GREY.

SIR,— Education Office, Greymouth, 4th March, 1897.

In compliance with the provisions of section 102 of "The Education Act, 1877," I have the honour to submit the following report of the Board's proceedings for the year ending 31st December, 1896.

The Board consists of the following members—viz., Messrs. Richard Nancarrow, Hon. James Kerr, William Robert Kettle, Joseph Petrie, Bernard McGuire, John Byrne, Frank White, S. K. Harris, and James Marshall. The members who retired in March were Messrs. Petrie, McGuire, and Byrne; these gentlemen were re-elected. At the ordinary meeting held in April Mr. Richard Nancarrow was unanimously elected Chairman of the Board for the current year. During the year the Board held eleven ordinary meetings and one special meeting. The following figures represent the attendance made by each member: Mr. Petrie, 12; Mr. McGuire, 12; Mr. Harris, 12; Mr. Kettle, 11; Mr. Byrne, 11; Mr. White, 11; Mr. Nancarrow, 10; Mr. Marshall, 9; Mr. Kerr, 7. Mr. Kerr was granted three months' leave of absence to enable him to attend to his parliamentary duties.

SCHOOLS AND ATTENDANCE.—There were twenty-eight schools in operation at the close of the year, being an increase of three on the previous year. The teachers in the employ of the Board comprise 18 males and 42 females, or a total of 60. These were classified as follows: Principal teacher, 1; head of department, 1; head of school, 8 males and 3 females; sole teacher, 3 males and 13 females; assistant-teachers, 3 males and 13 females; pupil-teachers, 3 males and 12 females. The annual examination of pupil-teachers was held in December. Five pupil-teachers were examined, of whom four qualified for a higher grade. The total number of scholars at the end of the year, including twenty-one attending the Greymouth High School, was 1,671. The classification of the twenty-eight schools is as follows: Under 25 pupils, thirteen; between 25 and 50 pupils, seven; between 50 and 100 pupils, six; between 100 and 300 pupils, one; between 300 and 500 pupils, one.

SCHOLARSHIPS.—The annual examination of candidates for scholarships was held in December. For the four scholarships (two town and two country) there were eighteen competitors—four from the Greymouth School, and fourteen from the country. Albert West and Philip Anderson, of the Greymouth School, won the first and second term scholarships, and Daniel Byrne and Arthur Coumbe, of the Paroa School, secured the first and second country scholarships respectively.

REGULATIONS.—The Board, after long and careful consideration, adopted, early in the year, a set of new regulations to better regulate the salaries and allowances paid to teachers; these regulations came into force on the 1st July.

BUILDING OPERATIONS.—The Board received during the year £885 9s. 10d., including a credit balance of £835 9s. 10d., and expended during the same period £1,394 4s. 1d., leaving a debit balance of £508 14s. 3d. The principal items of expenditure were as follows: Greymouth School, repairs and inside painting, &c., £500; Ahaura, addition to school building, £168; Blackball, addition to building, £208; Taylorville School, repairs, £105; erection of new school at Twelve-mile, £71 9s. 6d. The large outlay on the Greymouth School was rendered necessary owing to the bad state of the building, while the additions to the Ahaura and Blackball Schools had to be made in consequence of the increased attendance. It will thus be seen that the funds at the disposal of the Board were soon exhausted, and, as urgent repairs to several of the country schools demand immediate attention, it is obvious that the grant of £870 allocated to this district for the ensuing year will be wholly inadequate to meet even the most pressing requirements.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Education. RICH. NANCARROW, Chairman.

GENERAL STATEMENT of RECEIPTS and EXPENDITURE for the Year ending 31st December, 1896.

Receipts.		£	s.	d.
To Balance—				
On Building Account		835	9	10
On General Account		172	12	10
On deposit		13	10	0
Government grant towards cost of removing Westbrook School		30	0	0
Contribution from miners		20	0	0
Government statutory capitation ..		5,241	5	0
Scholarship grant		108	0	5
Inspection subsidy		125	0	0
In aid of technical classes		6	16	9
Payments by School Commissioners, for primary education..		110	0	0
District High School fees		86	0	0
Grant from Greymouth High School Board		60	0	0
Contractors' deposits received ..		12	0	0
Balance—				
Building Account ..	£507 13 3			
Add unpresented cheque	1 1 0			
		508	14	3
		£7,329	9	1

Expenditure.		£	s.	d.
By Office staff—Salaries..		175	0	0
Departmental contingencies		26	6	3
Inspector's salary		200	0	0
Examination of pupil-teachers ..		3	3	0
Teachers' salaries and allowances (including rent, bonus, &c.)		4,910	10	9
Incidental expenses of schools ..		202	9	1
Scholarships—				
Paid to scholars		112	10	0
Examination expenses		3	3	0
School buildings—				
New buildings		351	15	3
Improvements of buildings		633	13	1
Furniture and appliances		269	9	3
Sites		20	10	0
Plans, supervision, fees, &c. ..		118	16	6
Members' travelling allowances ..		104	6	0
Printing		101	15	6
Advertising		38	5	0
Technical classes		6	16	9
Contractors' deposits refunded ..		25	10	0
Balance—				
On General Account ..	£92 19 8			
Less unpresented cheques	67 10 0			
		25	9	8
		£7,329	9	1

RICHARD NANCARROW, Chairman.
F. W. RIEMENSCHNEIDER, Secretary.

Examined and found correct—J. K. WARBURTON, Controller and Auditor-General.