

GISBORNE.

An inspection of the Gisborne Brigade and its equipment was made on the 11th December last, and the following report forwarded to the Secretary of the Board covers the inspection:—

SIR,—

Office of Inspector of Fire Brigades, 9th January, 1918.

An inspection of the Gisborne Fire Brigade and its equipment was made on the 11th ultimo. Following is a report in that connection and including various matters submitted for the prompt consideration of your Board:—

At the inspection muster there was present the Superintendent, Deputy, seven firemen, and four cadets, or thirteen out of a total strength of fifteen then on the roll.

Steam was got up on the stationary fire-engine, and water was shown from a hydrant on the auxiliary salt-water service main in Peel Street within ten minutes from the time the fire was lighted—a satisfactory result. Motor hose, ladder, and other drills, wet and dry, were carried out in a fairly satisfactory manner. The station and appliances are in first-class order, but the rails had not yet been fixed on the barricade around the sliding-poles.

The numerical strength of the brigade, consisting as it does of fifteen all told, including four boys, is dangerously weak, and a strong effort should be made to increase the membership; also the time has arrived and passed when the present caretaker at the Central Fire-station should be replaced by a man who would be of much more general use to the brigade, and who should be a smart experienced fireman and competent to drive the motor.

I understand the Te Hapara district is now incorporated in the Gisborne Borough, and the borough boundary in that direction is nearly three miles distant from the Central Station, although at the present time there are no fire-mains laid down in the Te Hapara district. If the shed and hose-reel situated in Gladstone Road near Carnarvon Street, and which in its present location is of little or no service at all, were removed to a site much nearer to the Lytton Road, it might be of service to some portions of Te Hapara, but would certainly prove of greater service generally, and particularly if men residing in the vicinity were enrolled as members of the brigade.

Another work of importance requiring attention is the installation of a system of street fire-alarms, and early attention should be given to the matter.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

F. Cumming, Esq., Secretary, Fire Board, Gisborne.

To relieve the heavy hose, ladder, and chemical motor-machine, which has now been in constant service for nearly five years, of the longer distance runs, the Board have purchased a 20 horse-power second-hand chassis, and converted it for use as a ladder and hose-tender appliance.

Seventeen fires occurred in the district during the year 1917-18, as against fourteen during 1916-17, an increase of three, with an increase in the fire loss of £3,959. The attendance of the brigade at twenty-eight calls averaged thirteen members per call.

GREYMOUTH.

An inspection of the Greymouth Brigade and its equipment was made on the 8th February last, when there was present at the inspection muster the Deputy Superintendent and seventeen firemen; these, with the Superintendent absent sick and one on leave, accounting for all members then on the roll. The fire-engine was taken to the lagoon and there "got to work," the engine and pump, which had lately been thoroughly overhauled, proved to be in good working-order. The station and various hose-reel sheds with the appliances were found to be in good order and condition. A new back wheel has been fitted on the ladder-carriage, and it is now in serviceable order.

No improvement in the way of fire-protection had been made during the past year in the Blaketown district, but I understand the Borough Council is to sink a well there for the purpose of providing a supply of water for the manual engine. The time has quite arrived when the Board should provide a motor machine for the transport of men and equipment.

An excellent piece of work was performed by the Greymouth Brigade on the occasion of the fire at the Criterion Hotel at midnight on the 23rd January last. An old wooden building, with more than usually narrow, tortuous, and dangerous passages and staircases, coupled with the fact that the building was well alight when the alarm was given, to stop the fire at the stage it was checked was a creditable "job" to officers and men alike.

There was an increase of five in the number of fires, with an increase of £1,215 in the fire loss, as compared with the previous year. The attendance at twelve calls, Nos. 5, 8, and 13 omitted, averaged 15.83 of the total membership of the Brigade.

HAMILTON.

An inspection of the Hamilton Brigade and its equipment was made on the 14th November. The inspection is covered by the following report forwarded to the Secretary of the Board:—

SIR,—

Office of Inspector of Fire Brigades, 27th November, 1917.

An inspection of the Hamilton Brigade and its equipment was made on the 14th instant, when there was present at the inspection muster—Hamilton Section: The Superintendent and eight firemen, that with one absent accounted for the then full strength of the section. Frankton Section: The Deputy and seven firemen, that with three on leave accounted for the full strength.