

the Committee's revenue by voluntary contribution seems either to be overlooked or regarded with disfavour ; but, unless greater consideration for the smaller districts is shown by the Department, the Board will have to consider the adoption of some system of limiting its donations for building purposes to a pound-for-pound subsidy on the amounts contributed by the Committees. This plan, I believe, is already followed in some of the larger districts. New schools have been erected at Okaramio and Onamalutu, and sites have been acquired, and improved, at both places. A new school is now in course of erection at Canvastown, on an admirable site, about to be taken, with the consent of the Native owners, under the Public Works Act. The school grounds in Blenheim have been put in good order, and the furniture and appliances in various parts of the district have been renewed or added to.

SCHOLARSHIPS.—The amount of the grant for scholarships to which this district is entitled (at 1s. 6d. per head) for the past year was £136, of which amount the three scholarships current absorb only £120. Under the present arrangement the Board receives only what is actually expended, but, until something like adequate provision for secondary education is made for the Marlborough District, the Board would respectfully suggest that the unexpended surplus should be placed to the credit of the Board, for the purpose of giving an additional year's education to one scholarship-holder every three years. The exceptional destitution of the Marlborough Education District as regards the means of secondary education has been more than once brought prominently before the Minister of Education, especially during the last year. The tenure of the pastoral leases, which were to expire this year, has been extended, and the relief hoped for from that source is, consequently, postponed, perhaps indefinitely. At present the annual revenue of the Marlborough School Commissioners on account of secondary reserves applicable to the Marlborough Education District is only £9 per annum. It may, perhaps, be supposed that the advantages of the endowment of the Nelson College are available also for the people of Marlborough; but there is an impression that the interests of Marlborough have been overlooked, or sacrificed for the benefit of Nelson, especially in the establishment of a girls' college there instead of a secondary school for Marlborough; and the actual advantage accruing to the district consists in the remission of the tuition fees in the case of scholarship-holders, or a total of £36 per annum. The whole question of secondary education, and that also of public scholarships, require reconsideration. The secondary schools are largely supported by public funds (or reserves) for the benefit chiefly of those who are, or ought to be, able and willing to provide their own children with such education as they desire them to receive, whilst the distribution of scholarships throughout the colony is anything but equitable, and there is no doubt that very many are held by a class of persons for whom they are not really intended.

The Inspector's report, which is enclosed, will give all the usual information on the condition of primary education in this district. I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Education.

I have, &c.,

A. P. SEYMOUR, Chairman.

GENERAL STATEMENT of RECEIPTS and EXPENDITURE for the Year ending 31st December, 1895.

[illegible]

A. P. SEYMOUR, Chairman.

JOHN SMITH, Secretary.

Examined and found correct.—JAMES EDWARD FITZGERALD, Controller and Auditor-General.

NELSON.

SIR,—

Nelson, 18th March, 1896.

I have the honour to lay before you a report of the proceedings of the Nelson Education Board for the year 1895.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD.—At the beginning of the year the Board consisted of Messrs. George Talbot (Chairman), Richmond Hursthouse, Christian Dencker, Philip Best, William Lock, William Henry Phillips, jun., Andrew Thomas Maginnity, George Bell Sinclair, and William Norris Franklyn. At the annual election in March, Messrs. Talbot, Dencker, and Hursthouse were the retiring members, and again stood for election, Messrs. Colvin, Beube, Hughes, and Jamieson also contesting the vacant seats. Messrs. Talbot and Hursthouse were re-elected, and Mr. James