

The number of cable messages, excluding Press, sent from New Zealand to international offices during the year shows an increase of 11·95 per cent. on the number sent during 1919–20, and the number sent to Australian offices shows an increase of 7·5 per cent.

Messages from Australia increased by 11·17 per cent., and messages received from international offices by 10·97 per cent.

The proportion of cable messages sent “via Pacific” was greater than that sent by the same route the previous year, the percentages being 70 and 67 respectively.

The following table shows the total number of cable messages forwarded by each route during each of the past five years, and also the percentage of such traffic falling to each:—

PACIFIC.				EASTERN.			
Year.		Messages.	Percentage of Total.	Year.		Messages.	Percentage of Total.
1916–17	..	114,718	71	1916–17	..	47,790	29
1917–18	..	114,046	63	1917–18	..	66,318	37
1918–19	..	103,347	59	1918–19	..	70,591	41
1919–20	..	139,772	67	1919–20	..	68,832	33
1920–21	..	159,896	70	1920–21	..	68,406	30

Press messages numbering 1,203 were sent via Pacific and 1,946 via Eastern, compared with 946 and 1,767 respectively during 1919–20. The number received via Pacific was 7,196 and via Eastern 2,726, compared with 7,345 and 2,620 respectively.

The number of cable messages forwarded at the deferred rate was 17,668, compared with 17,827, a decrease of 159 messages, or 0·9 per cent.

The acceptance of week-end messages to the United Kingdom via Pacific was resumed on the 5th February, 1921, and from the United Kingdom and to and from Canada on the 1st March, 1921.

On the 17th February, 1921, the Auckland–Sydney cable was interrupted. International messages via Pacific to Australia, which were in course of transmission when the interruption occurred, were diverted via New Zealand and Eastern at *pro rata* rates. Communication was restored on the following day.

#### WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY.

The New Zealand wireless-telegraph stations, including Chatham Islands, Samoa, and Rarotonga, have during the past year continued in operation at a high state of efficiency.

Between the 20th December and 2nd January, 1921, arrangements were made for the exchange of Christmas-greeting messages between New Zealand, Apia, and Rarotonga at a reduced rate, the tariff being half the ordinary rate. The concession was freely availed of.

The number of forwarded radio messages shows a decrease of 2·86 per cent., while the number of received messages increased by 8·6 per cent. The amounts earned by New Zealand, however, show a decrease under both headings of 27·68 and 7·8 per cent. respectively.

#### TELEPHONE EXCHANGES.

Five exchanges were opened during the year, and none were closed. Additional switchboard accommodation was provided at 55 exchanges. There is now a total of 296 exchanges.

The work of converting single-line earthworking systems to metallic circuits has proceeded steadily. At the end of the year there were 255 metallic circuit and 41 earthworking exchanges.

The number of new subscribers connected during the year was 8,785, and 7,374 are awaiting connections.

The number of party-line connections now stands at 5,394, with a total of 18,599 subscribers, an increase of 447 and 1,753 respectively.

The total number of telephone-stations (meaning exchange connections of all kinds) in use in the Dominion on the 31st March, 1921, was 88,439. This includes 13,749 extensions and 3,914 bureau and service connections.

The number of telephone-stations at the ten principal exchanges on the 31st March, 1921, was as follows: Auckland, 9,969; Christchurch, 8,065; Dunedin, 5,956; Gisborne, 2,257; Hamilton, 1,865; Hastings, 1,937; Invercargill, 2,129; Napier, 2,065; Wanganui, 2,321; Wellington, 10,615.

The following table shows the distribution of telephones in the Dominion and the four chief centres:—

	Population.	Telephones.	Inhabitants per Telephone.
Dominion	1,218,270	88,439	14
Auckland	157,750	9,969	16
Wellington	107,428	10,615	10
Christchurch	104,972	8,065	13
Dunedin	73,537	5,956	12

The telephone-exchange system now includes 5,441 miles of pole line and 192,027 miles of wire, as against 5,111 and 177,510 miles respectively for the preceding year.

The total revenue received was £533,535, an increase of £114,227 on the previous year's figures.