

The number of telephone stations (main and extension) connected with each of the fourteen principal exchanges on the 31st March, 1929, was—Auckland, 18,860; Wellington, 18,539; Christchurch, 11,811; Dunedin, 8,179; Wanganui, 3,757; Palmerston North, 3,133; Hamilton, 2,901; Invercargill, 2,763; Gisborne, 2,706; Napier, 2,697; Hastings, 2,589; Timaru, 2,045; New Plymouth, 1,987; Masterton, 1,967.

The number of party and rural lines on the 31st March, 1929, was 10,266 to which were connected 40,583 main stations—an increase of 758 and 3,204 respectively on the figures for the previous year.

The following table shows, for each class of exchange, the respective percentages of business and residential stations, also the respective percentages of individual- and party-line stations, on the 31st March, 1929 :—

Percentage of			Class I Exchanges.	Class II Exchanges.	Class III Exchanges.	Class IV Exchanges.	Dominion Percentages.
Business stations	..	..	39	33	28	21	30
Residential stations	..	..	61	67	72	79	70
			100	100	100	100	100
Individual-line stations	..	..	89	75	55	37	64
Party- and rural-line stations	..	..	11	25	45	63	36
			100	100	100	100	100

The length of various items of telephone-exchange plant in existence on the 31st March, 1928, and 1929, respectively, was as follows :—

	Pole-line.	Single Duct Line.	Cable.		Wire.			
			Under- ground.	Aerial.	In Under- ground Cable.	In Aerial Cable.	Open Aerial.	Under all Headings.
	Miles.	Chains.	Chains.	Chains.	Miles.	Miles.	Miles.	Miles.
In existence on 31st March, 1928	12,947	35,252	71,225	48,440	308,357	65,633	89,366	463,356
Erected during year	746	2,772	10,160	5,260	39,381	5,919	7,332	52,632
Dismantled during year	35	21	1,775	6,633	10,134	9,379	1,005	20,518
In existence on 31st March, 1929	13,658	38,003	79,610	47,067	337,604	62,173	95,693*	495,470

* Includes 122 miles of earth-working circuit.

The percentages of the total wire-mileage in underground and aerial cables and open aerial wire respectively for the year ended 31st March, 1929, are as under :—

Telephone-exchange wire in underground cables	..	..	68 per cent.
Telephone-exchange wire in aerial cables	..	..	13 „
Telephone-exchange open aerial wire	..	..	19 „

WORLD TELEPHONE STATISTICS.

The official figures for world telephone development (compiled on 31st March, 1927) show that in the matter of telephone density America led the world, with 15·3 telephones per 100 of population; Canada was second, with 12·6 telephones; while New Zealand was third, with 9·5 telephones. Australia and Great Britain occupied sixth and tenth places respectively, with 6·7 and 3·3 telephones per 100 of population. The number of telephones per 100 of population of the world was 1·6.

AUTOMATIC-TELEPHONE EXCHANGES.

Specifications have been prepared and tenders called for complete automatic exchanges for installation at Gisborne, Whangarei, and Marton. Tenders have been received from a number of firms, and these are now under consideration. They disclose some very interesting technical developments, and represent the very latest automatic-telephone engineering practice.

CHRISTCHURCH TELEPHONE EXCHANGE : CONVERSION TO AUTOMATIC OPERATION.

The Christchurch Telephone Exchange, to which over 11,000 stations are connected, is one of the largest in New Zealand to be converted to full automatic operation, and will increase by approximately 14 per cent. the number of automatic telephones in use in the Dominion. But for some unfortunate delays in the delivery of the equipment, the conversion to automatic working would have taken place many months ago. Notwithstanding the delays, however, the actual time occupied in the work of installation compares favourably with that for similar exchanges of like capacity in this