

Sir,—

18th April, 1913.

An inspection of the Dannevirke Fire Brigade and its equipment was held on the 11th instant, and in connection therewith I have the honour to forward the following for the consideration of your Board:—

At this inspection muster there were present the Superintendent, Deputy, and ten firemen, that with two on duty and one on leave accounted for only fifteen out of the twenty then on the roll. This was not a satisfactory attendance.

Various drills were carried out, and during their progress it became apparent how unevenly the hydrants on the footpath in High Street have been laid down; as, for instance, in a space between Allardyce and Gordon Street, a distance of some 300 ft., there are three hydrants; the seat of the first is 7 in. below the level of the pavement, the seat of the second is 5½ in., and that of the third 16 in.; and there are, I believe, others about the town as deep-seated as the last mentioned. One of the stand-pipes is too short to ship properly in the deeper-seated hydrants, and the shank should be lengthened to 20 in.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

The new central station in Allardyce Street was officially opened on the 18th September last. The building is of brick construction, two stories in height, and contains—on the ground floor, engine-house (27 ft. by 36 ft), watch-room, stables, set of married quarters, and all necessary conveniences; on the first floor, large social hall, and four bedrooms for single firemen.

In March last the Board decided they would purchase a second-hand motor, and a car was bought accordingly, but after going to certain further expenses for overhaul, alterations, &c., it was found the machine was entirely unsuited for the purpose, and it is to be disposed of—this result notwithstanding that prior to its purchase the car was inspected and approved of by three members of the Board, and in addition a report was obtained from a motor expert. I was not consulted at all in the matter, and consider the Board made a serious mistake in not doing so.

During the past year two fires have occurred in the district, or five less than during the previous year. The attendance of members of the brigade at eight calls averaged sixteen per call, or 72·7 per cent. of the total strength.

The fire loss amounted to £148, as compared with £916 for 1912, a decrease of £768.

The estimated cost of the brigade for 1913-14 is £881 3s. 5d., as against £685 6s. for 1912, an increase of £195 17s. 5d.

DUNEDIN.

Inspections of the Dunedin fire brigades, their stations and equipment, &c., have been made as follows: Dunedin City—18th, 19th, and 26th September, 1912; 8th and 10th February, 1913; South Dunedin—25th September and 11th February; Caversham—25th September and 11th February; Roslyn district—10th February.

The two following reports, forwarded to the secretary of the Board, cover most points of the inspections:—

Sir,—

Office of Inspector of Fire Brigades, Wellington, 17th October, 1912.

In connection with my inspection of the Dunedin and its subsidiary brigades, with their equipments, in September last, I have the honour to submit the following report for the consideration of your Board:—

A false alarm of fire was given from the box situated at the corner of Cumberland and St. Andrew Streets at 8 p.m. on the evening of the 26th ultimo. In response to the call the horses, hose, and ladder-cart arrived at 8.1.30 p.m.; and the motor-car at 8.1.40 p.m. Two deliveries were got to work in St. Andrew Street, and water from both shown at 8.3.51 p.m.: this result may be considered satisfactory. Ladder and other drills and experiments were carried out, but the course of the inspection-work was interrupted owing to two malicious false alarms being sent in.

At the inspection muster there were present the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, thirteen permanent and seven auxiliary firemen: these, with three permanent and one auxiliary firemen on leave, and one permanent fireman on the sick-list, accounted for the full strength—twenty-seven—of the central section then on the roll, one less than the authorized number.

In company with the Chairman of the Board and the Superintendent an inspection of the South Dunedin section of the brigade was held on the evening of the 25th ultimo, when there were present the Captain, Lieutenant, and eleven firemen: that, with one on leave, accounted for the full strength. Various wet drills were efficiently carried out, and this section of the brigade acquitted themselves in the satisfactory manner usual to them. A reading of the gauge gave a pressure of slightly over 150 lb. in the 4 in. main in St. Andrew Street.

The Caversham section was inspected later the same evening, when there were present the Captain, Lieutenant, and nine firemen: these, with one on leave, accounted for twelve out of a total strength of fifteen on the roll. Here one delivery was got to work. In doing so some little delay was caused owing to a difficulty in opening up the hydrant, but on the whole there are signs of improvement when compared with previous inspections. The pressure on the 9 in. main was 133 lb. Both these sections of the brigade should be provided with suitable hand-pumps, and new branches and nozzles are required at Caversham.

In reference to the trial run on the new chemical and hose motor-car, I consider the car is in every way well adapted and suitable to your requirements, but would suggest, for the reasons men-