

1347. The land telegraph lines are usually owned by governments, the submarine lines by private companies. The United States own no telegraphs, so far as the public is concerned. In the British colonies the telegraphs are, as a rule, under Government control. In 1894 the Government of India controlled 42,707 miles of line and 134,255 miles of wire, exclusive of the Indo-European section; handled 4,184,790 messages, and had a net revenue of Rx. 261,236. At the Cape of Good Hope the telegraphs were built at the expense of the Government. In New South Wales \$4,000,000 have been borrowed to construct the 27,433 miles of wire operated by the state, the net return of which was last year 3.02 per cent of the cost of construction. In New Zealand the telegraph is entirely in the hands of the state, as it is in Queensland. Canada is an exception to most of the British colonies, the telegraph lines being in the hands of companies, only 2,700 miles out of 29,322 miles belonging to the state.

In Europe, the Government control is almost complete. In Great Britain, in 1894 there were 214,804 miles of line, of which 22,771 were private. In Austria-Hungary, Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Sweden, Norway and Switzerland the state owns the lines, excepting those belonging to railways. Denmark owns 2,816 out of 3,674 miles. Russia owns 78,367 miles or about nineteen-twentieths of the total length in the country. In Japan, Government control prevails. In Persia the Government owns about 3,400 miles of wire, and the Indo-European Company 1,090 miles. Brazil controls her lines. In the Argentine Republic, in 1891, of the 20,415 miles 11,250 were national; 1,115 miles of land lines and 8,050 submarine belonged to cable companies. In Chili, in 1892, of 13,730 miles 8,000 belonged to the state.

1348. Telegraphy was the first interest to bring the Governments of the world together to form a union—the first subject on which they sought a mutual understanding and formed a code of regulations, which each of them signed and which all of them have kept. The International Telegraphic Union was founded in Paris, in May, 1865, France calling a convention of European states with a view to put an end to the annoyances, delays and exorbitant charges experienced for want of concerted action. The Paris convention was followed by those at St. Petersburg, in July, 1875, at London, 1879, at Berlin, 1885, and again at Paris, 1890. Twenty states responded to the call in 1865. There were over 100 delegates present at the congress of 1890, and at present thirty-eight different nations and thirteen private companies are subscribers to the constitution. Thirteen other private companies follow the rules of the union, though not regular members, and several others are indirectly connected with it. The central office of the International Telegraph Bureau is at Berne, Switzerland. To Berne are sent all modifications of the tariff, all interruptions of routes, all extensions and changes on each line in the union, to be sent to all the lines affected by wire if of immediate importance, by circular if less urgent. According to statistics published by the International Bureau, 207,505,000 telegrams were despatched in Europe during 1891 and 88,422,000 in the other parts of the world, making a total of 296,017,000 messages, and, according to the same authority, there were 67,465 telegraphic offices in Europe and 31,000 elsewhere.