

No hand-pumps, as recommended several times, have yet been supplied to the brigade, nor has the Superintendent yet been provided with telephonic communication.

Two fires have occurred in the district, the same number as during the previous year.

The fire loss amounted to £700, as compared with £18,747, a decrease of £18,047.

The estimated cost of the brigade for the year 1912-13 is £225, as against £242 for the year 1911-12, a decrease of £117.

#### MASTERTON.

Two inspections of the Masterton Fire Brigade and the Fire Police Corps, with their equipments, have been made—viz., 18th and 19th December, 1911, and 7th June, 1912; also, a visit was paid to Masterton on the 9th November last.

The two following reports, forwarded to the secretary of the Board, dated 4th January and 12th June respectively, cover the inspections held:—

“SIR,—

“4th January, 1912.

“I have the honour to inform you that I inspected the Masterton Fire Brigade and the Fire Police Corps, with their equipments, &c., on the 18th and 19th ultimo, and beg to submit the following report for the consideration of your Board.

“Of the fire brigade there were present nineteen; these, with two on leave, account for twenty-one out of a total strength of twenty-two. Of the Fire Police Corps there were present sixteen, with two on leave, or eighteen accounted for out of twenty on the roll.

“The drills performed were carried out satisfactorily. The plant and appliances generally proved to be in good order and condition. One horse of the pair is inclined to be a little fractious, and requires more training for its work.

“The firebell at the Central Station was rung for testing purposes, and it was found that with the water-pressure registering 50 lb. to the square inch on the station-gauge the bell rang very slowly and feebly, leading to the supposition that with very little less pressure it will not ring at all. Those unsatisfactory conditions may be due largely to a considerable reduction in the available pressure, being caused by the comparatively small diameter (1½ in.) of the supply-pipe running from the 6 in. main in Queen Street to the engine, and in which pipe I understand there are two very acute elbows that would tend to further reduce the velocity. A suggestion has been made that a 2 in. pipe should be run from the 6 in. main in Dixon Street direct to the engine connection, and I would recommend that that should be done. Also, it might be possible to increase the bore of the engine; but that matter should be referred to some competent engineer to overhaul the engine and advise on the subject.

“According to the log kept at the Central Station the water-pressure not infrequently falls to below 40 lb. to the square inch, and I would recommend that a portable canvas cistern should be provided and carried on the fire-engine.

“At present the brigade do not carry any ladders when responding to an alarm of fire, and their absence at arrival on the scene may lead to serious and even fatal consequences; therefore I would recommend that four 10 ft. 6 in. coupling-ladders be provided; they can be fitted to and carried on the Fire Police van.

“Whilst in Masterton I noticed a number of verandahs having all-glass tops, some having the appearance of being only lately erected. These verandahs prove at times a very dangerous obstacle to firemen, and I would recommend your Board should suggest to the Borough Council the advisability of passing a by-law making it compulsory in future for any person erecting an all-glass-top verandah to provide a gangway not less than 2 ft. in width along the whole length directly under the first-floor windows, with a solid panel 2 ft. in width running from the street-edge to the said gangway at both ends of the verandah. A similar by-law is in operation elsewhere.

“I have, &c.,

“THOS. T. HUGO,

“Inspector of Fire Brigades.”

“SIR,—

“12th June, 1912.

“I have the honour to inform you that I held an inspection of the Masterton Fire Brigade and the Fire Police Corps on the 7th instant.

“Of the brigade there were present the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, and sixteen firemen; these, with one on leave and one absent, accounted for the full strength of the brigade—a satisfactory attendance.

“Of the Fire Police Corps, out of a total strength of twenty, there were present the Captain, three Lieutenants, and five constables; the remaining eight were accounted for as four on leave and four absent. This was not a satisfactory muster.

“A test of the water-pressure at various points was carried out. On the 6 in. main in Queen Street a standing pressure of 72 lb. was registered; when compared it showed that the station gauge was weak to the extent of registering 5 lb. more than the actual pressure. With 100 ft. of hose and a ¾ in. nozzle the working-pressure from this main was 49 lb., with 37 lb. at the nozzle. Worksoy Road, 4 in. main—standing-pressure, 74 lb.; working-pressure, same conditions, 47 lb. Hogg Crescent, 3 in. main—standing-pressure, 75 lb.; working-pressure, same conditions, 30 lb.

“As illustrated at the time, a couple of the nozzles used were defective, and should not be used for fire-extinction purposes. A number of the branches are more or less badly dented, and they should be put on a mandril and straightened.