

The station and equipment are maintained in good order and condition, and the fire-alarm system has given satisfaction throughout the year.

A very considerable improvement has been effected in the water-pressure. A reading of the gauge at 3 p.m. on the 1st June showed a pressure of 92 lb.; again at 8 p.m. on the same date the gauge registered 93 lb.; and I was informed that for some time past the pressure has averaged 85 lb., and, in fact, had not been below 75 lb. for at least the last four months.

#### MILTON.

Two inspections of the Milton Brigade and its equipment have been made—viz., 22nd September, 1915, and 23rd March, 1916. At the first inspection muster there were present the Superintendent, Deputy, eleven firemen, and one messenger; these, with three on leave, representing the full strength of the brigade.

The recently acquired manual rotary pump, which has a stated discharging capacity under pressure of 50 gallons per minute, was taken out and worked in a satisfactory manner, and it is suited to local conditions, but the carriage appeared to me to be light in construction for the weight it has to carry.

The station and equipment are maintained in good order.

The following report, forwarded to the Secretary of the Board, covers the second inspection:—

SIR,—

7th April, 1916.

At the inspection muster of the Milton Fire Brigade held on the 23rd ultimo there were present the Superintendent, Deputy, and five firemen; these, with one on leave and three new members (not then actually enrolled), constitute the full strength of the brigade at the present time. The numerical weakness of the brigade is due to six of its members having enlisted, but an effort should be made to increase the membership.

The chemical engine was taken out and one of the cylinders discharged. A slight creepage from one of the cylinder screwdown covers had taken place, and care must be exercised in this matter, as any such creepage has the effect of weakening the charge.

Both axle-arms of the manual-pump carriage are bent. The axle in its present shape is too small in its cross-section; also, the wheels are too light in construction for the purpose, and they should be replaced. 200 ft. of new hose is required, making 500 ft. in all.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

#### NEW PLYMOUTH.

Two inspections of the New Plymouth Brigade, including the Fitzroy section, with their stations and equipment, have been made—viz., 7th September, 1915, and 25th January, 1916.

The following report, forwarded to the Secretary of the Board, covers the first inspection:—

SIR,—

15th September, 1915.

An inspection of the New Plymouth Brigade, together with the Fitzroy section thereof, was held at 8 p.m. on the 7th instant. There were present at the inspection muster: Central section—Superintendent, Deputy, and eighteen firemen; these, with two on duty and two on leave, accounting for the total strength then on the roll. Fitzroy section—Captain, Lieutenant, and eleven firemen; these, with four on leave, representing the full strength of the section. The attendance in both cases was satisfactory, and the station and plant is maintained in good order.

Various drills were carried out, but not in a satisfactory manner; in fact, the drill efficiency of the central section of the brigade is not on a par with what it has been in the past. This would be a serious matter at any time, but is particularly so now in view of the modern equipment, such as motors, fire-alarms, &c., with which the brigade is now being provided, and it calls for a high efficiency on the part of the personnel of the brigade if results commensurate with the expenditure are to be obtained. During the drills in question considerable confusion and excitement was manifest, but no doubt some of the fault was due to there being a number of newly enrolled and inexperienced men who have had to be taken on to replace those experienced firemen who have enlisted for active service. In any case the men require more drill and instruction, and under the present condition of things drill once a month is not sufficient. I have to further suggest that, instead of the Superintendent conducting the drill himself, that work should be left in the hands of the Deputy and other officers, the Superintendent in this matter confining himself to criticizing and correcting the work of his officers, and which, generally speaking, should be done in private.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

At the second inspection there were present, of the central section, the Superintendent, Deputy, and fourteen firemen; these, with one absent on duty, accounting for seventeen out of a total strength of eighteen. Of the Fitzroy section there were present the Captain, Lieutenant, and ten firemen; these, with three on leave, accounting for fifteen out of a total strength of sixteen.

Various drills, wet and dry, were performed in a satisfactory manner, the two sections of the brigade working together much better than upon the occasion of my previous inspection, and altogether there was a manifest improvement in carrying out the required work.

The building known as the Eastern Fire-station has been removed from its original position and re-erected on the new site in Fitzroy. The building has been renovated, and is now well suited to the requirements of the Fitzroy district.

All the stations and equipment are maintained in good order.