

that, owing to the action of the Legislature with regard to the Education vote, the payment of the grant of 10s. per head of average attendance, for Committees, would be discontinued, their expenditure was already exceeding their income by the above amount. By the discontinuance of the capitation grant of 10s. for Committees the Board lost £1,154 per annum, and consequently had to face the problem of how to reduce their expenditure to the extent of £2,295 per annum. In face of the very heavy reductions already made in salaries the Board felt that it was a very great hardship to their teachers and officers to have to suffer a further reduction, and that they should make that reduction as small as possible. After very careful consideration of the whole matter, the Board therefore decided as follows: To pay all salaries as heretofore, with a deduction of 10 per cent.; to place all schools under the 88th clause whose average attendance does not exceed 32, paying to teachers of such schools only the amount of capitation grant received, viz., £3 15s. per head per annum; to reduce the staffs of the Hokitika and Greymouth Schools by one assistant teacher; to make reductions in payments to Committees (these will be given fully under the heading of "Committees"). Out of the 34 schools in this district, there were, at the end of the past year, 18 under the 88th clause. It is quite clear that this is an application of that clause which was never contemplated by the framers of the Act, or by the legislative body which passed it. The salaries paid to the teachers of these schools are ridiculously inadequate, the average of the whole being £85 per annum, or about 32s. per week, or 28s. per week less than the labourers' wages current in the district; and in very few cases are these miserable pittance augmented by local contributions. The highest salary paid in these schools is £165, and the lowest £37 10s. per annum. The Board deem it their duty to persistently press upon your notice the exceptional and unfortunate position of the district, and to ask that it may receive that consideration to which it is clearly entitled.

All the schools in the district, whether large or small, are conducted on the mixed system, and the Board see no reason for desiring to make any alteration. The girls and the boys have generally separate entrances, and are kept apart in the playgrounds. The temporary programme of instruction adopted by the Board, and alluded to in the last annual report, was rescinded on the recommendation of the Inspector; and all teachers were instructed by circular to use their best endeavours to carry out the Government regulations. The Inspector's report shows to what extent this has been done, and the Board is satisfied that little more can be expected while the services of the teachers are, in the majority of cases, so ill remunerated.

SCHOOL-BUILDINGS.—The following new schoolhouses were completed during the year, the contracts having been entered into during 1879: Hatter's Terrace, No Town, and Totara Flat. The following contracts were let during the past year: Book-store, Board's Office; schoolhouse, Upper Kokotahi; schoolhouse, Dunganville; schoolhouse, Kynnersly; for additions and repairs, Kumara Schoolhouse, Paroa Schoolhouse, Orwell Creek Schoolhouse, Cobden Schoolhouse, teacher's house, Hokitika; for clearing, fencing, and levelling Stafford School Reserve, No Town School Reserve, Hatter's Terrace School Reserve, Rangiriri School Reserve, Cobden School Reserve, Dunganville School Reserve; for furniture, Cobden School, Ahaura School. In addition to the above, numerous grants were made to Committees for repairs and improvements. The Board were, unfortunately, unable to provide as many teachers' residences during the past year as they were desirous of doing, owing to so many requisitions having been received from Committees for additions, repairs, &c. The Board purchased buildings at Hokitika, Greymouth, and Ross for residences. Twenty-three residences are still urgently required, and nine new schoolhouses. Four schools were, at the end of the year, carried on in buildings not belonging to the Board. During the past year the cost of preparation of plans, supervision, &c., amounted to about 5 per cent. on expenditure. Owing to reduction of revenue during the past year, the Board have been compelled to discontinue the insurance of most of their school-buildings, and now only insure those at Hokitika, Greymouth, Kumara, and Ross.

SCHOLARSHIPS.—The following is a list of the scholarships current during the year 1880:—

Name of Holders.	When Obtained.	Value per Annum.	At what School Gained.	Where now Attending.	Scholarship Expires
		£			
Robert Acheson	January, 1879	50	Greymouth	Christchurch College	December 31, 1880.
Herbert Perkins	January, 1879	40	Greymouth	Dunedin High School	December 31, 1880.
Sydney Sykes	January, 1880	50	Greymouth	Dunedin High School	December 31, 1881.
Gerhard Mueller	January, 1880	40	Hokitika ...	Nelson College ...	December 31, 1881.

INSPECTION.—The report of the Board's Inspector is forwarded with this, and all the information required by the Act in connection with inspection will be found therein. The work of inspection has been carried on as far as practicable in strict accordance with the regulations, except that certain schools in the southern extremity of the district have been visited only once, and a few schools only recently opened have not yet been inspected. Notwithstanding the repeated reductions that have been made in their emoluments, many of the oldest and most experienced of the Board's teachers still remain in the district, and it is very satisfactory to learn from the Inspector's report that the teaching staff of the district, as a whole, is giving satisfaction. When making reductions in expenditure, the Board decided to fix the travelling allowance of the Inspector at £140 per annum.

PUPIL-TEACHERS.—The absence of a normal or training school has been frequently referred to as a serious disadvantage to the pupil-teachers of this district; but, as the establishment of such an institution on this side of the Island is at present quite out of the question, the Board have done the only thing in their power to encourage pupil-teachers, who have passed their last examination, to continue their studies. A few regulations have been drawn up for their employment as junior assistants at a slightly increased salary, and for the payment of a small bonus to head teachers, upon such assistants