

HOKITIKA.

An inspection of the Hokitika Brigade and its equipment was made on the 11th February last, when there was present at the inspection muster the Superintendent, Deputy, and twenty-two firemen; these, with one on duty and three on leave, accounting for twenty-eight out of the full complement of thirty.

Various drills, wet and dry, were carried out in an efficient manner; the manual engine was got to work in particularly fast time. The station and various hose-reel sheds, with all equipment, was found to be in their usual good order and condition.

During the year 1917-18 twelve fires occurred in the district, an increase of ten, with an increase of £1,265 in the fire loss as compared with 1916-17. The attendance of the brigade at the fourteen calls averaged 22·8 members per call.

LAWRENCE.

An inspection of the Lawrence Brigade and its equipment was held on the 18th April last.

At the inspection muster there was present the Superintendent, Deputy, and two firemen; these, with one absent on sick-leave and one on leave, accounting for only six out of the total membership of nine then on the roll. On account of the poor attendance at the muster no inspection drills were carried out, but the station and equipment was found to be in good order.

The authorized strength of the brigade is twelve all told, but under present circumstances it is found impossible to obtain a sufficient number of suitable men to keep the membership of the brigade up to its full strength, and a number of the older more active residents of the town should be required to undergo sufficient fire drill to enable them to be of service to the brigade in case of need.

During the past year two fires have occurred in the district, with a fire loss of £997. The attendance of members of the brigade at the two fires numbered six at the first and five at the second.

MASTERTON.

An inspection of the Masterton Brigade and its equipment was made on the 18th June last, when there was present at the inspection muster the Superintendent, Deputy, and twenty-three firemen; these, with four on leave, accounting for twenty-nine out of the total membership of thirty.

Certain drills were carried out in a satisfactory and efficient manner, and the station and equipment were found to be in good order and condition, with the exception that all three lengths of the fire-engine suction-hose are more or less perished, and at least two new lengths should be obtained.

The motor hose-tender and extension-ladder, which has been on order for a long time past, is now, I understand, on the point of delivery. Nothing has yet been done in the matter of extending the street fire-alarm system.

The same number, ten, of fires occurred as during the previous twelve months, but with a decrease of £227 in the fire loss. The attendance of the brigade at twelve calls, Nos 4, 6, and 15 omitted, averaged 18·25 members per call.

MILTON.

An inspection of the Milton Fire-station and the fire-equipment was made on the 17th April last, when the plant and appliances were found to be in good order, but the new suction-hose for the pump is too long for efficient working; a new pair of couplings should be procured, and the hose cut into two lengths, 18 ft. and 12 ft. respectively.

Two calls occurred during the year, of which one proved to be a chimney-fire and the other an actual fire causing a loss of £100.

NEW PLYMOUTH.

An inspection of the New Plymouth Brigade and its equipment was made on the 19th September last, and is covered by a report forwarded to the Secretary of the Board as follows:—

SIR,—

28th September, 1917.

An inspection of the New Plymouth Brigade and its equipment was made on the 19th instant, and in that connection I beg to submit the following matters for the consideration of your Board:—

At the inspection muster there was present the Superintendent, Deputy, and fourteen firemen; these, with one on leave, accounting for the then full strength of the brigade—viz., seventeen all told. The numerical strength of the brigade is at present much lower than is consistent with safety, and with every prospect of further decrease. However, this matter, including suggestions for a remedy during the present exceptional conditions, has already been the subject of a report submitted to your Board.