

SIR,—

Office of Inspector of Fire Brigades, Wellington, 19th June, 1913.

Following upon my recent inspection of the Christchurch Fire Brigade and its equipment, herewith I have the honour to forward the following report for the consideration of your Board.

An inspection muster of the brigade was held at the central station at 8 p.m. on the 12th instant, when there were present the Superintendent, Deputy, and twenty firemen. A false alarm was subsequently given from the Choral Hall alarm-box. The alarm was responded to by one motor from the central station and one from the Chester Street station. Three deliveries were got to work into Latimer Square. For experimental purposes the four-wheeled escape ladder was taken out and towed, with occasional stops and starts, by the small motor, with very satisfactory results. The ladder was afterwards got to work and physical drill was carried out in the station. The false alarm was responded to in quick time, and the required drill carried out smartly and in an efficient manner.

Next morning the motor pump was got to work from the river near the Chester Street station, and some of the new hose satisfactorily tested at the same time. The motor and pump has now been in service some three years and requires a thorough overhaul; both the rear wheels and the cooling circulation in particular require immediate attention.

Whilst in Christchurch I was given to understand that the question of doing away with the tank reservoir in Cathedral Square was under consideration. I am strongly of opinion that it would be a most unwise action to do such a thing, particularly in view of the dearth of street hydrants in that neighbourhood; and in reference to the last matter I would again direct attention to the necessity of laying down more street or pillar hydrants in the congested part of the town.

Some new branches and nozzles are required. As demonstrated at the central station, the gauges vary considerably, and they should as far as possible be made uniform.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

I have again, as in past years, to call attention to the necessity of laying down more street hydrants in the congested parts of the city, and particularly in the vicinity of the more hazardous risks.

The new central station now being erected in Lichfield Street is approaching completion, and should be ready for occupation within the course of a few weeks from now.

There is a decrease of 103 in the number of false alarms for the year—47 as compared with 150 for 1912—of which 18 are returned as maliciously given, as against 44 for 1912, and 121 for 1911. This large decrease in the number of false alarms maliciously given is principally due to the fixing of gongs on the alarm-posts in the streets.

During the past year the brigade has received 159 calls, which included eighty-six actual fires—a decrease of seven fires as compared with the previous year.

The fire loss for the year amounted to £12,370, as against £9,345 for last year—an increase of £3,025.

The estimated cost of the brigade for the year 1913–14 is £9,000, as against £7,830 for 1912–13—an increase of £1,170, due to the erection and furnishing of the new central fire-station.

DANNEVIRKE.

Two inspections of the Dannevirke Fire Brigade and its equipment have been made, on the 5th November, 1912, and 11th April, 1913. The two following reports cover the respective inspections:—

SIR,—

15th November, 1912.

An inspection of the Dannevirke Fire Brigade and its equipment was made on the 5th instant, and herewith I have the honour to submit in that connection the following report for the consideration of your Board.

At the inspection muster there were present the Superintendent, Deputy, fourteen firemen, and one messenger: these, with three on leave, accounted for twenty out of a total of twenty-one then on the roll—a satisfactory attendance.

Various drills, wet and dry, were carried out generally in a satisfactory manner, though more practice is required in shipping the stand-pipes.

The plant and appliances are in good order and condition.

I would recommend to your Board that when the new horsed hose-and-ladder cart is obtained the hand hose-reel at present in the central station should be stationed in the old reel-house, provided satisfactory arrangement can be made for its housing there, where it would be convenient to the large risks of the town, with a downhill run all the way.

In reference to our conversation concerning the stability of the particular model proposed for the new horsed hose-and-ladder cart, in my letter bearing on that subject addressed to you and dated 2nd October, 1911, occurs the following: "One modification I would suggest is that the body should be built lower on the carriage and the driver's seat reduced somewhat in height: this for the purpose of giving increased stability." I would again endorse that suggestion.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.