

Telephone Exchanges.

A sub-exchange has been opened at Picton with 22 subscribers, and connections made with offices at Pelorus Sound and Havelock, thus enabling 15 bureaux to obtain direct telephonic communication with Picton and Blenheim.

The number of subscribers' connections to the exchanges in this district is steadily increasing, and now totals 1,025, of which 871 are paying connections, while 39 are free, and 115 are bureau connections. There are also 53 extension telephones, making a total of 1,078 connections.

The Nelson Exchange has 12 miles 38 chains of line and 156 miles of wire. At this exchange the new poles for the alterations in the routes to lead the wires to the new building have been erected, and wires are being run.

A branching multiple switchboard, with accessories, is under order for installation in the new building at Nelson. It will provide for 900 subscribers.

The Greymouth Exchange has 25 miles 48 chains of line and 154 miles 45 chains of wire. When the new building is ready a new telephone switchboard will be provided.

The length of line and wire in the district is 73 miles 59 chains and 505 miles 45 chains respectively.

There are 9 exchanges in this district, all of which are working satisfactorily.

Metallic Circuits.

The erection of an additional wire between Greymouth and Rotomana has provided a metallic circuit for bureau purposes between these two points, and at several intermediate offices. Additional wires, with Morse circuit superimposed, have also been erected between Westport and Granity and Westport and Burnett's Face for metallic circuits. Between Blenheim and Picton a single wire was run and combined with a telegraph-wire to make a metallic circuit, upon which the Morse circuits were superimposed. Telephonic communication on these circuits is now practically free from induction, and the telegraph superimposed upon the several circuits is working satisfactorily.

CHRISTCHURCH DISTRICT.

Construction.

The following new lines and wires have been erected during the year:—

	Poles. M. ch.	Wire. M. ch.
Waimate to Glenavy	...	34 0
Ashburton to Hinds and Lowcliffe	7 40	19 0
Mount Somers to Springburn	5 0	5 0
Ouruhia (loop and metallic circuit)	0 20	0 40
Loop into Morven (loop and metallic circuit)	...	3 0
Ashburton to Dromore	...	6 40
Waihao Downs to Waihaorunga	7 0	7 0
Rakaia to Highbank	17 0	17 0
Loop into Makikihi (metallic circuit)	...	0 40
Loop into Islington (metallic circuit)	...	2 40
Pleasant Point to Hazelburn	10 0	10 0
Glenavy to Tawai	5 0	5 0
Tawai to Ikawai	5 40	5 40
Timaru to Levels	...	7 0
Levels to Pleasant Point	...	5 0
Timaru to Fairlie	...	38 0
	57 20	165 40

On the Waipara-Cheviot section 11 miles of line have been reconstructed along the railway route.

The total number of miles of line and wire in this district is 978 $\frac{3}{4}$ and 3,719 $\frac{1}{4}$ respectively.

Maintenance.

An overhaul of the main line from Waiau to Kaiapoi was made. A number of new poles was put in, and the section put in good order. The Washdyke-Fairlie section also received attention. The line from Springfield to Otira received a thorough overhaul, two old wires in the Otira Gorge being renewed and all doubtful poles attended to. The line is in good order. Minor maintenance work has also been performed.

Offices.

Fifteen new offices have been opened during the year.

The Mount Somers office has been converted from a Morse to a telephone and bureau station.

Sumner is now a Morse office, the circuit being superimposed on a telephone metallic circuit.

There are 178 offices in the district, of which 60 are Morse and 118 are telephone stations.

Telephone Exchanges.

There has been no increase in the number of exchanges.

There has been a considerable increase in the number of exchange subscribers. This is particularly the case at Christchurch.