

A second inspection was made on the 8th June, when I found the new central station was in course of erection; but, with the exception of providing a new set of nozzles, none of my previous recommendations had been given effect to, and there was little or no improvement in drill.

MASTERTON.

An inspection of the Masterton Brigade was made on the 31st May, when eighteen officers and men out of a total strength of twenty-five were in attendance. Various drills were carried out in a satisfactory manner.

The 500 ft. of new hose had been used for competition practice, and was more or less chafed and worn in consequence; also, 300 ft. of it had been cut into 50 ft. lengths—a wrong thing to do with new hose intended for fire-brigade work: in any case, another 500 ft. of new hose is required. Upon an examination of the steam fire-engine the inside of the pump-cylinder was so badly scored as to have the appearance of having been machine-milled to the depth of $\frac{1}{16}$ in. or more, also the metal piston was badly scored. The cylinder requires to be relined or renewed. The brigade should be provided with a couple of gas-masks and a hose-repairing outfit.

MILTON.

An inspection of the Milton Brigade was made on the 21st January, when there were thirteen officers and men, out of a total membership of sixteen, in attendance. During the course of the various drills it was evident that, whilst the members of the brigade are an active and willing body of men, they are in much need of more instruction and drill. The manual pump proved to be not in good working-order, due to want of attention. Three out of the seven lengths of hose are no longer serviceable for fire purposes, and some new hose is immediately required.

NEW PLYMOUTH.

An inspection of the New Plymouth Brigade was made on the 23rd October, when there were twenty-two officers and men on parade. Various drills with motor-pump, ladders, &c., were carried out with fairly satisfactory results. The stations and equipment were in good order and condition. The west-end reel-shed should be shifted to Moturoa, as previously recommended. A further recommendation made is that a second permanent fireman be appointed.

OAMARU.

An inspection of the Oamaru Brigade was made on the 20th January, but, as the brigade had been at work all night and day at a large fire, no muster or inspection drills were carried out.

The recently acquired second-hand motor machine fitted up as a first-aid pump and hose-tender is proving only partially satisfactory: the pump itself is satisfactory, but some alterations are required to the fittings; the body of the machine is roughly finished, and the hose-box badly designed.

The following recommendations were made—viz., a set of married quarters to be built on to the present central station, and the brigade to be provided with a 35 ft. trussed extension fire-ladder.

OHAKUNE.

Due notice was sent that I would visit Ohakune on the 4th November, 1919, but by some oversight the members of the brigade were not notified, consequently no inspection of the brigade personnel was made.

The peculiar local conditions obtaining in Ohakune—viz., its extensive area of 3,224 acres with a small township located at the two opposite ends of the borough some two miles apart, its otherwise widely scattered dwellings or other buildings, no established water-supply, &c.—make the formulation of an adequate scheme of fire protection at a moderate cost proportionate to the small number of inhabitants a very difficult matter. I consider the recommendations set down below are the minimum requirements that will provide any reasonable degree of protection, and which, including the manual engine, go very little beyond a first-aid line of protection: A fire-station, on the lines of the sketch submitted, to be erected on the proposed new site; a bell-tower to be erected adjacent to the station; a 1-ton motor-truck to be purchased and a body built thereon (fittings to include a first-aid chemical outfit); three 100 ft. lengths of $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. hose with couplings of Government standard pattern; one 25 ft. and one 18 ft. extension ladder; four hand-pumps fitted with stirrups, hose, and nozzles; two hand chemical extinguishers; twelve collapsible canvas buckets; six helmets; two fire-axes; two lamps; and 50 ft. $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. rope.

PALMERSTON NORTH.

An inspection of the Palmerston North Brigade was made on the 19th May, when nineteen officers and men were on parade. Various drills with motor appliances, fire-escapes, &c., were carried out smartly and efficiently, and the stations and equipment were in good order.

For some time past it has been recognized that the site on which this central station now stands is too small, and will not permit of any further extension of the present building. It is practically impossible to acquire any more land adjoining the present site, therefore it has become necessary to acquire another site of larger area; and in that connection a recommendation was made in respect to a certain suitable site. Another matter requiring prompt attention is the installation of a street fire-alarm system, which matter has been held over for some years past.

PETONE.

An inspection of the Petone Brigade was made on the 17th June, which eighteen officers and men—these representing the full strength—were in attendance. A series of drills was carried out in the efficient manner customary with this brigade, and the station and equipment were found to be in the usual good order and condition.

For reasons set out in previous reports submitted to the Board I have to repeat my recommendation that the brigade be provided with a second motor fitted with pumping-apparatus; also, the station should be connected up with the public telephone service.

PORT CHALMERS.

An inspection of the Port Chalmers Brigade was made on the 27th January, when only eleven officers and men, out of a total membership of eighteen, were in attendance—this, however, due to six of the men having had to return to their work. Various drills were carried out, but not in a satisfactory manner, and more attention should be given to my instruction in such matters.