

Christchurch Exchange.

The total number of subscribers on the 31st March last was 848, including bureaux, as against 916 on the 31st of March, 1897, showing a decrease of 68.

Ashburton Exchange.

There has been no change in the number of subscribers (96).

Timaru Exchange.

One subscriber retired during the year, the number now connected being 73. This Exchange requires a thorough overhaul during the coming year. A great deal of the wire is very much oxidised and is becoming unsafe.

DUNEDIN.

Construction.

The various extension-works completed during the year have been as follows:—

	Poles.	Wire.
Hyde to Kokonga	...	9½ miles.
Ngapara to Tokarahi	8 miles	8 "
Hokonui to Hedgehope	3 "	3 "
Bannockburn to Nevis	18½ "	18½ "
Kokonga to Waipiata	6 "	6 "
Clyde to Cromwell (second wire)...	...	13 "
Kaitangata trunk line	...	7 "
Dunedin to Waitaki (copper wire)	...	84 "
Total : 35½ miles of new line, and 92¾ of wire, 56 miles of wire having been dismantled.		

Maintenance.

All lines have worked well during the year.

About 400 miles have been overhauled by the ordinary repairing parties.

There are 1,488 miles of poles and 3,276 miles of wire, 143 sets of Morse instruments, and 225 telephones used for telegraphic purposes in the district.

Offices.

Eight telephone-offices have been opened and two closed.

Telephone-exchanges.

The mileage of poles and wire for all exchanges in the district is 92 and 1,100 respectively.

There are 1,494 telephones in use in connection with exchange-work.

A branch exchange has been opened at Kaitangata.

The total number of subscribers in the district is 1,319, or a decrease of 31 as compared with those at the corresponding period of last year.

The usual telegraph charts accompany the report.