

gradually seized until it became almost impossible to move the brakes. An examination at the station afterwards showed that the slides had become clogged with sand and grease. Certain suggestions were made to the Superintendent, and it was arranged that he should make a further trial of the pump at a later date. Should your Board decide, in the event of the said trial proving unsatisfactory, to purchase a further pumping appliance, I enclose herewith catalogues illustrating a number of different patterns of small-capacity manual fire-pumps, some of them obtainable at very reasonable cost. I shall be glad if you will return the catalogues when finished with. In the meantime the brigade should be provided with a couple of hand-pumps, London Fire Brigade pattern.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

At the second inspection there were present the Superintendent, Deputy, seven firemen, and one messenger: these, with one on leave, accounting for eleven out of a total strength of twelve then on the roll.

The chemical-engine was got to work with satisfactory results: the manual pump was also got to work. In reference to the defective pump mentioned in my report dated 13th November, after further inquiry I consider the seizing of the pump is most probably due to foreign matter getting into and heating the working parts, thus causing unequal expansion of the metal.

No improvement has yet been made in the supply of water for fire-extinction purposes in the borough.

The station and plant is maintained in good order.

Three fires have occurred in the district, one more than during the previous year. The attendance of brigadesmen at three calls averaged 8·7 per call, or 58 per cent. of the full strength.

The fire loss amounted to £1,125, as against £1,301 for 1913, a decrease of £176.

The estimated cost of the brigade for 1914-15 is £100, as compared with £120 for 1913-14, a decrease of £20.

NEW PLYMOUTH.

Two inspections of the New Plymouth Fire Brigade, its stations and equipment, have been made—viz., 8th October and 4th February; also an inspection of the Fitzroy section of the brigade was held on the 9th October.

At the first inspection there were present the Superintendent, Deputy, and twenty firemen: these, with one on leave, accounted for twenty-three out of the twenty-four then on the roll. At the inspection of the Fitzroy section there were present the Captain, Lieutenant, and fourteen firemen, these representing the full authorized strength; both musters showing a very satisfactory attendance.

In both cases a series of ordinary monthly drills, wet and dry, were carried out in a satisfactory manner. The following report, forwarded to the secretary of the Board, covers the second inspection:—

SIR,—

26th February, 1914.

An inspection of the New Plymouth Fire Brigade and its equipment was made on the 4th instant.

At the inspection muster there were present the Superintendent, Deputy, and seventeen firemen: these, with two on duty and four on leave, accounted for the full strength of the brigade.

Various drills were carried out in a satisfactory manner.

I have to recommend that a system of private telephone fire-alarms be adopted, on the lines as fully explained to the Superintendent, &c., at the time of my visit. The proposed system can be established at a very small cost, and will in the meantime serve as a substitute for and until conditions allow of the installation of a proper street fire-alarm system.

Whilst in New Plymouth I saw the motor-car recently purchased for the use of the brigade. The car was then still in the hands of the body-builders, and I had no opportunity of testing its efficiency. Whilst I cannot say that the car, lightly loaded and with careful competent handling, will not to some extent prove satisfactory, I consider your Board has made a mistake—this referring to engine-power only and not to any particular make or pattern of machinery—in not purchasing a more powerful car—that is, one of 30 h.p., as previously suggested. The fact of having provided the brigade with the light car in question should not be the cause of any delay in procuring a more suitable fire brigade motor appliance, and in that connection I have to recommend that fresh tenders be called for: those received are now too old for acceptance.

I am, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

Satisfactory financial arrangements having at last been made, tenders have now been invited for the erection of the first portion of a new central station.

During the year nine calls were received, of which seven proved to be actual fires, or two less than during the previous year. The attendance of members of the New Plymouth section of the brigade at eight calls, No. 8 omitted, averaged 17·12 per call, or 68·48 per cent. of the full membership.

The fire loss amounted to £5,383, as against £13,768 for 1913, a decrease of £8,385.

The estimated cost of the brigade for 1914-15 is £1,098 1s. 3d., the same amount as for 1913-14.