

disaster to a minimum. Owing to the lower cost of building-material, and to other favourable circumstances, the Board hopes to accomplish this at a cost not exceeding that of the building destroyed, and for which, until the late Board was directed to discontinue the practice, the former building was always kept fully insured. In addition to the building itself a large part of the furniture was destroyed, including wall-maps and diagrams, scientific apparatus, and a valuable school-library. It has been also necessary to provide and fit up buildings for temporary school purposes, and until the new school is finished the Board will be subject to a rental of £2 15s. per week, or £143 per annum, for the use of the buildings so occupied. A careful account of all such expenses is being kept, and will be forwarded to the Minister for payment. In conclusion the Board desires to express its conviction that Parliament will recognise the satisfactory state to which educational matters have been brought by the temporary legislation affecting this part of the colony, and will see fit to mark its approval by placing this district on the same footing as the other education districts of New Zealand.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Minister of Education.

I have, &c.,

R. J. SEDDON, Chairman.

GENERAL STATEMENT of RECEIPTS and EXPENDITURE for the Year ending 31st December, 1885.

[illegible]

R. J. SEDDON, Chairman.

JOHN SMITH, Secretary.

I hereby certify that I have examined the above statement of accounts, and, having compared the same with vouchers, ledger, bank pass-book, and other documents, find the same to be correct.—W. A. SPENCE, Auditor. Hokitika, 30th April, 1886.

GREY.

SIR,—

Education Office, Greymouth, 26th March, 1886.

In accordance with the requirements of clause 102 of the Education Act, I have the honour to submit a report of the administration of the Commissioners during the past year.

COMMISSIONERS.—The Commissioners appointed under "The Westland Education District Subdivision Act, 1884," were Major Keddell, R.M., R. Nancarrow, Esq., and Thomas Ronayne, Esq.; and no change in the membership took place during the year. At the first meeting of the Commissioners Major Keddell was appointed Chairman. The Commissioners met fortnightly, on Monday, and twenty-two meetings were held.

SCHOOLS AND ATTENDANCES.—At the end of the year seventeen schools were open, including the Wallsend Side School. The average attendance for the four quarters was 1,086. Two applications were made during the year for the establishment of schools in small country places. The Commissioners agreed to the establishment of a school in each case, and to pay to the teacher the capitation accruing, provided the residents erected a building. In that case the Commissioners also agreed to supply all furniture required. In one instance—at the Teremakau Settlement—the offer was accepted, and a school was opened early in the present year. Returns Nos. 1, 2, and 11 give full details of attendances, &c., at the several schools.

TEACHERS.—Return No. 3 shows that on the 31st December there were thirty-seven teachers, including pupil-teachers, in the employ of the Commissioners. The number of pupil-teachers was eleven. Of the remaining twenty-six teachers fourteen are uncertificated; and of the twelve holding certificates six have recorded only partial success for Class E. In the case of the small country schools the teachers of which receive salary in the shape of capitation, the Commissioners feel that the annual pittance payable is too small to justify their insisting upon the qualification of a certificate; but they think that a time should be fixed after which no teacher without a certificate should be allowed to retain charge of a school of the better class. One of the first duties devolving upon the Commissioners on their taking office was to make their expenditure keep within the limit of their receipts; and this entailed the necessity for a reduction of salaries. The Commissioners gave to the matter the most careful consideration, feeling that the salaries which had been paid up to that time were not by any means too large; and adopted a scheme of payment