

The number of forwarded telegrams to each hundred letters posted in the colony for delivery within the colony was 8.29, compared with 9.12 in 1890 and 8.57 in 1889.

18,800 money-order telegrams, for £62,407 6s. 5d., were transmitted, compared with 18,468, for £60,869 9s. 3d., in 1890. The telegraph fees amounted to £940. The number and value of money-order telegrams forwarded from offices in the several postal districts will be found in Table No. 20.

Telephone offices were established during the year at the following places:—

Addisons	Kaponga	Ramarama
Ararimu South	Kennington	Rata
Ashley-Clinton	Kew	Rimu
Awahuri	Lake Takapuna	Rotherham
Beaumont	Lowburn Ferry	South Norsewood
Belfast	Makaretu	St. Helier's Bay
Birchwood	Maori Hill	Stoke
Burke's Pass	Maori Point	Tai Tapu
Coal Creek Flat	Maraekakaho	Tariki Road
East Oxford	Merrivale	Tarras
Evans Flat	Mount Linton	Towai
Eweburn	Mount Pisa	Tuapeka Mouth
Fairfax	Mount Roskill	Tuapeka West
Gimmerburu	Mount Somers	Upper Riccarton
Glenham	Ohariu	Wadestown
Glenorchy	Pakuranga	Waihi
Half-way Bush	Patutahi	Woodbury
Hawea Flat	Petone	Waikaka Siding
Huntermville	Punihu	

The telephone offices at Tahoraite, Te Mata, and Wallacetown Junction were closed.

A Morse instrument has replaced the telephone at Waitotara, and the office has again been transferred to the railway-station.

The names of the following offices have been changed: Newtown (receiving office) to Wellington South; Richardson to Stillwater; Petone to Petone Railway; and Boatman's to Capleston.

At the close of the year there were 338 offices connected by telephone.

The total number of telegraph and telephone offices open at the end of the year was 573.

The number of miles of line maintained during the year was 5,349, an increase of 201 miles.

The average cost of maintenance per mile was £5 12s. 7d., compared with £5 13s. in 1890.

The net expenditure out of loan for telegraph extension was £27,772 16s., or £11,481 2s. more than in 1890.

The number of private wires was 114, compared with 102 in 1890. The amount received by way of rent was £670 6s. 9d., compared with £1,236 16s. 8d. received in 1890.

The regulation for opening the principal telegraph offices to the public on Sunday, morning and evening, has been amended by abolishing the morning attendance, without complaint from the public.

The minimum salary for telegraph message boys under the Classification Regulations is fixed at £26 for the first year, but such of the lads as may be favourably reported upon at the end of their first year's service now receive a special allowance of £5 for clothing.

The maximum number of words in the text of inland telegrams—urgent, ordinary, and delayed—accepted at the initial rates for such telegrams, was, in February last, increased from ten to twelve, and the number of free words in the address and signature reduced from ten to six. This, however, was not altogether acceptable to the public, and another amendment providing for eighteen words, but including address and signature, was substituted.

The regulations for delayed telegrams, sent by members of Parliament during the sitting of Parliament, and to members of the Cabinet during the recess, now provide for thirty words being forwarded for sixpence, and four additional words for a penny.

In November last, new forwarded and received telegraph forms were introduced; duplicate or office-copies of received telegrams, except money-order and press, abolished; and received telegrams written with indelible instead of ordinary blacklead pencil. Each form has a "docket"—a perforated line separating the docket from the telegram; on the docket is entered the code-time, office of origin, instructions, &c., and the value of the telegram in stamps is affixed; only the address, text, and signature being written on the other part. The docket and corresponding telegram are given the same number, and are date-stamped, to facilitate tracing or searches. After the forwarded telegrams are telegraphed, and the received handed over for delivery, the dockets are separated from the telegrams, and the dockets and telegrams made up in separate bundles, in numerical sequence, for transmission at the proper time to the clearing-room, where the tracing and checking is now done by means of the dockets; the telegrams themselves not being handled except in the case of a search or for other special reasons.

With the introduction of the foregoing changes another was instituted, providing that statements should be kept of the actual number of telegrams dealt with and the revenue received at each office, in lieu of the returns of periodical countings, on which the telegraph business had been estimated since prepayment by stamps was introduced.

Brief reference must be made to the cable breaks and repairs. The single-core cable across Cook Strait broke on the evening of the 27th April last, during a heavy southerly gale, and the three-core cable was completely severed on the evening of the 14th May, during the height of another southerly gale, accompanied by a very heavy sea. Owing to the length of time which would have elapsed before one of the Eastern Extension Company's repairing steamers could reach