

The following, also forwarded to the Secretary of the Board, explains itself :—

Office of Inspector of Fire Brigades, Wellington,

SIR,—

25th May, 1915.

An inspection of the Hamilton Fire Brigade and its equipment was made on the 11th instant, and in that connection the following report is submitted for the consideration of your Board :—

At the inspection muster there was present the Superintendent, Deputy, twelve firemen, and one messenger; these, with one on leave, represent the present full strength of the brigade—that is, six less than the authorized number. A strong effort should be made to increase the membership. As compared with my previous visits, there is an improvement in the attendance, as also in the appearance and actions of the men, and in the condition of the plant and appliances.

It will be necessary to provide some new hose for use with the new motor pump, and in view of the state of the hose-market I would recommend, as suggested when in Hamilton, that quotations be obtained as early as possible from the manufacturer for the supply of, say, 1,000 ft. of hose, to be delivered to the makers of the machine, and by them packed in the same case, and sent out with the motor-engine. It will also be necessary to provide three new branches—one 1½ in., one 1½ in., and two 1 in. nozzles. These, however, can be obtained locally when the machine arrives.

It is probable that a set of the accumulators will be used in England for the purpose of testing the machine prior to shipment, and on that assumption it would be as well when writing to the manufacturers to ask them to see that the accumulators are properly treated before being packed, so as to arrive out here in good condition.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

SIR,—

16th June, 1915.

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated the 11th instant, as also of a plan showing the proposed extensions of the water reticulation throughout the occupied portions of the borough.

In compliance with the request contained in your letter, following are my comments upon the proposed extensions and the reticulation scheme as a whole :—

I note there are streets showing on the plan in which no reticulation is shown, and, whilst I am aware there are a number of streets that are not yet built upon, I have not sufficient local knowledge to identify them. However, presuming that the extensions take in all the inhabited streets, the reticulation is well laid out, the gridironing or circuiting, considering local topography, more than usually well carried out, only two dead ends are shown—viz., at the extreme end of Victoria Street and in Alma Street—both very short, and apparently unavoidable. The street hydrants are set out in a practical manner, well spaced, and sufficient in number. Altogether, with one exception, the reticulation system as set out on the plan may be considered suitable and adequate for its purpose. The exception is the small size, 6 in., of the main laid across the traffic-bridge for the supply of Hamilton East; but the linking-up with the 8 in. main crossing the railway bridge into Claudlands will then provide a sufficient volume for the whole of the east side of the river, so long as it remains a residential district only.

It must be clearly understood that the storage-capacity of the reservoir—140,000 gallons when full—is inadequate, and that in case of an outbreak of fire in any of the more closely built upon portions of the town it will be necessary to immediately start the pumps, so as to augment the supply from that source.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

In the “Return of the Personnel, Plant, &c.,” the membership of the brigade as on the 30th June is set down as consisting of twelve all told. The authorized strength is twenty-two; thus the brigade is ten short of its full complement, and numerically weak to a dangerous degree, particularly in view of other local conditions that will be understood by reference to the reports published above.

Certain improvements to the water-supply—laying of a new 9 in. main along Victoria Street—has been carried out by the Borough Council, and further improvements are under consideration. In January last the Board accepted a tender for the supply of a 65 h.p. motor machine with a 50 ft. extension-ladder, a 350–500 gallons turbine pump, &c.

During the year eighteen calls were received, of which twelve proved to be actual fires within the district—seven more than during the previous year. The attendance of members of the brigade at the eighteen calls averaged 12.9 per call, or 86 per cent. of an average strength of fifteen members—a good record.

The fire loss for the year amounted to £7,562, as against £1,155 for 1913–14, an increase of £6,407.

The estimated cost of the brigade for 1915–16 is £600, as compared with £850 for 1914–15, a decrease of £250.

HASTINGS.

Three visits were paid to Hastings—viz., 22nd October, 1914, 11th February, and 7th June, 1915.

On the occasion of my first visit in October, on account of the poor attendance of members of both the brigade and fire police, due to certain local circumstances, no regular inspection was carried out.

The following report, forwarded to the Secretary of the Board, covers my second visit :—

SIR,—

16th February, 1915.

In accordance with my notification, it was my intention to hold an ordinary inspection of the Hastings Fire Brigade and the Fire Police Corps at 8 p.m. on the 11th instant, but just prior to the