

GREY.

SIR,—

Education Office, Greymouth, 31st March, 1889.

As provided by section 102 of "The Education Act, 1877," I have the honour to present the following report of the proceedings of the Grey Education Board for the year 1888 :—

The Board consists of seven members—three elected and four nominated, as provided by "The Westland and Grey Education Boards Act Continuance Act, 1887." The nominated members at the beginning of the year were Messrs. Nancarrow, Marshall, White and Barkley; and the elected members Messrs. Kerr, Petrie, and Helms. At the election held in March, 1888, the only change which took place was the substitution of Mr. W. C. Smith for Mr. Helms as an elective member. Mr. Nancarrow held the position of Chairman at the beginning of the year. At the ordinary meeting in April Mr. Barkley was elected Chairman. Mr. Nancarrow was again chosen to represent the Board on the Greymouth High School Board. During the year the Board held eighteen meetings, twelve ordinary and six special.

The number of schools at the end of the year was twenty-one, there being two more classified schools than at the end of 1887, and one less aided school. The new schools are at Richardson and Ngahere, on the line of the Greymouth and Reefton Railway. The Lake Brunner aided school was closed before the end of the year. There are seventeen school districts.

Of the twenty-nine teachers above the grade of pupil-teacher employed at the end of the year sixteen were uncertificated. For the four smaller schools it is not at all probable that certificated teachers could be procured. Of the thirteen uncertificated teachers four only sat at the examination for E certificate, held in January of this year, and one for the D certificate. One teacher entered for completion, and two pupil-teachers were present, making altogether eight teachers belonging to the district who attended the examination. Five of the candidates for Class E, and the candidate for Class D obtained partial success. No candidate obtained a complete pass.

Considering the difficulty connected with the procuring of special instruction in this district, the Board is of opinion that those who have presented themselves for examination and have been unsuccessful should be granted another opportunity, and also those who have given an acceptable explanation of their absence. In cases where the teacher has elected not to sit for a certificate an immediate change should be made, especially if the school be above the lowest grade.

The following table gives the average weekly roll number, and the average attendance for each quarter from the 1st January, 1885, to the 31st December, 1888 :—

Year.	Average Weekly on the Roll.						Average Attendance.					
	Mar.	June.	Sept.	Dec.	Average for four Quarters.	Percentage increase previous Year.	Mar.	June.	Sept.	Dec.	Average for four Quarters.	Percentage increase previous Year.
1885	1,346	1,423	1,448	1,426	1,410·75	...	1,070	1,063	1,096	1,113	1,086	...
1886	1,484	1,492	1,504	1,513	1,498·25	6·2	1,141	1,107	1,111	1,136	1,123·75	3·5
1887	1,561	1,582	1,652	1,643	1,609·5	7·4	1,135	1,192	1,211	1,241	1,194·75	6·3
1888	1,799	1,844	1,816	1,796	1,813·75	12·7	1,415	1,418	1,364	1,358	1,388·75	16·2

It was in 1885 that the division of the Westland District into the Districts of Westland and Grey took place, and the above table shows a considerable rate of progression on the part of the Grey District since that period. The roll number has increased by 404, and the average attendance by 303.

Table No. III. shows that the Board received for general purposes during the year the sum of £5,733 6s. 6d., and expended £5,910 14s. 1d., including a debit balance of £499 on the 1st January, 1889, leaving a debit balance at the end of the year of £194 4s. 3d. The Board's position, as far as the General Account was concerned, was therefore better by £304 15s. 9d. than at the end of 1887, but the difference does not represent the actual saving effected during the year.

Apart from the deficiency existing at the end of 1887, the reduction made in the capitation grant and the alteration in the manner of computing the average attendance would alone have made it necessary for the Board to make reductions in expenditure. The Board therefore reduced both staffs and salaries, abolished all money payments to Committees, and payments and bonuses on account of pupil-teachers. The Board considers it very creditable to the teachers that, notwithstanding their too-often recurring discouragements, the results of the last yearly examination are on the whole so satisfactory, and prove that there has been no diminution of effort.

For expenditure upon school buildings the Board received during the year the sum of £654 12s., and expended £631 18s. 3d., including a debit balance of £87 at the beginning of the year, the credit balance at the end of the year being £22 13s. 9d.

The Board has to thank you for your liberality in providing the funds for a new building at Richardson, but at the end of the year there still remained many works which the Board found itself unable to undertake, owing to insufficiency of funds. The Greymouth, Taylorville, Dobson, and Cobden Schools were very much overcrowded, and the two first named were in a very dilapidated state generally. There was hardly a school building in the district which did not require some expenditure to place it in a thoroughly habitable condition, and several of the buildings badly needed painting. The schools at Kynnersly, Ngahere, Maori Gully, Taylorville, Dobson, Cobden, and Richardson are unprovided with residences. A statement is attached hereto showing that the sum