

At the inspection muster there were present the Superintendent, Deputy, and eighteen firemen ; these, with three on leave, accounting for twenty-three out of twenty-four then on the roll.

Since my last inspection twelve months ago a considerable improvement is apparent in both officers and men, and the drills are conducted in a more thorough and efficient manner—altogether a decided change for the better.

The motor-body is well designed for its purpose and well built, but it was a great mistake to allow as many as nine men to be taught to drive on the machine, and if it is considered necessary to maintain such a number of extra drivers in addition to the chauffeur any more men learning to drive should practice on a less expensive and older machine than the one in question. From a fire brigade point of view there is one weak point in the machine, and that is dependence upon one system of ignition : battery-and-coil ignition is liable to go wrong at any moment, as has happened in more than one instance in my experience ; and I would recommend that a magneto ignition be provided. The dual ignition will greatly increase the reliability of the machine at comparatively small cost.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

ROTORUA.

An inspection of the Rotorua Brigade was made on the 23rd February, and is covered by the following report forwarded to the Secretary of the Board :—

SIR,—

2nd March, 1917.

An inspection of the Rotorua Fire Brigade and its equipment was made on the 23rd ultimo, and in that connection I submit the following report for the consideration of your Board.

At the inspection muster there were present the Superintendent, Deputy, and nine firemen ; these, with seven on leave, representing the then full strength of the brigade.

Various drills were carried out, and the motor with a squad of firemen taken to the King George's Hospital for the purpose of giving the Hospital staff a demonstration of the use of the various fire appliances there placed.

When at the hospital the near-side front tire blew out, and there was a considerable delay before the motor was again ready to proceed ; to prevent a recurrence of such delay in future a Stepney wheel should be obtained and carried on the machine. With some practice it should be possible to attach the Stepney in a little over one minute.

I have again to recommend that the motor be fitted with an ordinary bulb horn for use when out for drill purposes, returning from fires, &c. The siren should only be used when responding to a fire call.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

Up to the time of my visit no improvement had been made in the pressure of the town gravitation water-supply, which, in that direction, is in an unsatisfactory condition.

TAURANGA.

An inspection of the Tauranga Brigade was made on the 21st February, and is covered by the following report forwarded to the Secretary of the Board :—

SIR,—

1st March, 1917.

In connection with the inspection of Tauranga Fire Brigade and its equipment held on the 21st instant, I submit the following report for the consideration of your Board :—

At the inspection muster there were present the Superintendent, Deputy, twelve firemen, and two messengers ; these, with two on leave, accounting for the full strength (eighteen) then on the roll—a better attendance than has been the case at any of my previous inspections of this brigade. The various drills were carried out energetically and in a manner as efficient as could be expected under the various circumstances ; but upon my next visit I hope to see that more attention has been paid to my advice than has evidently been the case in the past ; also, it would be well if more attention was given to brigade matters by local members of the Board, as any apathy in this respect is bound to react on the efficiency of the brigade.

The central station reel is altogether too heavily laden and the load should be reduced in the manner explained at the time. Canvas bags in which to carry the hand-pumps are required, and the leather hose attached to the pumps must be properly dressed and kept pliable. One of the pumps should be placed in the Quarter Acres Station ; and eight canvas collapsible buckets are required, four for each pump.

As more fully explained to the Chairman and members of your Board who were present at the meeting held on the morning of the 21st, I recommend the installation of the " remote control switch " system of fire-alarms, with two alarm-points in the Strand, one on the front of the Central Station, and the control switch in the station, or four points in all. When calling for tenders it will be necessary to give the length in one line of the wire it will require for the two points on the Strand ; also to mention that only one control switch is required, the other three points to be fitted with a first-class pattern of press button ; the three street switches to be enclosed in neat boxes with glass panel fronts having thereon the words " Fire-alarm. Break glass and press button." Alternate tenders might be called