

There was a total increase of 12,089 messages, and of £3,714 18s. 2d. in value.

The forwarded and received cable Press business for the past ten years ended 31st December, 1903, has been :—

Year.	Forwarded.			Received.		
	Number of		Value.	Number of		Value.
	Messages.	Words.		Messages.	Words.	
			£ s. d.			£ s. d.
1894	994	103,366	899 4 9	3,033	203,326	1,179 13 7
1895	1,168	68,682	433 13 0	3,926	314,136	1,782 13 5
1896	1,069	92,946	531 4 9	2,946	285,369	1,576 1 3
1897	1,294	128,839	945 4 8	3,665	323,617	1,752 7 5
1898	1,154	133,342	907 7 0	3,599	282,882	1,599 7 0
1899	1,570	182,066	1,800 10 4	3,822	298,218	1,690 12 4
1900	1,034	139,295	1,457 4 5	4,014	333,300	1,878 9 1
1901	1,420	148,400	2,718 12 0	3,989	351,291	1,967 19 3
1902	1,830	202,968	1,772 8 4	4,443	396,438	2,200 10 6
1903	1,595	159,732	1,235 11 1	5,636	425,824	2,333 10 2

TELEPHONE EXCHANGES.

Twelve new exchanges were opened during the year. 1,472 new subscribers were added to the exchanges throughout the colony, bringing the total connections up to 12,105, an increase of 14 per cent. for the year. Of the total increase, 709 were added at the four chief centres.

It will be necessary to make considerable additions to the Wellington Exchange, all the space available for the switchboard being now taken up.

In consequence of the growth of the larger exchanges and the introduction of electric tramways in the four principal centres, the installation of metallic circuits has been decided upon to eliminate cross-talk and induction from the tramways. These are now being installed at Auckland, and the material for Wellington and Dunedin, now under order, is expected to arrive shortly, when the work will be put in hand at once.

There were on the 31st March last 27 central and 54 sub-exchanges.

The following is a comparative return of the telephone-exchange connections for the years 1902-3 and 1903-4 :—

Exchange.	Number of Subscribers or Connections :	
	March 31, 1903.	March 31, 1904.
Ashburton	111	118
Auckland	1,554	1,707
Devonport	28	34
Blenheim	112	133
Christchurch	1,297	1,479
Akaroa	34	36
Doyleston	6	7
Leeston	10	11
Lincoln	...	8
Little River	7	8
Lyttelton	...	8
Rangiora	14	15
Southbridge	...	6
Dannevirke	53	88
Dunedin	1,420	1,579
Balclutha	20	24
Clinton	...	8
Kaitangata	5	10
Milton	20	21
Palmerston	20	18
Port Chalmers	21	21
Waikouaiti	9	8
Feilding	110	133
Sanson	...	1
Gisborne	237	281
Greymouth	161	183
Reefton	...	44
Hawera	126	143
Eltham	26	26
Manaia	19	18
Otakeho	1	...
Patea	30	31