

TELEPHONE EQUIPMENT AND TARIFFS.

Division of Wire Mileage—Long Distance Statistics—
Returns by Provinces.

The equipment of telephone companies in Canada last year was represented in 687,728.50 miles of wire and 302,759 telephones. The mileage of wire was divided as follows:—Urban 576,712.75, and rural 111,015.75.

By provinces the mileage of wire was distributed as follows:—

Province.	Urban. Miles.	Rural. Miles.	Total. Miles.
Ontario	9,563.25	29,098.00	38,661.25
Quebec	458,166.00	17,781.25	475,947.25
New Brunswick	13,725.50	7,107.00	20,832.50
Nova Scotia	1,155.50	22,718.25	23,873.75
Alberta	20,165.50	151.00	20,316.50
Saskatchewan	18,122.00	9,253.25	27,375.25
Manitoba	22.00	18,593.00	18,615.00
British Columbia	54,793.00	5,604.00	59,857.00
P. E. Island	1,000.00	1,250.00	2,250.00
Total	576,712.75	111,015.75	687,728.50

Extensions from Quebec.

Two explanations would seem to be necessary: First, the wire mileage credited to Quebec is the mileage of the Bell Telephone system, which extends to all the leading centres of Ontario. Second, the return of the Manitoba Government did not make any distinction between urban and rural mileage, and the total was classified as rural. It is confidently expected that a proper adjustment will be made for the current year.

The urban and rural wire mileage was divided into classes in the following way:—

	Urban. Miles.	Rural. Miles.
Galvanized	140,734.00	82,847.75
Copper	1,926.75	16,334.25
Cable—overhead	192,058.00	6,507.25
Cable—underground	240,118.00	5,182.00
Cable—submarine	1,867.00	45.00

Long Distance Mileage.

The long distance wire mileage reported was 94,750.50, distributed among the various provinces as follows:—

Ontario	1,632.00
Quebec	61,086.00
New Brunswick	6,374.00
Nova Scotia	6,055.00
Alberta	6,700.00
Saskatchewan	5,013.50
Manitoba	5,926.00
British Columbia	1,314.00
Prince Edward Island	650.00

Total long distance 94,750.50

The only form of assistance given to telephone companies, of which definite information could be ascertained, had reference to equipment. The Government of Saskatchewan, under an Act passed in June, 1908, undertook to provide the poles for rural systems.

Use of Various Instruments.

As has been indicated, the number of telephones in use totalled 302,579. Of these, 174,994 were operated by central energy, and 127,735 by magneto. Central energy telephones are those which are popularly described as automatic. The mere removal of the receiver from its hook warns Central. The magneto instruments are operated by the turning of a little handle at the right side, and these are the telephones which are invariably used in rural and small communities. In the light of this brief explanation, the following statement with respect to the number of telephones in use on June 30 last will be understood:—

Province.	Central Energy.	Magneto.	Total.
Ontario	2,265	37,368	39,633
Quebec	133,435	24,565	158,000
New Brunswick	6,547	4,541	11,088
Nova Scotia	7,579	4,630	12,209
Alberta	6,983	7,441	14,424
Saskatchewan	386	8,666	9,052
Manitoba		33,881	33,881
British Columbia	17,799	5,662	23,461
P. E. Island		1,011	1,011
Total	174,994	127,765	302,759

The figures relating to Manitoba were not divided in the report of the Provincial Government, and had to be placed in one column or the other. They were put under the head of "magneto" simply because the wire mileage had been classified as rural, for the reason indicated in a preceding paragraph.

Every effort was made by Mr. J. L. Payne, statistician of the Department of Railways and Canals, Ottawa, in his recent report on telephones, to gather data which it was hoped would enable an analysis to be made of tariffs and tolls throughout the Dominion; but the information received could not possibly be classified. It was not found practicable to establish even a maximum and minimum charge, by provinces, for the use of a telephone. The variations and qualifying conditions were too great. In this situation it was felt that, if a fair and intelligible classification could not be made of the various tolls and rentals reported, it would be well not to attempt the task. Whether or not the details which are on hand can be analyzed in such a way as to form a part of next year's report remains to be seen. Certainly they cannot be put into effective shape for the purposes of this report. This is disappointing; but it is quite unavoidable under the circumstances bearing upon Mr. Payne's primary report.

CROP CONDITIONS IN ONTARIO.

Ontario crop conditions, as reported to the Department of Agriculture during the middle of May showed that fall wheat entered May in a worse condition than has been witnessed for many years. Alternate thawing and freezing in the early half of April developed a covering of either water or ice on portions of many fields that proved fatal to a considerable portion of the young wheat. Reports have been made of losses ranging from 10 to 80 per cent. Taking the province over, the net loss of fall wheat may be placed at about one-third. More would have been plowed up but for clover or timothy having been seeded down with the wheat. Where the land was merely "patchy," barley, oats or other spring grains have been drilled or disced in to save the grass. While low fields suffered most severely, a correspondent suggestively remarks that "Under-drained land is all right." Taking the province by districts, the Lake Erie and West Midland counties have suffered most severely; the Lake Huron counties may be classed as from fair to poor, while the Georgian Bay counties range from fair to good. The Lake Ontario counties have done rather poorly west of Toronto, but fairly well to the east. Further east in the province fall wheat has done well, but it is grown there only in very limited areas. Occasionally mention has been made of the wire-worm, white grub, and the Hessian fly, but the crop so far has suffered less than usual from insect pests. It is of interest to note that in Ohio and Michigan, the states immediately south of our main fall wheat districts, 45 per cent. and 26 per cent. respectively of the fall wheat land has been abandoned this spring.

The clover crop has never been so variably described as to condition, from "poor" to "good" being reported in practically every locality. The latest returns to hand, however, are the most encouraging.

Alfalfa, like clover and fall wheat, this crop has been considerably winter killed, or, rather, has suffered greatly from water, frost, and ice in the spring.

The season is regarded by correspondents as being a week or two later than the average, with grass and other field growth relatively ahead of that of orchard and forest. A large number of cattle and other live stock have been turned out to grass, some of them much too early, both for the animals and the pastures.

Considering the rather backward season, seeding is well forward in some localities. While some farmers have not yet got in all their spring grains, others are already putting in mangels and beets. The seedbed as a rule has been in good, friable condition, except on undrained or very low, wet clay soils. More seeding than usual will be done this season on account of so much fall wheat land having been either reinforced with spring grains or plowed up.

In the more western counties of the Lake Erie group, and in Lambton, a number of peach trees were more or less killed back in the bud, and were at first thought to be destroyed; but later examination showed that the damage was not as bad as had been feared, as the deep snow had in most cases prevented root killing. On the other hand, in what is known as the Niagara district—the leading commercial fruit section of the province—peaches have come through winter with but little harm, and the frost of the 13th and 14th of May was not heavy enough to injure the buds. So far as can be judged from the backwardness of the season, plums and cherries give promise of good yields, and apples are also likely to give a fair show of blossom. Raspberries, blackberries, and other bush fruits were considerably broken down or frozen back as a result of the deep snow and the severe cold, but as a rule they have been merely checked. Strawberries have also suffered, but more from the drouth of last summer than from the winter. However, taking fruit prospects generally, the outlook may be classed as rather encouraging, considering the unusual severity of the past season.

As to the supply of fodder all kinds are scarce and very high in price.

Much matter of interest and value are included in the monthly review issued by the Dominion Bond Company, of Toronto, Montreal and London, England.