

STATEMENT OF BALANCES.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.	
Primary Education Account	284	2	9	Balance, 31st December, 1908—				
Secondary Education Account	113	0	8	Fixed deposits, Bank of New Zealand..	1,527	0	9	
Land Fund	1,512	15	4	Current account, Bank of				
Trust Account	13	7	11	New Zealand ..	£400	5	2	
				Less outstanding cheque	5	15	11	
						394	9	3
				Cash in hand		1	16	8
	£1,923	6	8			£1,923	6	8

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES.

Assets.				£	s.	d.
Cash in hand	...	...	...	1	16	8
Bank balance, 31st December, 1908	...	...	...	400	5	2
Fixed deposits	...	...	...	1,527	0	9
Rents in arrear, 31st December, 1908	...	...	...	501	1	10
Total assets	...	...	...	£2,430	4	5
Liabilities.				£	s.	d.
Outstanding cheque	...	...	...	5	15	11
Rents paid in advance	...	...	...	23	19	4
Trust account	...	...	...	13	7	11
Total liabilities	...	...	...	£43	3	2

New Plymouth, 3rd April, 1909.

JAMES WADE, Chairman.
F. P. CORKILL, Treasurer.

Examined and found correct.—JAS. B. HEYWOOD, Assistant Controller and Auditor-General.

WELLINGTON.

SIR,—

Office of the School Commissioners, Wellington, 15th February, 1909.

I have the honour to forward herewith the report and statement of receipts and expenditure of the School Commissioners for the Wellington Provincial District for the year ended 31st December, 1908.

The following are the members of the Board of Commissioners: Mr. J. R. Blair (Chairman), Mr. W. H. Field, M.P., Hon. A. W. Hogg, M.P., Mr. F. Y. Lethbridge, and Mr. James Mackenzie (Commissioner of Crown Lands).

No new reserves were added during the year to the area vested in the Commissioners.

The total area at present included in the educational-reserve estate in this provincial district is 106,342 acres and 13 perches, of which 9,126 acres 3 roods 15 perches (consisting largely of rough and inferior country) were unlet at the end of the year.

The reserves leased during the year numbered nine, containing 6,800 acres 1 rood 21 perches, their annual rental being £1,531 0s. 5d. The total number of leases now on the books is 480, comprising an area of 97,215 acres and 38 perches, on which is payable an annual rental of £9,617 2s. 1d., as against £8,104 16s. 9d. last year, this marked advance on the rental payable for 1907 being principally due to the fact that all the leases expiring during the year, whether renewed at rentals fixed by arbitration or submitted to public auction, brought considerably higher rentals for the new terms.

In two cases of expiring leases the Commissioners considered it desirable to purchase the improvements of the outgoing tenants, whose leases provided for such payment. In one of these cases (a section comprising 6,975 acres) it was imperative to do so, in order to enable the area to be subdivided. The value of the improvements on this section had been fixed by arbitration at £6,435, and the Commissioners found it necessary to borrow £6,000 in order to pay the amount so fixed to the lessee before the expiry of the lease, the alternative being that the lessee would be entitled to a precisely similar lease for other twenty-one years, and so on in perpetuity, for the whole area.

Being without statutory borrowing-powers, the Commissioners were unable to raise the money through ordinary channels, and the Chairman therefore advanced the sum of £6,000, which constitutes a debt owing by the Commissioners to him until it is liquidated. They had then to endeavour to obtain legislative sanction for the action taken, and they have to thank you for your sympathetic, prompt, and effective aid in having a validating Act passed by Parliament.