

Two other sub-exchanges have been authorised—viz., Rakaia and Methven, and the work of construction is now in hand.

There are now 3 chief exchanges and 18 sub-exchanges open in the district.

The work of preparation for a central battery switchboard at Timaru is being pushed forward. Many poles have been replaced, messenger wires run, and a number of service wires erected to connect with pole-boxes, which will be placed in position when the cables are run. The gas-engine and drying-out apparatus are already in working-order, and everything will be in readiness for the switchboard when it comes to hand. The necessary alterations to the building are in the hands of the contractor.

Metallic-circuit work in Christchurch is progressing satisfactorily. Thirty-seven miles of cable of various sizes have been suspended since the commencement of conversion work. Of this, 1,399 miles 15 chains of wire are in use, and 901 miles are spare for converting existing earth-circuits and for future requirements, making a total of 2,300 miles 15 chains of metallic-circuit wires erected since the installation of the system was begun. Nearly 1,000 miles of open aerial earth-circuit wires displaced by metallic circuits have been dismantled.

The number of subscribers now on metallic circuit is 1,364, and the circuits are all working satisfactorily.

Two new sections are being added to the switchboard, increasing the capacity to 3,300.

There are 2,350 connections on the Christchurch exchange, of which 2,232 are paying, 44 free, and 74 bureau-connections. The increase for the year was 189. The total number of telephones in use on the exchange, including extensions, is 2,978, an increase of 290.

There are 723 extension telephones in use throughout the district, 628 of which are in Christchurch.

The total number of connections in the district is 3,391, as compared with 2,975 last year, which shows an increase of 416. With extension telephones the total number of telephones in use is 4,111, an increase of 526.

The total length of poles in use in the district is 204 miles 27 chains, and of wire 3,212 miles 7 chains. This is exclusive of 36 miles of dead wire.

Offices.

Twenty-seven new offices have been opened, and one office—Waihao Forks—closed during the year. There are 236 offices in the district, of which 63 are Morse and 173 are telephone stations.

The postal and telegraph business at Rakaia has been removed from the railway-station, and a temporary building is being used.

Alterations are being carried out at the Timaru office in view of the installation of a central battery switchboard in the exchange. Instrument-tables are being refitted and rearranged, and other improvements are in progress. The battery-room is to be downstairs.

The removal of the telephone-exchange at Ashburton to a room upstairs has effected a much-needed improvement in the telegraph arrangements.

A new office is in course of erection at Geraldine, business being carried on in the old building, which has been shifted to make room for the new one.

DUNEDIN DISTRICT.

Construction.

The following new lines and wires have been erected during the year :—

	Poles.		Wire.	
	M.	Ch.	M.	Ch.
Albert Town - Makarora	42	0	42	0
Balclutha-Owaka	6	0	21	0
Catlins River - Tautuku	22	0	22	0
Edendale-Brydone .. .. .	..	..	4	0
Gimmerburn Junction - Ranfurly .. .. .	..	..	1	0
Hillend-Pukepito	8	0	8	0
Invercargill-Makarewa	1	0	1	0
Kelso-Heriot .. .. .	..	..	5	0
Lime Hills - South Hillend	6	40	6	40
Mossburn-Matuku	6	60	6	60
Otago Heads - Harrington Point .. .. .	..	..	1	0
Otara - Slope Point	8	40	8	40
Owaka-Katea	3	20	4	40
Puketeraki-Karitane	1	0	1	0
Riversdale-Waikaia, Morse wire .. .. .	..	..	14	0
Riverton - Centre Island	2	0	9	40
Totaratahi-Reidston .. .. .	..	..	2	40
Wyndham-Mokoreta	14	0	14	0
Telephone trunk wires—				
Dunedin-Gore (Metallic circuit) .. .. .	..	..	200	0
Dunedin-Oamaru (metallic circuit) .. .. .	..	..	146	0
Total	121	0	518	20