

was given to understand, is the maximum pressure now available. With one delivery at work off the main in Jackson Street, having 100 ft. of hose and 1 in. nozzle, a drop to 64 lb. was observed; with a second delivery from a second hydrant there was a drop to 57 lb. The readings taken showed that the gauge at the fire-station was weak to the extent of registering 2 lb. more than the actual pressure.

"The turnout and required work was carried out in an efficient manner.

"The plant and appliances are maintained in good order and condition.

"An inspection of the new Central Station now in course of erection was made, and in that connection it will be borne in mind that the centre section of the building was originally of one story only, and the position of the sliding-pole was fixed accordingly; but as the building of the social hall is now being proceeded with it would be better, for various reasons, as pointed out, if the position of the pole was altered, placing it immediately behind the front centre pillar in the engine-house. The alteration should not entail any extra cost.

"I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

"Inspector of Fire Brigades."

At the request of the Fire Board two special visits have been paid to Petone: 21st November, 1911, inspection and report in respect to the most suitable of the competitive plans for a new Central Fire Brigade Station; 12th January, 1912, conference with Board in reference to station plans, water-pressure, &c.

The new Central Fire Station is now being erected in brick, and should be ready for occupation in a couple of months' time.

During the last four years there has been a steady decrease in the water-pressure. In October, 1908, the maximum pressure available was about 96 lb.; in April, 1911, this had dropped to about 80 lb.; and at the present time it stands at only some 69 lb. This is becoming a serious matter, and if the pressure continues decreasing at the same rate, very soon it will be quite inadequate for fire-protection purposes.

The brigade has attended eighteen calls, three more than during the previous year; these included ten actual fires; a decrease of two.

The fire loss amounted to £3,209, as compared with £3,719, a decrease of £510.

The estimated cost of the brigade for 1912-13 is £1,247 7s. 6d., as against £762 6s. 7d. for 1911-12, an increase of £485 0s. 11d. The increased expenditure is due to the purchase of a site and the erection of a new Central Fire Station.

ROTORUA.

Following upon a poll held in November last, Rotorua has recently been proclaimed a fire district, and the Fire Board was constituted last month.

An inspection of the brigade and its equipments was made on the 28th ultimo, and following is a report in that connection, forwarded to the Chairman of the Board:—

"SIR,—

"1st July, 1912.

"I have the honour to inform you that I held an inspection of the Rotorua Fire Brigade, with its stations and equipment, on the 28th ultimo; also, a series of tests of the water-pressure was carried out, and the following is my report in those connections.

"At the inspection muster there were present the Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, and twelve firemen; these, with one on leave and one on the sick-list, accounted for the authorized strength of the brigade—viz., sixteen all told. They are to all appearance an active, capable body of men, and of good physique. The various drills required were carried out in a smart and willing manner. Mistakes made were, on the part of the men, due to a misunderstanding of the orders given; but it is evident that more instruction and drill is required by the brigade as a whole.

"The nozzles used are, as demonstrated at the time, all more or less defective. The stock of hose, some 900 ft. in all, is an insufficient quantity, and some of it is apparently not in the best of condition. There is not a sufficient number of stand-pipes, and the shanks of those there are shorter than they should be.

"The present station in Haupapa Street is inadequate for its purpose, and is in bad condition as a building. The small hose-reel shed at Ohinemutu, with its equipment, is in a most neglected condition. There is only a partial reticulation of the gravitation water-supply throughout the borough, which has a population fluctuating from two to three thousand, and comprises an area of 4,140 acres, but some 2,000 acres of that amount consists of reserves. The reticulation, however, covers the more populous portion of the town, the remaining part being mostly of a widely detached residential character. The pressure tests taken in the afternoon were from a hydrant on the 10 in. main opposite the Lake House Hotel, Ohinemutu, registering 47 lb.; 4 in. main opposite the Geyser Hotel, Whakarewarewa, 40 lb.; 6 in. mains corner Fenton and Hinemoa Streets, 55 lb.; 10 in. main corner Fenton and Haupapa Streets, 57 lb. Tests were also made for the purposes of showing the difference in this pressure when the supply required for the bathhouse, &c., was being used and when cut off, also the time required to cut off and make the absorbed pressure available for fire purposes. It was found that this supply absorbed some 8 lb. of pressure from the 10 in. main in Fenton Street, but in the case of a large fire can be made available in a few minutes. The midnight pressure averages, I understand, 8 lb. to 10 lb. higher than the