

Fire-alarms: Another alarm-point is required somewhere in the vicinity of the hose-reel station in Laing Street, and I suggest the installation of a siren alarm. Such an alarm, worked by hand, water, or electrical power, can be installed at a cost of about £15.

Principal equipment: A motor fire-machine to be provided; and in this connection I recommend the purchase of a 1-ton chassis, the body to be built to suit your requirements, and preferably to be fitted with a first-aid apparatus. There is 1,350 ft. of the 2½ in. canvas hose in stock, but of that amount, I am informed by the officers of the brigade, not more than 800 ft. is in good serviceable condition. There should be not less than 2,000 ft. of good hose in hand; therefore it will be necessary to purchase 1,200 ft. of new hose. A 30 ft. extension ladder is required. The two hand-pumps should be taken out of the pails, the leather cups removed, and stirrups fitted on the barrels of the pumps; the leather delivery-hose should be softened with soft-soap in hot water and then treated with dubbin. Six collapsible canvas buckets are required.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,
Inspector of Fire Brigades.

J. W. Fraser, Esq., Secretary, Fire Board, Port Chalmers.

The brigade completed its first year of work under Fire Board control on the 30th June. During the year four fires occurred in the district, and the fire loss amounted to £6,635.

ROTORUA.

An inspection of the Rotorua Brigade and its equipment was made on the 10th December, 1918, and following upon which a report was forwarded to the Secretary of the Board containing the result of the inspection, summed up as follows: "Altogether, fire-protection and fire-prevention matters in Rotorua are in a most unsatisfactory condition, and I have before pointed out that, owing to the number of large two-story boardinghouses, largely habited by more or less infirm people, such conditions should be more than usually efficient." The report mentioned also contained my recommendations for the improvement of the service.

A second inspection was made on the 27th May last, when, whilst some improvement was manifest and some of the faults were in course of being remedied, the service generally was still in an unsatisfactory state.

Chiefly as the outcome of the resignation of the officers and the experienced members of the brigade, the matter culminated in the appointment of a Magisterial Commission of Inquiry, which, after some adjournments, ultimately sat on the 25th to 28th June, and again on the 15th July, 1919. After an exhaustive inquiry the Magistrate practically sums up his finding in the following sentence: "The fire-prevention service generally is not satisfactory yet, for the following reasons . . ." The reasons follow, and the Board would be well advised to, as far as lays in their power, take the necessary steps to place the fire service in Rotorua on a satisfactory footing.

During the year four fires occurred in the district, as against five for the previous year. The fire loss for 1918-19 amounted to £62, as compared with £1,133 for 1917-18, a decrease of £1,071.

TAURANGA.

An inspection of the Tauranga Brigade was made on the 28th May, 1919. The following report covers the inspection:—

SIR, —

5th June, 1919.

An inspection of the Tauranga Fire Brigade and its equipment was made on the 28th ultimo, when at the inspection muster there were present the Superintendent, Deputy, thirteen firemen, and one messenger; these, with two on leave, accounting for the full strength of the brigade—viz., eighteen all told.

Various wet and dry drills were carried out in a satisfactory manner, and, in this particular, great improvement is manifest when compared with conditions previously subsisting.

I herewith confirm the recommendation made at the meeting of the local members of your Board as to the suitability of the 1-ton truck chassis for use in your town as a fire-brigade motor appliance, and in that connection enclose herewith a report containing full particulars in the matter.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,
Inspector of Fire Brigades.

The Secretary, Fire Board, Tauranga

Three fires occurred in the district during the past year, as against two during the previous year. The fire loss for 1918-19 amounted to £1,129, as compared with £504 for 1917-18, an increase of £625.