

also it should be provided with dual ignition. The horses having been done away with, one of the loose boxes is to be converted into a bedroom and the other utilized for storage purposes.

Improvements in the borough water-service are being gradually carried out, and the reticulation of that portion of the town known as the Native Reserve has now been completed.

During the year 1917-18 three more fires occurred, but with a decrease of £1,098 in the fire loss, as compared with 1916-17. The attendance of the brigade at twenty-six calls, Nos. 7, 8, 10 omitted, averaged sixteen members per call.

PETONE.

An inspection of the Petone Brigade and its equipment was made on the 13th June last. This inspection is covered by the following report forwarded to the Secretary of the Board :—

SIR,—

21st June, 1918.

An inspection of the Petone Fire Brigade and its equipment was made on the 13th instant, and in that connection I beg to submit the following report for the consideration of your Board :—

At the inspection muster there was present the Superintendent, Deputy, and fifteen firemen; these, with two on leave, accounting for nineteen out of a total strength of twenty-one then on the roll. Owing to the inclement weather indoor practice only was carried out, and various drills were performed in a satisfactory manner, and the equipment is in good order and condition. The improvement, commented upon in my last annual report, in the personnel, drills, &c., of the brigade still continues, and a word of commendation is due in view of the various improvements to the station premises carried out to an unusual extent by the members of the brigade.

I have again (see report dated the 29th June, 1917) to recommend that a magneto be fitted on the motor hose-tender so to provide dual ignition. I note there is no improvement in the water-pressure; at 7.30 p.m. on the night of my visit there was only 48 lb. showing on the fire-station pressure-gauge, which is an average of 15 lb. to 20 lb. less than my previous readings.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

The Secretary, Fire Board, Petone.

During the past year six fires have occurred in the district, involving a fire loss of £290, or a decrease of two fires and a decrease of £102 in the fire loss as compared with 1916-17. The attendance of the brigade at the thirteen alarms averaged 13.7 members per call.

ROTORUA.

An inspection of the Rotorua Brigade and its equipment was made on the 9th November last. The following report, forwarded to the Secretary of the Board, covers the inspection :—

SIR,—

21st November, 1917.

An inspection of the Rotorua Fire Brigade and its equipment was made on the 9th instant, and in that connection I submit the following report for the consideration of your Board :—

At the inspection muster there was present the Superintendent, nineteen firemen, and three auxiliary firemen; these, with three on leave, accounting for the then full strength of the brigade, which is three short of its authorized number. Various drills with the motor hose-tender and ladders, &c., were carried out in a satisfactory manner, and the station and appliances generally are in good order.

The "Stepney" wheel which I previously recommended should be procured and carried on the motor hose-tender (see report dated 2nd March, 1917) has not yet been obtained, and the necessity for its provision was again demonstrated when, as the motor was standing in the engine-house, one of the back tires blew out at 4.30 a.m. on the morning of the 26th ultimo, and as a consequence the machine was out of commission for some hours, whereas were a "Stepney" available in cases of such accidents it would be in running-order again in less than two minutes. In view of local conditions—*i.e.*, the many large wooden boardinghouses with the large number of visitors staying at them, all strangers and many of them invalids, any delay of the brigade in responding to an alarm of fire may result in most serious consequences; and your Board would be well advised to procure the wheel with as little delay as possible, and I shall be much obliged if you will be good enough to advise me immediately the wheel is placed on the motor. I note the lighting on the motor is not by any means as good as it might be, probably due to some minor fault which should be rectified.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

T. J. Underwood, Esq., Secretary, Fire Board, Rotorua.

According to a report published in the *Rotorua Chronicle* of the 18th June, trouble is still being experienced with the converted motor hose-tender. In this instance when on the way in response to an alarm of fire on the evening of the 17th June the engine stopped, and the machine had to be towed to the scene of action by another motor.

During 1917-18 five actual fires occurred in the district, an increase of three fires, with an increase of £1,122 in the fire loss as compared with 1916-17. The attendance of the brigade at the eight calls received averaged fourteen members per call.