The Board is pleased to report that its relations with the several Committees throughout the year have been of the most amicable nature, and desires to express its appreciation of the valuable service rendered by the Committees in the cause of education within the district.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Education. A. P. Seymour, Chairman.

General Statement of Receipts and Expenditure for the Year ending 31st December, 1897.

Receipts.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
To Balance—		
Dr. on Building Account	1,233 6 5	
Cr. on General Account	1,474 13 9	
		241 7 4
Government grant for buildings ..		1,430 0 0
Government statutory capitation ..		6,706 5 0
Scholarship grant		90 0 0
Inspection subsidy		200 0 0
Payments by School Commissioners ..		100 0 0
Books		304 12 7
Deposits		28 17 0
Rents		3 11 0
Refunds		3 7 0
School libraries		28 6 0
		£9,136 5 11

Expenditure.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
By Office Staff—Salaries		441 5 9
Departmental contingencies		156 5 3
Capitation to aided schools		1,277 12 4
Teachers' salaries and allowances (including rent, bonus, &c.)		4,535 9 9
Incidental expenses of schools ..		466 11 10
Scholarships		120 0 0
School buildings—		
New buildings		1,047 1 6
Improvements of buildings ..		283 11 4
Furniture and appliances		82 16 10
Sites		133 19 1
Plans, supervision, and fees ..		55 19 6
School libraries		20 5 0
Books		412 18 7
Deposits		65 14 0
Refund of rent		1 0 0
Balance—		
Dr. on Building Account	1,406 14 8	
Cr. on General Account	1,442 9 10	
		35 15 2
		£9,136 5 11

J. C. Chaytor, Acting-Chairman.
John Smith, Secretary.

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

NELSON.

Sir,— Education Office, Nelson, 28th March, 1898.

I have the honour to lay before you a report of the proceedings of the Education Board of the District of Nelson for the year 1897.

Members of the Board.—At the beginning of the year 1897 the Board was composed of the following persons, viz.: Messrs. Geo. Talbot, Wm. Norris Franklyn, Wm. Henry Phillips, junr., Geo. Bell Sinclair, Wm. Lock, Philip Best, Andrew Thos. Maginnity, James Colvin, and Richmond Hursthouse. At the annual election in March, the retiring members, Messrs. Best, Lock, and Phillips, were re-elected. In July, Mr. Hursthouse resigned his seat on the Board, finding that other duties prevented his regular attendance at its meetings, and the seat of Mr. G. B. Sinclair was declared vacant by reason of his continued absence from the Board's meetings without leave. At the election held to fill these vacancies, Messrs. Thos. John Baigent and John Deidrich Beuke were elected. During the year the Board has held twelve monthly, fifteen adjourned, and two special meetings; the average attendance at each meeting being 6·10.

Schools.—At the end of the year 116 schools were at work, seventy-nine of them being in school districts, and thirty-seven aided and household schools outside the boundaries of school districts. New schools have been opened at Hope Valley, Sandy Cove, Wratten's, Ligar Bay, Scott's, and Gibbs Town, while schools at Cable Bay and Waiwero have been discontinued, leaving a net increase of four for the year.

School Districts.—One new school district has been constituted, viz., Anatoki, making, with those previously in existence, a total of sixty school districts in the Education District of Nelson.

Attendance of Scholars.—The number of children on the rolls of the schools under the jurisdiction of the Board was, at the end of the year 1897, 5,943, the strict average attendance being 4,800, and the working average attendance 4,904. The corresponding numbers at the end of the previous year were: On roll, 6,004; strict average attendance, 4,873; and working average attendance, 4,969; showing a slight decrease for the last quarter of the year.

Teaching Staff.—At the close of the year there were 64 male and 133 female teachers on the staff, making a total of 197 of all grades, being an increase of nine (three male and six female) teachers over the previous year.

Buildings.—During the year the Board has removed and practically rebuilt the school and teacher's house at Capleston, has erected new schools at Will's Road and Gibbs Town, enlarged the Lower Moutere School, and also the teachers' houses at Reefton and Lower Wakefield. The works at Capleston have been a great drain on the building fund, and the Board is still of opinion that it is entitled to have the amount expended thereon refunded by the Government.

Proposed District High School for Westport.—In June last the Westport School Committee renewed their application for the establishment of a District High School there, which was favourably entertained by the Board. A committee was appointed to visit Westport, to confer with the School Committee and make inquiries on the spot as to the needs of the district in the matter of higher education. The committee's report being entirely favourable, a scheme was drawn up,