

considerably improved, as pointed out at the time, and particularly in the way of conducting the practises in different parts of the town, thus familiarizing the members of the brigade with the various localities, buildings, positions of the street fire-hydrants, &c.

I noticed that whilst in general throughout the borough the hydrant-indicators are mostly in place, and maintained in good order; they are entirely missing along the business portion of Victoria Street, and should be put in place.

Some of the branches require placing on a mandril and straightening.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

A site in Garden Place for the erection of a new central fire-station has been purchased from the Borough Council, and tenders have been invited for the supply of a combined hose-ladder and pump motor fire appliance.

Since the 7th August, 1913, on which date the Fire Board came into existence, the brigade has received nine calls, of which five proved to be for actual fires. The attendance of members of the brigade at eight calls, No. 8. omitted, averaged 9.25 per call, or 51.4 per cent. of the total strength.

The fire loss amounted to £1,155.

The estimated cost of the brigade for the year 1914-15 is £850, as compared with £300 for a portion of the year 1913-14, an increase of £550.

HASTINGS.

Two inspections of the Hastings Fire Brigade and of the Fire Police Corps, with their equipments, have been made—viz., 15th October, 1913, and 7th April, 1914. The two following reports cover the respective inspections:—

SIR,—

6th November, 1913.

An inspection of the Hastings Fire Brigade and of the Fire Police Corps was held on the 15th ultimo, when there were present: Fire brigade—Superintendent, Deputy, seventeen firemen, and two messengers; these, with four on leave, accounted for the full strength of the brigade. Fire police corps—Captain, two Lieutenants, and eight constables, which, with three on leave, accounted for fourteen out of a total strength of fifteen then on the roll.

Various drills, wet and dry, were carried out by the brigade in a satisfactory manner, as also were those performed by the fire police corps.

With a view of stopping corrosion of the fire-engine boiler, as suggested by the Superintendent, the water should be run out and the air allowed to circulate; but arrangements should be made so that the boiler can be quickly refilled in case of emergency, such as anything going wrong with the high-pressure water-supply or in the event of a dangerous outbreak of fire.

The annunciator relay in the watch-room requires fitting with a close-fitting cover to protect it from dust and prevent interference.

The glass in the alarm-box is too thick: 16 oz. glass is quite heavy enough for the purpose.

Notices should be posted in the watch-room and engine-house strictly prohibiting any one other than the authorized persons touching any of the appliances, particularly the electrical fittings.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

SIR,—

17th April, 1914.

Following upon my inspection of the Hastings Fire Brigade and the Fire Police Corps, with their equipments, on the 7th instant, herewith I have the honour to submit the following report for the consideration of your Board.

At the inspection muster there was present: Fire brigade—Superintendent, Deputy, eighteen firemen, and two messengers; these, with two on leave, accounting for the full strength of the brigade. Fire police corps—Captain, two Lieutenants, and ten constables; these, with two on leave, accounted for the full strength of the corps. Satisfactory attendances in both cases.

Instructions were given for the brigade to get three deliveries to work in Eastbourne Street, and all three jets were at work in 1 minute 57 seconds from the time the call was given. Various other drills were carried out by both bodies in a satisfactory manner.

In view of the fact that the high-pressure water-supply is practically dependent upon the one carrying-main, I consider the Borough Council have committed a most injudicious action in filling up the manholes from which the water-supply for the fire-engine was obtained. The greater the static head the more the reticulation is liable to accidents, and a fracture might occur at any time, particularly with a pressure ranging as high as 140 lb., leaving the town unprotected for an indefinite period. As an instance very much in point I enclose cuttings from Christchurch papers, which please return to me when finished with. I have to suggest that your Board should make a strong protest in this matter, and request the Borough Council to reopen the manholes, or, at the very least, two of them, the one at the railway-crossing and the other at the junction of Heretaunga and Warren Streets.

Also, I have to recommend that your Board should give early consideration to the following matters: First, the appointment of a permanent man to act as caretaker and motor-driver. The cottage at the rear of the station might be repaired and let rent-free to one of the married firemen in consideration of his acting as a relief to the permanent man. Second, the provision of a properly-constructed motor fire appliance. It must by now be apparent to your Board that the present system of hiring a motor to attend at the station when an alarm is given is not satisfactory. Third, the installation of a street fire-alarm system.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.