

As a trial method of overcoming temporary interruptions to telegraph circuits caused through salt spray lowering the line insulation between Napier and Clive the insulators on the Napier–Awatoto section are being washed periodically. The results so far are very promising. Meantime the two telegraph circuits over which the machine-printing system is worked have been diverted to the inland route via Taradale.

As a result of bush-fires during the latter part of the year, seventy poles in the Nelson district (near Murchison) were destroyed. Fortunately, the principal damage was confined to lines of minor importance.

Canterbury Engineering District.—As the result of a heavy snowstorm on the 20th August, all circuits between Kaikoura and Waiau were interrupted. Subsequently it was found that twelve poles, about thirteen miles from Waiau, had been either broken or bent by the weight of snow. Repairs were effected by a gang from Christchurch.

Considerable damage was done to toll lines on the West Coast in January and February by extensive bush-fires. In many cases all the wires in a section had to be re-regulated, while in other cases new wires had to be erected.

With the exception of sections of line which are being or are about to be reconstructed, all the lines in the Canterbury Engineering District are now in good condition, and it is anticipated that there will be a reduction in the maintenance charges.

Otago Engineering District.—Two old pole-lines between Invercargill and Bluff, carrying a good deal of corroded iron wire, have been replaced by a new pole-line and circuits of 70 lb. bronze wire.

POLES AND WIRE.

During the year 128 miles of pole-line and 2,513 miles of wire were erected for telegraph and telephone (toll) purposes, while 199 miles of pole-line and 1,151 miles of wire were dismantled, or, in localities where no longer required by the Department, sold to settlers for use as private telephone-lines.

The lengths of pole-line and wire in use for telegraph and telephone toll purposes on the 31st March, 1927 and 1928, respectively, were as follow :—

Pole-line and Wire.						Year ended 31st March, 1927.	Year ended 31st March, 1928.
Miles of pole-line	..	..	..	..	..	12,798*	12,727
Miles of wire	..	..	..	..	..	61,286*	62,648

* Revised figures.

The telegraph and telephone wire in use on the 31st March, 1928—viz., 62,648 miles—is classified as under :—

	Miles.
Used exclusively for telephone toll traffic	 3,183
Used exclusively for telegraph traffic	 9,813
Used simultaneously and (or) conjointly for telegraph and telephone toll traffic	 49,652

The total length of wire that may be used for telephone toll traffic is 52,835 miles; the total length that may be used for the transmission of telegrams, 59,465 miles; and the length of telephone toll-lines over which telegrams may be transmitted by telephone, 23,767 miles. The total length of Morse circuit derived from the superimposing of telephone circuits is 13,547 miles, and the total length of additional telephone toll circuit improvised from the existing wire circuits by the use of subsidiary apparatus associated therewith (so-called phantom working) is 5,478 miles.

The following table shows the class and number of telegraph instruments and batteries in use at telegraph-offices for the year ended 31st March, 1928 :—