

The following letter, forwarded to the secretary of the Board, explains itself:—

SIR,—

22nd December, 1913.

I am in receipt of a circular issued on behalf of the Hastings Fire Board wherein they offer for sale their steam fire-engine.

I wish to respectfully inform your Board that in disposing of the said engine they are committing a most injudicious action, and quite opposed to the recognized system of fire-protection generally adopted for towns wherein local conditions are similar to those prevailing in Hastings.

I would strongly recommend your Board to reconsider their decision in the above respect and to retain the engine as a stand-by. In any case, I do not think they will be able to obtain anything like the price they are asking for it.

I have, &c.,

THOS. F. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

In reply to the above letter, the secretary informed me that the Borough Council had filled in the street manholes at which it was usual to get the engine to work, and consequently the engine was of very little further use to them. The Board have since made two applications to the Council to reopen the manholes, but up to the present with no result.

The brigade received seventeen calls, of which fourteen proved to be actual fires within the district, or two less fires than during the previous twelve months. The attendance of members of the brigade at sixteen calls, No. 9 omitted, averaged 18·8 per call, or 75·2 per cent. of the full strength. The attendance of the fire police at fifteen calls, Nos. 5 and 9 omitted, averaged 7·73 per call, or 51·5 per cent. of their total number.

The fire loss amounted to £6,402, as against £3,208 for 1913, an increase of £3,194.

The estimated cost of the brigade for 1914-15 is £1,105, as compared with £1,146 for 1913-14, a decrease of £41.

HAWERA.

Three visits have been paid to Hawera—viz., two fire inspections of the brigade and its equipment, 7th October, 1913, and 3rd February, 1914, respectively; and on the 25th March, 1914, for the purpose of testing the improved water supply and pressure as provided by the newly erected water-tower. The following reports, forwarded to the secretary of the Board, respectively cover the three visits:—

SIR,—

26th February, 1914.

An inspection of the Hawera Fire Brigade and its equipment was made on the 3rd instant.

At the inspection muster there were present the Deputy Superintendent, fourteen firemen, and two messengers, or seventeen out of the total strength of twenty-six. Of the remainder, three were on leave, and the Superintendent, with five men, was attending the Auckland Fire Brigades competitions. I found that arrangements had been made for other firemen to sleep at the fire-station in the place of those temporarily absent in Auckland.

Various drills were carried out in a fairly satisfactory manner, but more attention should be given to the "washing" of the various appliances, such as the stand-pipes, branches, &c. Neglect to this detail has the result of lessening the water-pressure (which at present is not too satisfactory), and in some cases seriously so.

The second hand-pump should be carried on the Wilson Street hose-reel. I noticed that some of the street fire-hydrants are without indicators.

The members of the brigade should be provided with hand-axes and pouches.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

SIR,—

2nd April, 1914.

Herewith I have the honour to submit for the consideration of your Board my report in connection with the testing, on the 25th ultimo, of the now completed scheme as carried out by the Hawera Borough Council for the provision of a more efficient water-supply for fire-protection purposes.

The principal features of the scheme as completed are—A water-tower with an upper reservoir having a storage capacity of 100,000 gallons of water, and a lower reservoir with a capacity of 50,000 gallons; an electrically driven direct-coupled pump having a pumping-capacity of 300 gallons per minute delivering into the upper reservoir, with suction connections to the lower reservoir, the town reticulation, and also, as a reserve supply, to the public baths containing 110,000 gallons of water; a 10 in. main for fire purposes only laid from the tower along High Street as far as Victoria Street, and connected at several points with the borough reticulation. The altitude of the upper reservoir floor above the tower base-level is 131 ft. = 56·74 lb. The reservoir when full has a depth of 21 ft. of water, or 152 ft. = 65·84 lb., giving a mean static head of 141·5 ft. = 61·27 lb.

The various deliveries were got to work from different points in High and Princes Streets, the gravitation supply having been previously concentrated in the centre section of the town, and the readings for the first test were taken from gauges on a standpipe shipped on the 10 in. main in High Street opposite the Council Chambers.

The first column of pressures is taken as from the gravitation supply only, the second column with the water-tower supply turned on. Standing pressures: Gravitation only, 58 lb.; with tower supply on, 66 lb. Pressures taken during flow of water: first delivery, 100 ft. hose and 1 in. nozzle—gravitation, 36 lb.; with tower supply, 52 lb.; second delivery, 200 ft. hose and $\frac{3}{4}$ in. nozzle—