

Maintenance.

The Hokitika-Ross line has been practically rebuilt, and is now in first-class order.

The Westport line has also received considerable attention, and the section Hope Junction to within a few miles of Lyell has been thoroughly overhauled.

The Blenheim-Picton line has been almost rebuilt, a third wire being run at the same time.

The line over the Maungatapu near Nelson has been deviated *via* the Rai Valley, 31 miles of poles and 62 miles of wire being erected in connection therewith.

Most of the telephone circuits have now been supplied with bridging bell telephones, a considerable improvement being effected thereby.

The business, especially on the West Coast, is increasing, and fully occupies the wires.

Offices.

There are 123 telegraph- and telephone-offices in the district.

Telephone Exchanges.

The three exchanges in the district (Blenheim, Nelson, and Greymouth) are in good working-order, and the subscribers steadily increasing. Nelson now has 107 (an increase of 29), Greymouth 114 (an increase of 20), and Blenheim 91 (an increase of 16), making a total of 312, or 65 for the year.

CANTERBURY.

Construction.

The following extensions of lines and wires were made during the year:—

	Miles of Poles.	Miles of Wire.
Sheffield to Annat	...	2
Christchurch to Port Levy, &c.	27	29
Waimate to Waihao Downs	8	9
Amberley to Leithfield	...	4
Sheffield to Waddington	...	1½
Christchurch to Dallington	1	2
Lead off Peel Forest line to Arundel	2½	2½
Christchurch to Prebbleton	...	9
Lead off Mount Somers line to Surrey Hills	2	2
Christchurch to Yaldhurst	2	8
Christchurch to Gebbie's Flat (extension Taitapu line)	...	5
Timaru to Fairlie (trunk wire)	...	39
Timaru main line to Morven (loop)	1½	3
For Railway Department—		
Jackson's to Otira Railway	...	13
Kaiapoi to Eyreton Junction	...	1½
Total	44	130½

Transferred to the Nelson District Inspector's charge,

Kumara to Jackson's 27 64

The net increase, therefore, for the district is 17 miles of poles and 66½ miles of wire. This, added to the total of last year, makes a grand total for the district of 889½ miles of line, carrying 3,244½ miles of wire.

Maintenance.

The Timaru-Waitaki section has received a thorough overhaul, the line being strengthened where necessary, and several hundred cracked and broken insulators replaced. From Timaru to Temuka the main line has been strengthened and wires raised. This work was carried out simultaneously with the erection of the Temuka trunk wire.

The Christchurch-Akaroa line has received some pressing repairs, and will be put in thorough order when the trunk wire for Akaroa is being run. This is to be done shortly.

The Timaru-Fairlie line of 40 miles has also been thoroughly overhauled and put in complete order.

All the locals in the Christchurch office are now being run off two storage-cells instead of the usual practice of using a separate local for each circuit. The innovation has conduced towards a more constant current being maintained.

The total number of offices in the district is 135. Twenty new offices were opened during the year.

Exchange.

The Exchange is working very satisfactorily, and subscribers steadily increasing in number. The increase for the year is 80, and the total number 1,048. Another section for the multiple switchboard of 450 numbers has been ordered to meet future requirements. The capacity of the exchange will then be 1,950.

The total number of subscribers connected with the four exchanges in this district is 1,290. The Timaru and Ashburton exchanges and Rangiora sub-exchange are in good order. At Timaru 20 new subscribers have been added since last report. A trunk wire is being run to Temuka, where a sub-exchange will shortly be opened.

Five miles and three-quarters of poles and 138 miles of wire were erected, and two miles of wire dismantled, during the year, making a total mileage of 99½ miles of poles and 1,487½ miles of wire connected with the four exchanges in the district.