

### CHRISTCHURCH.

An inspection of the Christchurch Brigade, its stations and equipment, was made on the 13th and 14th February last. The turnouts and various inspection drills were carried out in satisfactory and efficient manner, and the stations and equipment found in good order and condition.

To provide additional married accommodation two more rooms have been built at the Sydenham district station. An order has been placed for the supply of a second 55 horse-power 300-400 gallons motor turbine pump combination machine, but the date of its delivery is problematical, also there is on order a 35 ft. "Ajax" telescopic ladder and a "Draeger" smoke helmet.

Two matters requiring attention are: the erection of a substation at a point somewhere midway between the Central and St. Albans Stations and the borough boundary, and the provision of an 85 ft. mechanically operated fire-ladder. Both matters are essential to the efficient working of the brigade, and should be taken in hand at the earliest opportunity that circumstances will allow.

During the year 1917-18 seventy-five actual fires occurred in the district with a fire loss of £29,860, a decrease of one fire, but an increase of £20,692 in the fire loss as compared with 1916-17.

### DANNEVIRKE.

An inspection of the Dannevirke Brigade and its equipment was made on the 4th April last, when there was present at the inspection muster the Superintendent and fourteen firemen, these with three on leave representing the full strength then on the roll.

During the course of the inspection it was apparent that details of drill are not being carried out, nor is the hose being cared for, in accordance with my previous suggestions. Some of the branch and hose coupling washers are in a bad state, causing a serious loss of water and pressure in consequence; also I noticed that the clips of the offside wheel of the hose reel had slipped backwards on the frame, consequently, the rims of the wheels in front were  $2\frac{1}{2}$  in. wider apart than were the back rims, thus causing heavier draught than if the wheels were running true, a serious matter with a hand-drawn vehicle.

Reference to my previous reports will show that for a long time past I have repeatedly had occasion to adversely comment upon the management of the brigade so far as the methods of drills and the proper care and maintenance of the equipment is concerned, and I consider a change is necessary as recommended in my report dated the 6th April, 1918.

Four fires occurred during the year, involving a fire loss of £113,834, of which total £113,649 was due to the disastrous fire that took place on the 22nd October, 1917.

### DARGAVILLE.

My first inspection of the Dargaville Brigade and its equipment was made on the 23rd and 24th May last. The inspection is covered by the following report forwarded to the Secretary of the Board:—

SIR,—

1st June, 1918.

An inspection of the brigade was made on the evening of the 23rd May, when there was present at the inspection muster the Superintendent, Deputy, and nine firemen; that, with two on leave, accounted for the full strength (thirteen) then on the roll. Certain drills were carried out but, owing to the exceptionally bad weather prevailing at the time, not to the extent I would have liked. However, such drill as was gone through was carried out smartly and in a practical manner, and the personnel of the brigade, both officers and men, appears to be both capable and energetic.

*Recommendations.*—The authorized strength of the brigade should be increased to twenty, this particularly in view of the fact that the fire apparatus is transported by man-power.

A motor-chassis should be purchased and a suitable body built thereon.

A small shelter-shed, just sufficiently large enough for the purpose, should be built at the Mangawhare end of the town and the recently purchased hose-reel housed there, and the reel equipped with hose, standpipe, and branch, the other reel to remain at the Central Station for use in emergencies.

The present fire-alarm-bell system is not satisfactory, the ringing apparatus is inefficient, and one of the towers in a dilapidated condition. In place of the large expense involved in providing a new tower, another bell, &c., I recommend that three sirens be installed, this, however, subject to a report from the Chief Officer of the Wellington Brigade that the sirens installed in his city are giving satisfactory results.

The stock of good hose, 1,462 ft., this including the 1,000 ft. of new hose, is by no means an ample supply, and in view of the present stringency and cost it should be conserved with the greatest possible care.

The brigade should be provided with a reducing hose and nozzle, as also with one hand-pump London Fire Brigade pattern.