

TELEPHONE-EXCHANGE SERVICES.

AMENDMENTS TO TELEPHONE REGULATIONS.

A number of amendments were made to the Telephone Regulations by Order in Council dated the 3rd October, 1927. The principal alterations have reference to party-line business connections at Class I exchanges; to the charges for bunching subscribers' lines at night for connection with another exchange; and to the charges for the installation of extra equipment at the premises of a subscriber situated beyond the base-rate area of an exchange.

In addition, a regulation was made providing that a subscriber shall not have any right to or interest in any particular telephone-number, and that the Department may, at its discretion, alter or change any number.

PROHIBITION OF USE OF TELEPHONE FOR TRANSMISSION OF MUSICAL ITEMS.

With the development of radio broadcasting there has grown a practice of transmitting musical items over the telephone. Such a practice causes inconvenience to subscribers wishing to obtain the attention of those so using their telephones, and brings about unnecessary wastage in battery-power. The practice is liable also to cause a somewhat serious restriction upon the use of calling-facilities at automatic exchanges. It was deemed necessary to prohibit the use of telephones for this purpose, and with this object in view a regulation made by Order in Council was gazetted on the 20th October, 1927.

MISUSE OF TELEPHONE FOR FALSE OR BOGUS CALL.

A bogus telephone call to a carrier for the purpose of inducing him to leave the carriers' stand on a false mission resulted in a prosecution at Christchurch in February, 1928. Proceedings were instituted under section 10 of the Post and Telegraph Amendment Act, 1922. The offenders were convicted and mulcted in nominal penalties. This was the first prosecution of the kind under the Act, and will probably serve as a warning that the telephone must not be used for such an improper purpose.

TELEPHONE DIRECTORIES.

PRINTING.

An improvement in the indexing of telephone directories has been effected by inserting the name of the exchange at the top of each page. Extra prominence is also given to the special notices to subscribers, particularly in regard to telephone connections of fire brigades and ambulances. These are now printed in red in prominent block type.

USE OF BLOCK TYPE FOR ENTRIES.

It has been arranged that on payment of a small additional fee a telephone-exchange subscriber may have the entry concerning himself in a telephone directory printed in block type. The innovation, which is really a form of advertising, has proved to be popular with a number of business subscribers.

ADVERTISING.

In order to protect the rights of the Department in the matter of advertising in or on telephone-exchange directories, it was found necessary to include in the Post and Telegraph Amendment Act, 1927, a provision authorizing the making of regulations in protection of the rights of the Department in any official publication, and of the interests of any person in any advertisement appearing in or on any such publication, and to prohibit, save with the authority of the Minister, the publication of any list of subscribers to the telephone, or the supply or use of any cover or other device that would obscure any advertisement appearing in or on any such publication. The maximum penalty that may be imposed for infringement is fixed at £50.

EXTENSION OF AUTOMATIC SERVICE TO RURAL LINES.

To enable automatic service to be given to subscribers whose premises are some distance from the exchange and beyond the normal range of automatic operation, an ingenious adaptation of established principles has recently been devised by officers of the Department. It has already been introduced into the Wellington exchange-area, and its extension to other suitable automatic exchanges is being considered. The scheme can be applied to most long-distance subscribers' lines, including party and rural lines having as many as ten subscribers per line. Such subscribers are usually connected with a special rural switchboard operated manually, the subscribers being required to call the operator when desiring connection with another subscriber. By the use of the adaptation referred to, however, connection with a rural switchboard at the automatic exchange and the necessity for calling an operator to obtain another subscriber are obviated.

DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF TELEPHONE-EXCHANGE SYSTEM.

Notwithstanding that the unfavourable financial conditions were reflected in some districts by a less keen demand for telephone connections, the results of the year's operations over the Dominion as a whole were very satisfactory, the new subscribers numbering 12,159, a total which has been surpassed on but two previous occasions. Taking into consideration telephones relinquished as well as instruments installed, 7,651 additional telephones were put into service, making the total number at the end of the year 139,740. If to this number are added the telephones connected with toll stations and non-departmental exchanges, the number of telephones in service on 31st March, 1928, was 144,552, which represents 9.94 telephones for every 100 of the population, a figure exceeded only by the United States of America and Canada.

Auckland Engineering District.—Owing to the non-receipt of some of the essential parts of the switching equipment under order for the extension of the automatic exchanges in Auckland, the