

NELSON

Nelson, 6th March, 1884.

SIR,—

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 1883.

MEETINGS OF THE BOARD.—The Board has held twelve ordinary and two special meetings during the year, the average number of members present at each meeting being seven.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD.—After the election of three new members in March, the Board was constituted as follows J. W. Barnicoat, Esq (Chairman), Messrs. Shephard, Tarrant, Clayden, Wastney, Campbell, Dencker, the Rev J. C. Andrew, and the Rev J. Beckenham. The death of Mr. Campbell, who had held a seat, first at the Central Board of Education, and subsequently at the Education Board, without intermission, for twenty-seven years, caused a vacancy which was filled up in August by the election of the Bishop of Nelson.

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS.—Eighty-two schools have been at work within the year. Three of these were closed during the December quarter, leaving seventy-nine actually at work at the end of the year.

ATTENDANCE OF SCHOLARS.—The number of scholars on the roll at the close of 1883 was 4,550, the working average being 3,424. This return, which gives an increase of 458 to the roll-number, and of 202 to the working average, as compared with last year, shows a larger rate of increase than has taken place for many years previously.

TEACHING STAFF.—128 teachers of all grades were in the service of the Board at the end of 1883. Of these, 47 were male and 81 female teachers. They were subdivided into 78 head-teachers, 26 assistants, and 24 probationers.

PROBATIONERS.—The services of this class of young teachers have proved so generally acceptable, both on the score of economy and of efficiency, that their number has doubled since last year, three-fourths of them being employed in country districts. The difficulty of preparing probationers systematically for the teachers' examination, which was the weak part of the scheme, has been met, to a certain extent, by a series of examinations conducted by the Inspector, who prepares half-yearly sets of examination papers, drawn up on the lines of the papers set to candidates for the E certificate. The probationers answer, under the supervision of their respective head-teachers, the papers sent, which are then corrected by the Inspector and returned to the probationers. Several of the assistants also take part in these examinations. It is hoped that the definite course of study exacted from all the students who enter their names for examination will, at the end of two years, enable most of them to approach the E examination of teachers with a reasonable expectation of success. This system has the additional merit of cheapness, the Board being put to no further expense than that of printing the examination papers.

AIDED SCHOOLS.—Twelve of these schools are now at work, although from time to time, when the increased attendance of scholars appeared to warrant the change, new school districts have been constituted in neighbourhoods which had begun with aided schools, which have always been regarded by the Board as tentative and provisional institutions. The terms now offered by the Board to aided schools are more advantageous than they have hitherto been, the full capitation allowance of £4 being given on account of each scholar in daily attendance. The quota contributed by the Board towards the erection of school buildings has also been increased from one-third to one-half of the cost, a maximum of expenditure being, however, fixed in every case.

HOUSEHOLD SCHOOLS.—If the experience of the three household schools that have been at work during the year may be taken as a fair specimen of what may be expected from this class of school, little can be said in their favour. In one instance only did the scholars present themselves for examination at the appointed time and place, although ample notice was given.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Education.

J. W. BARNICOAT, Chairman.

GENERAL STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE for the Year ending 31st December, 1883.			
<i>Receipts.</i>		<i>Expenditure.</i>	
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
To Balance on December 31st, 1882—		By Office staff, salaries	262 0 0
Building Account	32 16 2	Departmental contingencies	225 18 7
General Account	1,484 19 1	Inspector's salary and travelling expenses	500 0 0
Government grants for buildings	3,690 0 0	Inspector's special allowance for detention of steamer at Karamea	15 0 0
Other receipts for buildings—		Teachers' salaries and allowances (including rent, bonus, &c.)	11,076 6 1
Loan from Maintenance Account	200 0 0	Incidental expenses—	
Compensation on account of fire at Eighty-eight Valley School	100 0 0	Schools	1,709 7 0
From Telegraph Department	15 0 0	Rents of school buildings	63 5 0
Government statutory capitation (£3 15s.)	11,800 3 9	Training of teachers	31 13 6
Special capitation (5s.)	798 0 0	Scholarships—	
Scholarship grant (1s. 6d.)	182 0 0	Paid to scholars	183 5 0
Scholarship gift of School Commissioners	6 5 0	Examination expenses	20 17 6
Inspection subsidy	300 0 0	School buildings—	
Grant for training of teachers	19 10 0	New buildings	1,550 12 1
Payments by School Commissioners for primary education	383 6 4	Improvements of buildings.	497 3 10
Exchange refunded	20 2 0	Furniture and appliances	144 13
Sale of school materials	501 13 2	Sites	131 10 0
Refund from Building Account	1,000 0 0	Loan to Building Account	200 0 0
		Refund to Maintenance Account	1,000 0 0
		Subsidy to schools library	10 0 0
		Purchase of school material	720 13 11
		Bank interest	3 6 10
		Credit balance of account on 31st December, 1883—	
		Building Account	716 19 0
		General Account	1,471 3 11
	£20,533 15 6		£20,533 15 6

J. W. BARNICOAT, Chairman.

STEAD ELLIS, Secretary

The above accounts examined and found correct.—H. E. CURTIS, Provincial District Auditor
3rd March, 1884.