

From the 523 private wires and subsidized lines the amount of rent and maintenance received was £3,989.

The various telegraph tables give full particulars with reference to telegrams handled. The total number of all codes dealt with was 10,836,751, an increase of only 8,783 over the previous year. The proportion of paid telegrams per unit of population was 9.29.

While ordinary telegrams show the decrease in number already referred to, the increased rates produced an increased revenue therefrom of £24,180, and urgent ordinary telegrams, which showed a considerable falling-off in number for the same reason, showed an increase of £155 in revenue.

The number of Press telegrams fell from 471,455 to 383,155, but the revenue derived therefrom on account of the increased rates during the last half of the year was £24,417, as against £22,328.

The bureau business was not affected by the increased rates, and, in addition to showing the increase in number referred to above, also gave the greater revenue by £12,116. At the same time the average value of each bureau message increased from 6.38d. to 6.78d.

The Government messages, for which no payment was received, show a tendency to steadily increase, and during the year they totalled 127,841. Their value at ordinary rates amounted to £9,085. The increase shown is no less than 16,486 telegrams.

The number of paid telegrams forwarded amounted to 8.71 messages for every 100 letters posted in New Zealand.

The overhaul and reconstruction of telegraph and inter-urban telephone-lines was steadily proceeded with during the year, the number of miles in each Telegraph Engineer's district so dealt with being as follows: Auckland, 312; Wellington, 356; Nelson, 231; Canterbury, 114; Otago, 1,126.

Owing to increase in business, five offices were converted from telephone to Morse offices, and in two cases, where the business did not justify the retention of Morse instruments, the offices were converted from Morse to telephone. The total number of telegraph-instrument sets of all classes in use in the Dominion numbers 870. A double-current duplex set has been fitted up at Westport, the consequent rearrangement of circuits permitting direct working with Wellington. New test-boards have been installed for long-distance lines at eighteen of the more important telegraph-offices.

The length of telegraph and telephone line and wire on the 31st March, 1915 and 1916 respectively, was as follows:—

	Miles of Pole Line.			Miles of Wire.		
	Year ended 31st March, 1915.	Year ended 31st March, 1916.	Increase.	Year ended 31st March, 1915.	Year ended 31st March, 1916.	Increase.
Telegraph and inter-urban telephone	13,434	13,684	250	46,778	48,052	1,274
Telephone-exchange plant...	3,029	3,437	408	113,479	128,525	15,046
Totals	16,463	17,121	658	160,257	176,577	16,320

NEW ZEALAND SUBMARINE CABLE SERVICE.

There was no alteration in the length of submarine cable, which remains at 374 knots. During the year faults developed in the No. 2 Cook Strait cable, and in the cable between Motuihi and Waiheke and between Motuihi and Howick. They were, however, promptly repaired. In the two first cases it was found that the fault was caused by a species of crustacean borer, and in the third case the armouring of the cable was eaten away by chemical action.

OCEAN CABLE SERVICES.

The cable business during the year shows a marked increase in the traffic handled, and also discloses the fact that the Pacific route, which in the previous year handled 74 per cent. of the ordinary outward business, only received 67 per cent., while the Eastern Company increased their proportion of the business from 26 per cent. to 33 per cent. The following table shows the total number of ordinary telegrams forwarded by each route during the past five years, and the percentages of the total of such business falling to each:—

PACIFIC.				EASTERN.			
Year.	Messages.	Percentage of Total.		Year.	Messages.	Percentage of Total.	
1911-12	89,276	69		1911-12	39,374	31	
1912-13	99,617	71		1912-13	40,680	29	
1913-14	104,638	73		1913-14	38,023	27	
1914-15	106,018	74		1914-15	37,446	26	
1915-16	114,151	67		1915-16	56,684	33	

The number of international cable messages forwarded during the year shows an increase of 34.75 per cent. on the number sent during 1914-15, and the number forwarded to Australian stations shows an increase of 7.98 per cent.

Messages received from international stations increased by 46.55 per cent., and there was an increase of 11.43 per cent. in the Australian received traffic.

New Zealand's proportion of the deficit of £7,915 8s. 1d. on the thirteenth year's working of the Pacific cable amounted to £879 9s. 9d.