

Other sections requiring attention are Hamilton-Cambridge; Hamilton-Thames; Thames-Tauranga, with diversion from Paeroa *via* Waihi to the Coast, thereby cutting out country most difficult to traverse and a section of line which is much decayed.

The Tauranga-Opotiki, Thames-Tairua, Taupo-Orakeikorako Junction, Cambridge-Te Awamutu, Auckland-Helensville, Waipu-Dargaville, and Ohacawai-Rawene-Hokianga Heads sections all require considerable attention.

The total miles of poles and wire now maintained in the district are 2,029 and 5,304½ respectively.

OFFICES.

The Auckland, Thames, Whakatane, Matata, and Atiamuri offices were refitted.

New offices were occupied at Newmarket, Pahi, and Poutu. The Auckland "local" batteries have been replaced with six storage-cells, which are giving most satisfactory results.

TELEPHONE EXCHANGES.

The Auckland Exchange is steadily increasing in numbers, there being on the 31st March 1707 connections, including 58 bureaux—a net increase of 153 for the year.

107¼ miles of poles and 1,839 miles of wire are utilised for the above connections.

An exchange was opened at Whangarei with 36 connections, including 3 bureaux.

At Rotorua another 50-number switchboard has been added. There are now 70 subscribers—an increase of 34 during the year.

The other exchanges are practically the same as last year, there being only a slight increase in the number of subscribers.

All the exchanges are working satisfactorily, the total connections therewith numbering 1,950, of which 1,844 are paying, 30 free, and 76 bureaux.

The poles and wires connected with the various exchanges aggregate respectively 129¼ miles and 1,956¼ miles.

The work of installing metallic circuits in connection with the Auckland Exchange is well in hand, and a large number of subscribers will be connected shortly.

WELLINGTON DISTRICT.

Construction.

During the year just closed the following new lines and wires were erected for the purpose of opening up new districts, and to give increased accommodation on existing circuits:—

			Miles of Poles.	Miles of Wire.
Feilding to Feilding Racecourse	...	...	...	0½
Taihape to Mataroa and Ruanui	...	...	13¾	13¾
Bull's to Marton <i>via</i> Greatford	...	...	0½	10½
Tokomaru to Shannon	...	...	...	7½
Blackburn to Whakarara	...	...	6½	6½
Masterton to Kuripuni	...	...	...	1
Waipukurau to Dannevirke	...	...	...	35½
Mangaweka to Taihape	...	...	...	14
Palmerston North to Feilding	...	...	...	12½
New Plymouth to Inglewood	} Part of through wire, Wel-	} lington to New Plymouth)	...	12½
Halcombe to Shannon			...	46
Te Karaka to Kaiteratahi	...	...	...	5½
Glasgow Wharf (Wellington) Bureau	...	...	...	0½
Oriental Bay to Roseneath	...	...	0½	0½
Berhampore to Island Bay	...	...	0½	1¾
For Public Works Department—				
Taihape to Mataroa	...	...	...	6
Totals	...	...	21¾	174½

Lines dismantled—

Marton to Greatford-Bull's Junction	...	...	6	12
Blackburn to Makaretu	...	...	...	3¾
			6	15¾

Railway-wires ceased to be maintained by this Department—

Palmerston North to Longburn	...	...	...	4
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The total number of miles of poles and wire in the district, exclusive of those maintained by the Railway Department, are 2,030½ and 7,043¾ respectively.

Maintenance.

The lines generally throughout the district are in good order, with the exception of the Wairoa-Opoutama section of the Napier-Gisborne line, for which necessary alterations and repairs are now in hand, the poles having gone forward for the purpose.

Re-poling of several other sections will be necessary, but considerable difficulty is experienced in obtaining suitable poles, totara being both scarce and expensive. The most serious interruptions to communication during the year were caused by thunderstorms, 14 poles having been shattered by lightning south of Taupo on one occasion. A large number of faults occurred north of New Plymouth between Urenui and Mount Messenger from a similar cause.