

The muster of the brigade—two officers and fifteen firemen—and Fire Police—two officers and ten men—at 9.15 p.m., or 10 minutes from time of first call, was very satisfactory. The muster on the following evening was also satisfactory.

The attendance at the two musters prove that both Fire Brigade and Fire Police take an active interest in the work, and such drill that they were called upon to perform was carried out smartly, and I am pleased to say that an improvement is manifest since my last visit.

I would again recommend that a couple of hand-pumps should be obtained immediately; also, a set of coupling-ladders are required.

A plan of the reticulation of the town, with the diameters of the various mains plainly marked thereon, should be provided for the information of the officers and men of the brigade. This knowledge is very necessary, enabling fire-brigade officers to decide quickly and correctly how many deliveries may be safely taken from the mains in the vicinity of a fire.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

R. Brown, Esq., Secretary, Masterton Fire Board, Masterton.

MILTON.

Two inspections of this brigade have been made—9th September and 26th March respectively.

At the first inspection, on the 9th September, at 7.1 p.m., a call was given at the station for a supposed fire at a point some 200 yards distant. Two deliveries were got to work, and the first water was shown at 7.4.25 p.m., or 3 minutes 25 seconds from time of call. At the muster following the Superintendent and eleven men were present, and instruction on various matters was then given.

At 8.27 p.m. on the 26th March a surprise false alarm of fire was given by ringing the fire-bell. The plant was got to work, and water shown at 8.32.17 p.m. The brigade was mustered at 8.37 p.m., 10 minutes from time of first call, and the Superintendent and ten men were reported present. The full strength is Superintendent and eleven men.

The officers and members of this brigade are a smart, willing body of men, well drilled in the use of such equipment as they are provided with; and they deserve credit for the results hitherto obtained from their old-fashioned obsolete plant and other disabilities under which their work is carried out.

Milton is a town covering an area of 265 acres, of a flat nature, and has a population of about fourteen hundred. The buildings are of wood generally, and, with the exception of those in the main street, are mostly of a detached residential character. There is no public water-supply, and in case of fire water for extinction purposes has to be obtained from privately owned wells or tanks. The principal equipment of the brigade consists of two small brake pumps, each placed in a small round tank, with a holding-capacity of about 20 gallons, which are mounted on low trucks with wooden wheels, about 14 in. high. The working-capacity of the pumps is about 25 gallons per minute each. There is also 800 ft. of 2 in. hose and two 18 ft. coupling-ladders. This plant is absolutely inadequate to deal effectively with even an ordinary dwellinghouse well alight. The question of a public water-supply system is, I believe, under consideration by the local authorities. In the meantime, however, the brigade should be equipped with a hand-drawn chemical engine, double cylinder for preference; a couple of hand-pumps, "London Fire Brigade" pattern; and the present manual trucks mounted on more suitable wheels.

NEW PLYMOUTH.

SIR,— Office of the Inspector of Fire Brigades, Wellington, 20th August, 1908.

Referring to your letter dated the 31st July, 1908, addressed to the Hon. the Minister of Internal Affairs, asking that your Board should be furnished in all cases with copies of Inspector Hugo's reports on your Fire Brigade, I have the honour to forward you a report bearing on matters in connection with your brigade, as follows:—

Inspection.

At 8.12 p.m. on the 17th July I gave a call at the Central Station for an imaginary fire at a place about 120 yards distant, directing that two deliveries should be got to work. The first water was shown at 8.15.5 p.m., or 3 minutes 5 seconds from the time of call. The second water was shown at 8.17.35 p.m. These results were not very satisfactory, but I believe there was some little misunderstanding in the station in reference to the call. Some trouble was experienced later at the second standpipe. During the further inspection I found there was considerable room for improvement in matters of drill and instruction.