

AUCKLAND.

An official inspection of the Auckland Fire Brigade was held at the Central Fire Station on the 13th December, 1909, and again on the 16th May, 1910. Subsequent inspections were made of the substations and equipment.

The several "turn-outs" of the appliances were carried out smartly and in quick time, and the various drills—steamer, ladder, hose, rescue, &c.—were performed in an efficient manner, and the members of the brigade appear to be well disciplined, and conversant with their various duties.

The stations and appliances are maintained in good order and condition, but the need for more accommodation at the several stations is very apparent.

During the year the City Council have made considerable improvements to and extension in the reticulation on the higher levels of the city, and a much better supply of water is now available.

A 100-horse-power Dennis-Gwynne petrol motor, with pump capable of throwing 800 gallons of water per minute, has been ordered by the Auckland Fire Board, and it will be placed in the Beach Road Station—that is, in the vicinity of the greater risks of the city, and with special design to the protection of the Harbour Board's property.

The two following interim reports have been forwarded to the Secretary of the Auckland Fire Board:—

SIR,— Office of the Inspector of Fire Brigades, Wellington, 29th January, 1910.

In connection with my inspection of your brigade and its appliances, &c., held on the 13th ultimo, I have to recommend for the consideration of your Board the advisability of obtaining another combined fire-escape and ladder. The large-block risks in Auckland, to which in a number of cases, should a fire of any magnitude occur, access is only possible from the frontages and from very narrow streets, render the provision of a second ladder of a more modern type than that at present in use necessary; and I would suggest the purchase of one similar in design, but of smaller dimensions, to those lately supplied to the Liverpool, Sydney, and other brigades. These machines are both driven and operated by electricity, and have many points in their favour as a fire-brigade appliance, such as being capable of conveying a number of men, carrying hose and other gear, simplicity of manipulation, &c.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

SIR,— Office of the Inspector of Fire Brigades, Wellington, 27th May, 1910.

Following upon my recent visit of inspection to your city, and having in view the rapid increase in number of buildings of large cubical capacity that are adding greatly to the block risks, I beg to submit the following recommendation for the consideration of your Board: The numerical strength of your brigade is insufficient to cope with a block-fire of any magnitude, and, as it would mean a very considerable increase in the cost of maintenance to attach permanently to the brigade such a number of men as might be considered adequate to cope with any emergency, I have to suggest that arrangements should be made, either by the payment of a reasonable subsidy or some such other consideration that may be mutually agreed upon, with the volunteer brigades at present established and operating in the suburban boroughs immediately adjoining the city, whereby a certain number of firemen from each brigade would be available for work at a fire in the city in the event of your Superintendent deeming it necessary at any time to call for such aid.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

During the year ending 30th June, 1910, 75 fires have occurred in the Auckland Fire District, as against 68 for the previous year.

The loss by fire amounted to £36,586, as compared with £12,679, an increase of £23,907.

Out of the total loss for the year, £36,586, the sum of £32,000 was due to the fire at the Strand Arcade on the 16th August.

The estimated cost of the brigade for the year 1910–11 is £7,454, as against £7,276 for 1909–10, an increase of £178.

CHRISTCHURCH.

Considerable changes in the *personnel* and alterations in the organization of the Christchurch Fire Brigade have taken place since the date of my last report. The strength is now 42 of all ranks—viz., Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, 20 permanent and 20 auxiliary firemen—but, in addition, the services of the Railway Brigade are available in cases of emergency.

During my inspection on the 22nd March last it was evident that the members of the brigade attached to the Headquarters Station (I understand that they included a number who had only recently been appointed) were in need of more instruction and drill.

The drills performed by the Chester Street Section were carried out smartly and in an efficient manner.

I understand that from 7.30 a.m. until 7.30 p.m. only eleven men are available for a turn-out to a first call in the city. Much depends upon the first few minutes after an outbreak of fire,