

In addition to the statutory inspections, in accordance with requests received from local and other bodies visits were paid for special purposes as follows:—

- Trentham Military Camp—31st August, 1915: Organization of a fire-protection system.
- Timaru—28th September, 1915: Inspection and testing of manual engine.
- Hamilton—11th October, 1915: Attendance at special Board meeting.
- Woolston—25th November, 1915: Attendance at Board meeting, organization of brigade, &c.
- Featherston Military Camp—2nd December, 1915: Organization of a fire-protection system.
- Trentham Military Camp—30th December, 1915: Inspection of fire equipment.
- Opotiki—13th January, 1916: Inspection and report upon efficiency of the borough water-supply.
- Hamilton—17th January, 1916: Inspection of new site for station, &c.
- Featherston Military Camp—2nd February, 1916: Inspection as to efficiency of fire equipment.
- Westport—20th to 24th February: Attendance at the United Fire Brigades Conference, and delivery of an address to the delegates.
- Featherston Camp—5th April, 1916: Inspection of fire equipment, &c.
- Featherston Camp—2nd June, 1916: Inspection of fire equipment, &c.
- Featherston Camp—23rd June, 1916: Testing of manual engines, new chemical engine, &c.

In all fifty-eight personal visits were made, and, as usual, instruction and addresses were given at the conclusion of inspection drills. Advice has been given to local bodies and others in relation to water-supply schemes, fire risks and protection, purchase of fire plant, &c. Imported machinery has been tested, specifications drawn up, and supervision exercised over the manufacture of plant and appliances in the Dominion.

Following upon an invitation received from the executive officers of the United Fire Brigades Association I attended their annual conference held at Westport in February last, and delivered an address on various fire matters, more particularly dealing with the danger to firemen whilst working at fires from both high- and low-potential electric wires. It is to be regretted the Conference took the retrograde step they did when, notwithstanding strong opposition from all the more experienced brigade officers then present, they adopted the motion "that the pattern of hydrant (standpipe) used at the Wanganui demonstration be adopted for all future demonstrations," for the pattern referred to is the most faulty in design and defective in construction of any standpipe I have ever seen in use for practical fire-brigade work, and the said action is all the more surprising in face of the excellent results obtained with the pattern of standpipe used at the 1915 demonstration.

The principal improvements effected or in course of being carried out are as follows:—

Stations.—Gisborne: A new central station erected and occupied in February last. The building is constructed in brick, two stories in height, and contains an engine-house (41 ft. by 34 ft.), one set of married quarters, three bedrooms accommodating six single men, social hall, board and watch rooms, &c., and all necessary conveniences.

Auckland: A new district station has been erected in Remuera. The building is of one story, constructed of brick, and provides accommodation for single men only. A section with a dwelling thereon was purchased in Manukau Road, and the building altered in a suitable manner to serve as a substation for the Parnell district.

Christchurch: A new district station has been erected at St. Albans, and was occupied in May last. The building is of two stories, in brick, and contains engine-house, one set married quarters, social hall, two bedrooms accommodating five single men, and all necessary conveniences.

Motor Appliances.—Christchurch: The new 40 h.p. combined hose, ladder, and turbine-pump machine was received and put into commission in February last.

Woolston: A second-hand 40 h.p. commercial chassis has been purchased, and a suitable body built thereon locally; it is also fitted with a chemical engine having two 30-gallon cylinders.

Petone: A new 25 h.p. commercial chassis has been purchased, and a suitable body for use as a hose-tender is to be built locally.

Fire-alarms.—Hawera: A street fire-alarm system having three circuits and fourteen boxes has been installed.

New motor appliances are on order as follows: Masterton—A 60 h.p. combined hose, ladder, and reciprocating-pump machine; Whangarei—a 50 h.p. combined hose, ladder, and first-aid pump machine; Hamilton—a 65 h.p. combined hose, ladder, and turbine-pump machine; New Plymouth—a 65 h.p. combined hose, ladder, turbine and first-aid pump machine. The first two-mentioned machines have been on order for over two years, and the last two for over eighteen months. War exigencies have delayed delivery, and up to the present no definite information has been received as to when delivery may be expected.

A very large number of firemen have enlisted, and the difficulty of obtaining suitable men is more or less general throughout the brigades in the Dominion, and has become a very serious matter in some towns.

A matter which I consider it necessary to comment upon is the management of costly brigade motor machines. After acquiring a motor appliance generally some local chauffeur is appointed driver and "motor expert" to the brigade, and having considerable spare time on his hands in most cases turns his attention to electrical inventions with their corresponding experiments with the result, as has happened in more than one case coming under my observation, the machine under his care suffers in consequence. In the particular case I have in view the "expert" has