trap at the intersection of the Heretaunga and Warren Streets. Steam was raised to 60 lb. pressure and the engine started to work at 8.17·15 p.m., but no water was obtainable, and it was 8.29·10 p.m. before sufficient water had backed up in the sewer to allow the water to be shown from the first delivery. The second water was shown 1 minute 5 seconds later.

Personnel *of the Brigade*.—There was a full muster of the brigade, consisting of the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, 2 engineers, 24 firemen, and 3 messengers. They are a smart, capable body of men, of good physique, and appear to take an interest in their work, but require more instruction, particularly in the life-saving part of fire-brigade work.

Of the Fire Police there were present—captain, 3 lieutenants, and 7 constables, or 11 out of a total strength of 15 on the roll. They appear to be a capable body of men, and efficient in the duties they are called upon to perform, but they also should receive instruction in such first aid as applies to fire-brigade work.

Station and Equipment.—The present station is inadequate for its purpose; the accommodation for both men and appliances is altogether too limited, and it is impossible to make efficient arrangements for horsing the fire-engine, but some more satisfactory method than that at present existing should be adopted. It is absolutely necessary that a site should be acquired and a suitable station erected thereon. In selecting the site and designing the building future expansion and developments should be carefully taken into consideration. A set of coupling-ladders are required.

Means for extinguishing Fires.—The chemical engine lately acquired by your Board will be found, in conjunction with hand-pumps, a most valuable appliance for dealing with incipient fires, or fires in the earlier stages; but, beyond that stage, matters assume a serious aspect. By reference to figures given above it will be seen that the call was given at 8.8 p.m., and, although the engine was ready to work some ten minutes later, it was 8.29·10 p.m., or 21 minutes 10 seconds from the time the call was given, before the first water was available—this right in the heart of the town, and under, as far as regards the call, what must be considered favourable circumstances; and I consider it my duty to strongly emphasize the danger, as in the event of a late call, for instance, of a disastrous conflagation due to prevailing conditions taking place at any moment. And this risk is always becoming greater owing to the increase of the number of buildings of larger cubical capacity than those formerly built. The more prosperous your town becomes, the more this danger will increase unless adequate means of fire protection are provided. If there is no prospect of installing the gravitation high-pressure system in the immediate future, concrete tanks should at once be put down at various suitable points in the town, so that water to supply the fire-engine will be immediately available in case of necessity. It must be understood that this method would be only a partial remedy, and is not suggested as an alternative to a gravitation or other reticulative supply.

A matter to which I would draw your attention is, at a fire of any magnitude firemen as a rule cannot help their clothing getting wet through, perhaps remaining in that state for hours; consequently there is considerable danger to their health when the water used is drawn from the sewers, as in Hastings.

I have, &c.,
THOS. T. HUGO,
Inspector of Fire Brigades.

A. Collinge, Esq., Secretary, Hastings Fire Board, Hastings.

SIR,— Office of Inspector of Fire Brigades, Wellington, 30th May, 1910.

In reply to your letter dated the 25th instant, addressed to the Minister of Internal Affairs, and asking "for a copy of Inspector Hugo's last report on the Hastings Fire Brigade," I beg to forward you a report in that connection as follows:—

At the inspection muster held at 7.30 p.m. on the 11th April last there were present the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, 18 firemen, and 3 messengers, or 23 out of a total of 25. This was satisfactory.

At the Fire Police muster there were present—captain, lieutenant, and 9 constables, or 11 out of 19 on the roll; 3 constables reported later. This was not very satisfactory. The drill was carried out in a satisfactory manner; all plant and appliances clean and in good order. I have to again (see previous report to your Board, dated 12th October, 1909) recommend the urgency of acquiring a site, and the erection of a new fire station to take the place of the present inadequate building. More attention should be given to ambulance instruction in relation to accidents at fires, particularly by the Fire Police, and they should be supplied with a small first-aid ambulance-box.

Greater care should be taken of the hose. The damage to the length of new hose was caused by its being very badly chafed, presumably when hung up to dry.

I have, &c.,
THOS. T. HUGO,
Inspector of Fire Brigades.

A. Collinge, Esq., Secretary, Hastings Fire Board, Hastings.

The ratepayers of Hastings have recently sanctioned the raising of a loan for the purpose, amongst others, of providing a gravitation system of water-supply; and in view of the present inadequate protection from fire, and the consequent danger of serious loss, it is to be hoped that the work of reticulation will be put in hand with the least possible delay.

During the year ending 30th June, 1910, 11 fires have occurred in the Hastings Fire District.

The loss by fire amounted to £2,831.

The estimated cost of the brigade for the year 1910–11 is £756, as against £708 for the year 1909–10, an increase of £48.