

AUCKLAND.

Two inspections of the Auckland Fire Brigade, its stations and equipment, have been made—viz., on the 15th and 17th December, and the 11th and 13th May.

At the first inspection the turnouts at the different stations were carried out smartly and in quick time, and the various drills performed in an efficient manner. The second inspection in May is covered by the following report, forwarded to the secretary of the Board :—

SIR,—

2nd June, 1914.

An inspection of the Auckland Fire Brigade, its stations and equipment, was made on the 11th and 13th ultimo.

The turnouts were carried out smartly and efficiently, and the stations and appliances are maintained in good order and condition.

I note the marking of the street fire-hydrants is still in a most unsatisfactory condition.

In company with the Superintendent an inspection was made with a view to formulating a comprehensive scheme for the proper protection of the largely increased district, due to the more or less recent incorporation with the city of the Boroughs of Parnell, Grey Lynn, and Arch Hill, and that has nearly doubled the area now under the jurisdiction of the Auckland Fire Board. The inspection included also the Remuera Road District; that apparently will shortly be also incorporated with the city.

The conditions call for the erection and equipment of a new station in Grey Lynn. Unless that is done, when the Ponsonby section of the brigade attend a city call, as it must continue to do, it leaves for the time being Ponsonby, Grey Lynn, and Arch Hill entirely unprotected; and even were that condition not present, local topography (intervening gullies, &c.) makes it impossible to afford efficient protection from the existing stations.

The proposed site for the new station in Manukau Road, Parnell, is a very suitable one, and is so situated that protection can be extended to Newmarket when that borough is united with the city, as eventually it must be. This station is urgently required, and the building should be proceeded with with as little delay as possible.

Remuera—approximate greatest length two miles and three-quarters by something over two miles and a quarter at its widest part—is altogether too large a district to be efficiently protected from outside its own boundaries, and when incorporation with the city takes place it will be necessary to make self-contained provision for its protection.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

It was found necessary to replace the auxiliary brigade operating in the Parnell district by permanent firemen, and a street fire-alarm system consisting of seven circuits having twenty-eight call-points has been installed; also a 40 h.p. motor hose-tender has been stationed there. An extension of the street fire-alarm system has been made in the Grey Lynn district.

The Borough of Grey Lynn has been incorporated with the city, and negotiations are now proceeding with the view of amalgamating the Remuera Road District; also, there is a movement having as its purpose the incorporation with the city of several of the suburban districts, altogether making at the present time the question of efficient protection for the Auckland Fire District a very complicated one.

During the year the brigade received 194 calls, of which ninety-five proved to be actual fires occurring within the district, eight more than during the previous year.

The fire loss amounted to £5,596, as against £41,147 for 1913, a decrease of £35,551. This, notwithstanding the annual increase in the number of fires, is the lowest fire loss in Auckland for the last six years—that is, since the proclamation of the Auckland Fire District.

The estimated cost of the brigade for the year 1914–15 is £10,256, as compared with £10,110 for 1913–14, an increase of £146.

CHRISTCHURCH.

Two inspections of the Christchurch Fire Brigade, its stations and equipment, have been made—the 2nd and 3rd December, 1913, and the 12th and 13th March, 1914; also two special visits have been paid—viz., the 25th September, official opening of the new central station; and the 9th June, attendance at Board meeting in connection with tenders for the supply of a new motor machine. Both inspections are covered by the following reports forwarded to the secretary of the Board :—

SIR,—

24th December, 1913.

An inspection of the Christchurch Fire Brigade and its equipment was held on the 3rd instant. During the course of the inspection the motor-pump was taken down to the river at Chester Street, and there got to work with certain results, the particulars of which have no doubt already been laid before your Board by the Superintendent.

I have to direct attention to the urgent necessity for the provision of an additional motor appliance. All the motors now at the central station are, and of necessity under present conditions when running to fires, loaded up with both men and gear to a greater degree than is consistent with safe and reliable working; and with these conditions in view I would suggest to your Board the advisability of not running any of the appliances to fires outside the Christchurch Fire District until such time as an additional motor is available. Also, I have again to call attention to the necessity of providing new branches and nozzles to replace the defective ones now in use.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.