GENERAL STATEMENT of RECEIPTS and EXPENDITURE for the Year ending 31st December, 1897.

Receipts.	£	s.	d.
To Balance—On General Account ..	25	9	8
Government grant for buildings ..	1,120	0	0
Government statutory capitation ..	5,242	3	9
Scholarship grant	106	17	5
Inspection subsidy	125	0	0
Grants in aid of technical class ..	36	14	7
Payments by School Commissioners ..	110	0	0
District High School fees	82	0	0
Grant from Greymouth High School Board	60	0	0
Contractors' deposits received ..	3	0	0
Balance— £ s. d.			
Building Account .. 334 14 4			
General Account .. 87 0 11			
Unpresented cheques .. 92 1 4			
	513	16	7
	£7,425	2	0

Expenditure.	£	s.	d.
By Balance—Building Account	508	14	3
Office staff—Salaries	175	0	0
Departmental contingencies	22	13	4
Inspector's salary	200	0	0
Teachers' salaries and allowances (including rent, bonus, &c.)	5,063	7	8
Incidental expenses of schools ..	119	14	1
Training of teachers	18	0	0
Scholarships	100	0	0
School buildings—			
New buildings	125	16	7
Improvements of buildings.. ..	543	17	4
Furniture and appliances	183	0	7
Sites	52	2	0
Plans, supervision, and fees ..	41	3	7
Printing	71	12	6
Advertising	36	12	6
Members' travelling-expenses.. ..	123	13	0
Technical class	36	14	7
Contractor's deposit refunded.. ..	3	0	0
	£7,425	2	0

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

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

WESTLAND.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit the report of the Westland Education Board for the year ending 31st December, 1897.

THE BOARD.—The membership of the Board has again suffered no change, the retiring members, Messrs. Grimmond, Staines, and Cumming, being re-elected in March. At the first meeting in April the following re-appointments were made: Mr. McWhirter, Chairman; Mr. Chesney, Treasurer; Mr. Michel, representative on the Hokitika High School Board; Mr. Grimmond, School Commissioner. During the year the Board has held twelve meetings, and the attendance of members was as follows: Mr. A. Cumming, 12; Mr. J. McWhirter, 11; Mr. J. Chesney, 11; Mr. E. Stennard, 11; Mr. J. L. Smith, 9; Mr. J. Staines, 9; Mr. H. L. Michel, 8; Mr. J. R. Hudson, 7; Mr. J. Grimmond, 3.

SCHOOLS.—During the year thirty-five schools have been open. Of the twenty-two aided schools (having an average attendance below twenty) two are half-time. The Upper and Lower Otira Schools, owing to the increasd attendance in the latter, have been promoted to full time schools, a new building being erected for the larger school. A new household school has been established at Waiatoto.

The classes devoted to secondary education in connection with the Hokitika and Kumara District High Schools presented at the Board's examination twenty-six and eleven scholars respectively, and the Inspector reports very favourably of the work done in each class. The temporary establishment of the Kumara District High School has been continued until the end of the year 1898.

In July a class for manual instruction was established in connection with the Kumara School under the direction of the local School Committee. The number of pupils attending is thirty-five, and the course followed is that fixed by the Education Department. A special grant from the Minister of Education provided for a separate building, and the necessary timber and tools have been supplied by local effort. As the feasibility of initiating such instruction has thus been amply demonstrated, it is the hope of the Board that, in connection with other schools, advantage will be taken of the opportunity provided by the Act recently passed to bring this important branch of education within the reach of the scholars attending.

ATTENDANCE.—The total roll number for the district on the 31st December was 1,462, a decrease of seventy-nine from that of the previous year. The average attendance for the year was 85·3 per cent. of the average roll-number. While this general result is satisfactory, there is need in several cases for the active interference of the local authorities for the purpose of securing more regular attendance.

TEACHERS.—The number of teachers under the Board at the end of the year was sixty-three, including eleven head-teachers, twenty-three sole teachers, fourteen assistants, thirteen pupil-teachers, one monitor, and one sewing-mistress. With the exception of the pupil-teachers and one assistant, all teachers in schools with an average attendance above fifteen possess certificates.

SCHOLARSHIPS.—At the examination of candidates for scholarships a larger number (29) than usual presented themselves. Five scholarships of £8 each and one of £10, tenable for two years, have been granted. The number of Board's scholars will be increased from eight in 1897 to ten in 1898.

FINANCE.—At the close of the year the Building Fund showed a credit balance of £9 0s. 9d., but liabilities exist of £60. The amount expended during the year was £710 5s. 6d.

In the Board's General Account the credit balance has increased to £81 18s. 7d. Owing to the ecrease in the attendance of scholars in the district the amount saved is not as satisfactory as the Board desires, in view of the reductions in teacher's salaries still in force. It is very evident that,