

During the year ending 30th June, 1910, 10 fires have occurred in the Masterton Fire District, as against 17 for the previous year, a decrease of 7.

The loss by fire amounted to £1,166, as against £5,244, a decrease of £4,078.

The estimated cost of the brigade for the year 1910-11 is £926 11s., as compared with £1,334 14s. for 1909-10, a decrease of £408 3s.

MILTON.

Two inspections of the Milton Fire Brigade have been held, 23rd September, 1909, and 14th March, 1910, respectively.

At the first inspection there were present—Superintendent, Deputy, and 9 firemen; with 2 on leave: or, 13 accounted for out of 14 then on the roll.

At a second inspection there were present only the Superintendent, Deputy, and 3 firemen. This poor attendance was due to the Secretary of the Fire Board, after being notified, not informing the Superintendent in proper time of my proposed visit.

The present authorized strength of the brigade is—Superintendent, Deputy, 10 firemen, and 3 auxiliary firemen.

The station and appliances are in good order and condition. Considerable improvements have been made in fire-protection matters in Milton.

The new station was taken over in November last. It is a wooden structure of one story, well designed for its purpose, and containing commodious engine-house, watch, meeting, store, and bath rooms, also sleeping-accommodation for three firemen.

A double-cylinder (of 25 gallons capacity each) chemical engine, manufactured in Christchurch, has been purchased. Two 3-gallon hand-chemicals have also been purchased. One of the hand-brake pumps has been mounted on a suitable carriage.

This brigade is in a much better position to cope with outbreaks of fire than it was formerly, but the want of a proper water-supply may at any time result in a serious loss.

During the year ending 30th June, 1910, 2 fires have occurred in the Milton Fire District, as against 1 for the previous year, an increase of 1.

The loss by fire amounted to £352, as against £320, an increase of £32.

The estimated cost of the brigade for the year 1910-11 is £280, as compared with £300 for 1909-10, a decrease of £20.

NEW PLYMOUTH.

An inspection of the New Plymouth Fire Brigade was held on the 1st September, 1909. Present—Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, 22 firemen, and 5 auxiliary firemen; with 1 on sick leave: total strength accounted for. At the second inspection, at 8 p.m. on the 4th February, 1910, there were present—Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, 17 firemen, and 5 auxiliary firemen; 2 were on duty, 1 on sick leave, and 3 on leave: all accounted for. There was a very satisfactory attendance at both musters, and good discipline is apparent. The present strength of the brigade totals 30 of all ranks. The various drills were carried out in a smart and efficient manner; any omissions were mostly due to the positions of the hydrants not being marked or clearly marked, and the following letter in connection has been forwarded to the Secretary of the Fire Board:—

SIR,—

Office of Inspector of Fire Brigades, Wellington, 10th February, 1910.

I have the honour to inform you that during the drill of your brigade held for inspection purposes it was discovered that the positions of certain of the fire hydrants were very indistinctly marked; in some instances there were no indicators at all. It must be obvious that unless the hydrants are very clearly and distinctly marked, it becomes very difficult to pick them up promptly, particularly on dark or wet nights, resulting in very serious delay in the brigade getting to work. Therefore I would suggest that your Board should endeavour to have this defect remedied with as little loss of time as possible.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

Stations and appliances are maintained in good order and condition. Alterations have been made at the Central Station, and sleeping-accommodation for seven firemen is now available. Minor additions have been made to the equipment during the year.

I have to recommend that the Fire Board should take into consideration the advisability of installing a street fire-alarm system. There are some fairly large risks in New Plymouth, and the loss of some minutes for want of proper facilities to give a prompt alarm may have disastrous consequences. I would draw the attention of the Board to a recommendation contained in my report dated the 20th August, 1908, "The hydrants are spaced quite far enough apart, and some more of them should certainly be laid down in the more congested parts of the town, particularly in the neighbourhood of the larger fire risks."

During the year ending 30th June, 1910, 8 fires have occurred in the New Plymouth Fire District, the same number as in the previous year.

The loss by fire amounted to £2,350, as against £4,950, a decrease of £2,600.

The estimated cost of the brigade for the year 1910-11 is £457 5s. 2d., as against £472 for 1909-10, a decrease of £14 14s. 10d.