
Totals	3,083	2,592

Of the 3,083, there are 229 non-paying or free subscribers.

Telephone exchanges have been opened at the Hutt, Balclutha, Milton, and Riversdale, bringing up the total number to 19.

Twenty-three bureau-offices were opened during the year, and the number of bureaux connected with the exchanges was 60.

The telephone exchange subscriptions received during the financial year amounted to £18,571 7s. 8d. compared with £19,252 4s. 3d. received the previous year; the reduced rates have been in force for six months only.

The working expenses, maintenance, interest on capital cost, and allowance for depreciation absorbed £15,026 12s. 2d.

The capital expended in connection with the several exchanges up to the 31st March last, including spare material on hand, was £88,368 17s. 9d.

With the view of testing the adaptability of women for the position of telephone exchange attendants, forty-eight have been appointed on probation—twelve at each of the four principal exchanges. Should the experiment prove satisfactory in every way the employment of women in telephone exchanges will probably be extended.

The following is from the District Inspectors' annual reports:—

AUCKLAND DISTRICT.

Construction.—New lines were constructed as follows: Ararimu, 6 miles of poles and 10 miles of wire; St. Helier's, 4 miles of poles and 8 miles of wire; Pakuranga, 7 miles of wire; Towai, 2 miles of poles and 12 miles of wire; Waihi, 9 miles of poles and 9 miles of wire; Mount Roskill, 1 mile of poles and $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles of wire.

Eight new stations were opened. The total number of stations opened to the public on the 31st December was 137.

Maintenance.—726 miles of lines were overhauled, including the reconstruction of $27\frac{1}{2}$ miles of line, repoling, and rebutting.

The lines throughout the district are in first-class order, and will not require any exceptional expenditure for at least two years.

NAPIER DISTRICT.

Construction.—The Waipiro Bay line has been extended to Port Awanui, a distance of 18 miles. A line has been extended from Ongaonga to Ashley-Clinton, $14\frac{1}{2}$ miles; and a wire from Waipawa to Ashley-Clinton, $23\frac{1}{2}$ miles, has also been run. 3 miles of wire has been run from Woodville to the Manawatu Gorge, forming a portion of the railway signalling line. From Hastings to Maraekakaho, 13 miles of wire, and a wire from Wairoa to Mohaka, 18 miles, has been erected. The Norsewood line has been extended three-fourths of a mile.

Reconstruction.—The section of main line for 9 miles south of Napier has been reconstructed with larger poles.

Works in Progress.—The construction of a loop-line to Blackburn; also the reconstruction of 6 miles of line north of Taupo, and butting poles between the latter place and Runanga.

The line from Taupo to Cambridge is also under overhaul. The section between Porangahau and Tenui will be overhauled during the ensuing summer, as also section between Napier and Taupo, and Katikati and Thames.

Overhauling.—The following sections have been overhauled during the year: Katikati to Taupo, Maketu to Opotiki, Maketu to Te Puke, Waipiro Bay to Gisborne, Napier to Woodville, Gisborne to Wairoa, Waipukurau to Wallingford.

The working condition of the lines throughout the district is good.