

Station, &c.

The present station is not well placed in relation to the risks of the town in view of its future trend; neither has it accommodation for firemen to sleep on the premises. Therefore, the building of the new station on the Allardyce Street site recently purchased by your Board should be proceeded with. The bell should be removed to the new site without delay, as, owing to its present position on the western extremity of the town, with the majority of the members of the brigade more towards its centre, they would be unlikely to hear the alarm should a strong easterly wind be blowing at the time. A few words of direction to strangers to turn on the "full water-power" when giving an alarm should be printed in the immediate vicinity of the bell. The out-station should be connected with the new station by direct wire and telephone.

Plant and Appliances.

These are sufficient for present requirements, with the exception that coupling-ladders should be provided, so that they can be taken to a fire at the first call by or with the hose-reel, and a couple of hand-pumps are required.

Water Reticulation and Pressure.

The major portion of the reticulation of the town is fair, but extensions of the mains are required, and no pipes under 4 in. in diameter should be put in. The position of every hydrant should be clearly marked by a conspicuous indicator. The pressure—an average of 80 lb., with a possible increase to 90 lb.—is not looked upon as good for fire-extinction purposes; but, seeing that there are no buildings over two stories in height and of comparatively small cubical area, good results should be obtained with that pressure if care is exercised by the officers of the brigade when getting a number of deliveries to work that the various fire-mains are not opened up over their capacity to supply efficient fire-streams.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

W. Dobson, Esq., Secretary, Dannevirke Fire Board, Dannevirke.

FEILDING.

SIR,—

Office of the Inspector of Fire Brigades, Wellington, 17th August, 1908.

In reply to your letter dated the 4th ultimo, addressed to the Hon. the Minister of Internal Affairs, asking for a report from the Inspector of Fire Brigades embodying his views on the state of your brigade and plant, and his recommendations in regard to the future working of your brigade, I have the honour to forward you the following report:—

At the inspection drill of your brigade, held on the evening of Tuesday, the 20th June last, the muster of members of the brigade—fourteen out of twenty-two on the roll—was very disappointing, particularly as the reasons given for non-attendance were, in some cases, not of a very satisfactory nature. The wet drill under conduct of the Deputy Superintendent was carried out in a workmanlike manner. Water was shown from the first delivery in good time, but there was a delay in getting the second delivery to work, due to the shank of the standpipe being too short.

Personnel of the Brigade.

Of the members of the brigade that attended the muster, the officers present appear to be capable and intelligent, and the men active, willing, of a good stamp and build; but, as I pointed out at the time, there appears to be a want of enthusiasm, and this was made more apparent by the absence of so large a percentage of the strength of the brigade. Any organized body of men take their tone from the officers in command, and, should any lack of interest be manifested by that officer, it very soon works a like effect upon the men. This is a very serious matter for your town, in view of the way in which it is growing, and the number of new and comparatively large buildings being erected. The chief officer of a fire brigade who has the success of his brigade at heart, volunteer or permanent, and who will take the trouble to study, outside the mere routine work, the very varied subjects bearing on fire extinction, prevention, and life-preservation, can make it most interesting to his men, and very quickly instil into them an enthusiasm for the work, and this work should be carried out on the lines as suggested in my address to the members of your brigade.

Site for New Station.

Of the sites shown to me during my visit to Feilding I consider the Hobson Street one the most suitable.

Plant.

Several of the standpipes require the shanks lengthening, and they should be made of uniform length. Fire-ladders are required; three 10 ft. lengths of coupling-ladders would be most serviceable. Two C pattern "London Fire Brigade" hand-pumps, fitted with stirrups, should be obtained; also some larger bore branch-nozzles are required.