

23 seconds after the alarm was given. The Chester Street two-horsed chemical wagon with the Deputy Superintendent and seven men arrived at 10.44.5 p.m., the horsed fire-escape with two men arrived at 10.44.25 p.m. These results were very satisfactory, and the practical work was carried out in an efficient manner, with the exception of the motor-ladder drill. This ladder attached to the motor turbine car was a recent acquisition, and there had not then been sufficient time to become proficient in its working.

The following interim report covers the third inspection :—

“ SIR,— “ Office of Inspector of Fire Brigades, Wellington, 19th April, 1911.
“ Following upon my inspection of the Christchurch Fire Brigade on Wednesday, the 5th instant, I beg to lay before your Board the following matters in connection therewith :—

“ In response to my instructions to get to work at an imaginary fire on the premises of the Co-operative Farmers' Company in Bedford Place, there attended from the Central Station the Superintendent and eight men on the Dennis-Gwynne motor, the Deputy Superintendent and five men on the horsed fire-escape, also from the Chester Street Station the foreman and seven men, or twenty-three all told. The Superintendent informed me that there were five more firemen present than would be immediately available under ordinary circumstances. This means that for an ordinary call the Superintendent, Deputy, and sixteen men would attend, an increase of five when compared with the number available upon the occasion of my previous inspection in March, 1910 (see my annual report for 1910). Later in the night a false alarm was given from the Choral Hall box, but the instrument did not register, and a subsequent examination showed the transmitter had not run down, the push-pins being out of alignment. The alarm was then given from the box at the corner of Hereford and Manchester Streets, and was promptly responded to by the brigade, the first motor arriving in 2 minutes 34 seconds from time of call.

“ During the course of the inspection it was apparent that the men were in need of more fire-escape drill; also, the physical drills were carried out in a very perfunctory manner. Nozzles of a larger diameter should be used on the first delivery. No improvement has yet been made in the hydrant-indicators, but I understand the City Council are now taking the matter in hand. The hydrants are spaced very widely apart, and arrangements should be made for the erection intermediately, in the more congested parts of the city, of pillar hydrants having, in addition to the ordinary screwed outlets, one of sufficient size by direct coupling to supply the motor-pump. Failing these, more of the ordinary hydrants should be laid down. The question of living-accommodation at the several stations, as mentioned in my previous report, should receive your Board's earliest possible attention. A very objectionable feature in this connection is the watch-room at the Central Station being used as a bedroom for several men. The congregating of persons, firemen or strangers, in the watch-room does not tend, in many ways, to the prompt and efficient carrying-out of the brigade-work.

“ I have, &c.,

“ THOS. T. HUGO,

“ Inspector of Fire Brigades.”

The several “turnouts” of the brigade and its appliances at the different stations were accomplished in quick time and efficiently.

The Board has purchased a site for the proposed new Central Fire-station.

A special feature of the calls to fires received by the Christchurch Fire Brigade is the exceedingly large number of malicious false alarms. Of the total number of false alarms received—162—no less than 121 are returned as having been given maliciously, leaving only 41 as from justifiable causes. However, I understand that since gongs have been placed on the posts above each alarm-box of the new system recently installed the number of malicious false alarms received has been very considerably reduced.

During the course of the year 69 fires have occurred in the Christchurch Fire District, as against 86 for the previous year, a decrease of 17.

The fire loss for the year amounted to £12,728, compared with £23,486, a decrease of £10,758.

The cost of the brigade for the year 1911–12 is estimated at £6,645, as against £6,849 for the year 1910–11, a decrease of £204.

DANNEVIRKE.

Two inspections of the Dannevirke Fire Brigade and its equipment have been held—11th October, 1910, and 27th March, 1911.

At the first inspection there were present the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, 15 firemen, and 1 messenger, or 18 out of a then total strength of 21. This was a satisfactory attendance.

The various drills were carried out efficiently, with the exception that there was a tendency to rush about, no doubt caused by overanxiety to perform the required work smartly.

The second inspection is covered by the interim report following :—

“ SIR,— “ Office of Inspector of Fire Brigades, Wellington, 1st April, 1911.

“ Following upon my visit of inspection to Dannevirke on the 27th ultimo, I beg to inform you that the attendance of members of the brigade at the muster—viz., 18 out of a total strength of 22, 4 being on leave—was satisfactory, but more attention, as pointed out after the inspection, should be paid to the drills and matters in connection therewith. With the exception of one of the hand-pumps, the plant and appliances are maintained in good order and condition. Provision should be made for conveying to fires the ladders, hand-pumps, and ambulance-box.