

GREY.

SIR,—

Education Office, Greymouth, 8th April, 1891.

The Board has the honour to present a report of its proceedings for the year ending 31st December, 1890, as required by clause 102 of the Education Act.

BOARD.—At the date of the last annual report, the Board consisted of the following members: Messrs. Nancarrow, Barkley, White, and Marshall (nominated), and Messrs. Kerr, Petrie, and Smith (elected). The election held in March resulted in the return of Messrs. Kerr, Petrie, and Byrne. Messrs. Nancarrow, Marshall, White, and Barkley were re-nominated. The death of Mr. Barkley, in April, caused a vacancy on the Board, which was filled by the nomination of Mr. Smith. At the meeting held on 8th April, 1890, Mr. Kerr was elected Chairman of the Board for the ensuing year. Mr. Nancarrow was re-elected to represent the Board on the Greymouth High School Board. The Board held thirteen meetings during the year—twelve ordinary meetings and one special meeting. The respective attendances were as follows: Nancarrow, 13; Petrie, 13; Kerr, 12; White, 11; Smith, 11; Marshall, 10; Byrne, 8; Barkley, 5.

SCHOOL DISTRICTS.—At the end of the year there were still seventeen school districts.

TEACHING STAFF.—The number of teachers was the same as at the end of 1889. At the end of the year there were eight uncertificated teachers in the employ of the Board, as against thirteen at the end of 1889.

ATTENDANCE.—The following table gives the average weekly roll-number and the average attendance for each quarter from 1885 to 1890:—

Year.	Average Weekly Number on the Roll.						Average Attendance.					
	March.	June.	Sept.	Dec.	Average for Four Quarters.	Per-centage Increase Previous Year.	March.	June.	Sept.	Dec.	Average for Four Quarters.	Per-centage Increase Previous Year.
1885	1,346	1,423	1,448	1,426	1,410·75	...	1,070	1,065	1,096	1,113	1,086	...
1886	1,484	1,492	1,504	1,513	1,498·25	6·2	1,141	1,107	1,111	1,136	1,123·75	3·5
1887	1,561	1,582	1,652	1,643	1,609·5	7·4	1,135	1,192	1,211	1,241	1,194·75	6·3
1888	1,799	1,844	1,816	1,796	1,813·75	12·7	1,415	1,418	1,364	1,358	1,388·75	16·2
1889	1,828	1,828	1,868	1,776	1,810	...	1,404	1,352	1,382	1,453	1,397·75	...
1890	1,801	1,811	1,828	1,810	1,815	0·28	1,453	1,331	1,416	1,441	1,410·25	2·22

The weekly roll-number therefore shows an increase of 0·28 per cent., and the average attendance an increase of 2·22 per cent.

FINANCE.—For general purposes, the Board received during the year £5,749 10s. 2d., and expended £6,065 18s. 9d. The debit balance on the 1st January, 1890, was £124 19s. 10d., and on the 31st December, £316 8s. 7d. On Building Account, the Board received during the year £592 1s., and expended £1,083 3s. 9d. The debit balance on the 1st January, 1890, was £508 18s. 3d., and on the 31st December £491 2s. 9d. No new buildings were erected during the year, but grants for repairs, &c., were given to all schools excepting Kynnersley, Red Jack's, Maori Gully, and Marsden.

GENERAL.—The unsatisfactory condition of the school buildings was referred to in the report for 1889, and the lapse of another year has not improved matters. The funds placed at the Board's disposal are quite inadequate to meet the necessities of the district. Table 6 gives in detail a statement of requirements, the total amount being £2,884, and nothing less than that amount is sufficient to place the school buildings in a state of thorough renovation, and to supply the additional space urgently needed at several schools. The Board would respectfully impress upon you the desirability of a liberal grant being allowed, so that the Board may prevent the further progress of decay and dilapidation. Several buildings have not been painted for fully ten years; whereas our climate renders a coat of paint necessary at least at intervals of three years. The Board found at the end of the June quarter that there was a considerable diminution in average attendance, especially at the Greymouth School. The Board therefore decided to reduce the staff of that school, and, after very careful deliberation, resolved to dispense with the services of the head teacher, and to transfer two pupil-teachers to other schools. The proposal met with very energetic opposition from the Greymouth School Committee, but was ultimately carried into effect without injury to the efficiency of the school. At the end of the year seventeen pupil-teachers were in the employment of the Board. The Government programme of instruction was adopted by the Board in 1888, and the result is decidedly satisfactory. The Board has found it necessary on several occasions to transfer pupil-teachers and junior assistants from the Greymouth School to the schools at Taylorville, Dobson, and Richardson. Their salaries being small, the charge for railway-travelling presses heavily, and the Board would ask you to consider the advisability of granting free passes to these teachers. The regulations relating to inspection and examination have been fully complied with by the Board's Inspector, the results being fully set forth in the Inspector's annual report. Four scholarships were competed for in January, 1890—two for country schools and two for town schools. The two town scholars and one country competitor did very good work, the work of the other country competitor being rather weak. The scholarships were awarded, and the scholars are attending the Greymouth District High School. The Board desires to express its appreciation of the good work performed by the teachers, as shown in the Inspector's report, and while doing so would respectfully draw your attention to the low salaries paid in this district as compared with those in most other parts of the colony; and would ask you to devise some means by which more equality of payment may be secured. The Board also wishes to give