

HASTINGS.

Three inspections of the Hastings Fire Brigade and the Fire Police Corps with their equipments have been made—viz., 9th October, 1911; 15th February and 5th June, 1912.

At the first inspection there were present of the fire brigade, Superintendent, nineteen firemen, and three messengers, that with four on leave accounted for the full strength of the brigade, twenty-seven then on the roll. Of the Fire Police there were in attendance Captain, two Lieutenants, and ten constables, that with five on leave and one sick accounted for nineteen out of the full strength of twenty all told.

Various test drills, wet and dry, were carried out in a satisfactory manner.

The following two reports, dated 27th February and 13th June respectively, cover the later inspections:—

“ Sir,—

“ 27th February, 1912.

“ An inspection of the Hastings Fire Brigade and the Fire Police Corps was held on Thursday evening, the 15th instant, when there was present, of the Fire Brigade, the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, twenty-one firemen, and three messengers; these, with two firemen on leave, account for the full strength of the brigade—viz., twenty-eight all told. Of the Fire Police Corps there was present the Captain, one Lieutenant, and six constables, with five on leave and five absent, or an attendance of eight out of a total strength of eighteen—an unsatisfactory result.

“ There was a turnout of the steam fire-engine and the chemical engine, with a discharge of the latter; but, seeing that the water from the newly installed high-pressure system will be available for fire-suppression purposes in the course of a few weeks' time, and that it is my intention, when such is the case, to hold a comprehensive inspection drill, no extensive drill was carried out on this occasion. An inspection of the nearly completed new Central Fire-station was made on the 16th instant, after which certain faults and deficiencies, mostly of a minor character, with the exception of the grading of the engine-house floor, was pointed out to the architect, who promised to have matters rectified.

“ In view of the near completion of the water-supply it is necessary to supply the brigade with suitable equipment, and I would recommend the following appliances should be provided: Four double-headed stand-pipes with 3 in. barrels; four branches; two $\frac{7}{8}$ in., four 1 in., and one $1\frac{1}{8}$ in. nozzles. A pressure-gauge should be fixed in the watch-room, as also a plan of the water-main reticulation hung there.

“ I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

“ Inspector of Fire Brigades.”

SIR,—

“ Office of Inspector of Fire Brigades, Wellington, 13th June, 1912.

“ I have the honour to inform you that an inspection of the Hastings Fire Brigade and the Fire Police Corps with their equipments was held on the 5th instant. Of the brigade there were present the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, twenty firemen, and three messengers: that, with two on leave and one absent, accounts for the full strength of the brigade—twenty-eight—a satisfactory muster. Of the Fire Police, with a total strength of nineteen on the roll, there were present the Captain, two Lieutenants, and nine constables, with three on leave, two sick, and two absent—an improvement when compared with previous attendances of the members of this corps at my inspections.

“ Readings of the standing pressure on the newly installed high-pressure water-supply reticulation was taken at various points, the water being turned on from the reservoir for the purpose. The pressure registered at the corner of Market and Lydon Streets was 126 lb., and at two different points in Heretaunga Road 127 lb. and 127½ lb. respectively. These readings perfectly agree with the static head and the height of the water in the reservoir at the time—a very satisfactory result.

“ Certain experiments were carried out with different lengths of hose and nozzles, and during their course it was apparent that some of the hose was not in sufficiently good condition to stand the pressure of water that is now available, the whole stock of hose requires testing, and any lengths found defective either repaired or replaced. Also, difficulty was experienced with some of the couplings owing to there being several different gauges of thread amongst them: this, however, has been remedied.

“ As suggested while in Hastings, instead of building a gallows for the one purpose of hose-drying, the bell-tower at present standing on the Railway Reserve should be removed from thence and erected at the fire-station, its normal place: it could then be utilized for hose-drying, drill, and lookout purposes, &c. I noticed, during the course of the before-mentioned experiments, that there was a tendency to handle the appliances more roughly than was at all necessary: this should be corrected by the brigade officers whilst the usual drills are being carried out. There are several matters in connection with the station fittings, as pointed out in my previous report, not yet carried out, though I understand they will be attended to in due course.

“ I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

“ Inspector of Fire Brigades.”

A new Central Fire-station of brick construction has been erected on the corner of Market and Lydon Streets, and the brigade is now in occupation. The building provides, on the ground floor, engine-house (36 ft. by 40 ft.), Board-room, watch-room, three bedrooms, three horse-stalls, and conveniences, &c.; on the first floor, married quarters for caretaker and recreation-room. Some details yet require attention.