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EUGENE J. O'CONNOR, Provincial Secretary.

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No. 22.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR OF
PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CENTRAL BOARD OF
EDUCATION.

SIR,—

I beg to lay before you the following Report on the Public Schools of the Province of Nelson for the twelve months ending June 30, 1876.

Five new schools have been opened, and the names of 544 scholars have been added to the rolls during the past year—the total number of public schools being now 68; of scholars, 4913. During the last six months, when the schools were no longer thinned by sickness, the average attendance has been better than it was last year—the percentage for the March quarter being 71; for the June quarter, 74. The worst feature disclosed by the annual returns is, that the proportion of children who remain at our schools after they have reached their twelfth year is steadily decreasing—the large addition to the total numbers this year having failed to bring up the list of scholars over twelve to the number reached last year. It bodes ill for the ultimate success of any system of primary education when the school life of nearly five-sixths of the children ceases at twelve years old. And yet it is hard to say what inducements are wanting. No admission fee is exacted in education districts—excellent books and maps are supplied gratis—the discipline is far from being harsh—and the teaching, on the whole, is more

rational, more systematic, and more careful than it has ever been before.

I subjoin a summary, embodying my opinion as to the manner in which each subject is being taught in our schools. Cases of exceptional merit or demerit will be dealt with in the detailed report of each school.

Reading.—On the whole, reading is successfully taught. There are 83 more good readers than there were last year, nor does the bare enumeration of these figures by any means represent the amount of improvement that has been made in the style of the children's reading. It is now not uncommon to meet with scholars who read prose with taste and good intonation, while the initial "h"—that standing difficulty with teachers of primary schools—has been fairly grappled with and, in most cases, mastered. In some schools, such as Happy Valley, Motupiko, and Stoke, great pains have evidently been taken to cure a chronic drawl. Few of our scholars, it must be confessed, can yet read a passage of poetry without offending the hearer.

Writing.—As a rule, great, though not undue attention is being paid to this art. The copy-books are usually kept neatly, and the letters are well formed. It is impossible, however, not to observe that the handwriting at the schools on the West Coast is, with at most two or three exceptions, palpably inferior to that in the rest of the Province. I am at a loss to account for this inferiority, but that it exists is pretty clear from the fact that in 18 schools, containing 868 scholars, I could find only

38 writers who could be classed as "good." I have intentionally excepted from the list Westport, which furnished almost as many good writers as all the rest of the West Coast schools.

Arithmetic.—The results of my examination in arithmetic compare unfavorably with those obtained in 1875. Although more than 500 names have been added to the school rolls during the past year, I have recorded actually fewer passes in two of the four standards by which the scholars were tested, while in the two lower standards the passes are relatively fewer. In the highest grade, especially, there is a falling off of nearly a sixth, although the paper was scarcely so difficult as that given last year.

Grammar.—I last year congratulated our teachers on their having wisely devoted part of the time formerly spent in learning the minutiae of grammar to the practice of composition. Several teachers have evidently understood me to mean that the study of grammar might well be given up altogether. But it is not too much to expect that the first class in a school of even second-rate pretensions should be able to parse correctly an ordinary sentence. A few minutes given daily to the study of the simple grammars with which our schools are supplied, ought to bring about this result in twelve months, with children of average ability.

Geography.—My repeated remonstrances as to the way in which this, to children, most interesting subject, was being mis-taught, have at last brought about some reformation. Oral teaching, before the maps, is becoming the rule, instead of the exception, and the children can now usually tell something about the land they live in. By steadily refraining from putting questions on the minuter details of the geography of Europe—which was at one time almost all that was attempted—an examiner will eventually succeed in getting the broader features of geography taught. Subsequent reading and observation may fairly be trusted to fill up these outlines as occasion requires.

History.—A still further diminution has taken place in the number of children learning History. In 1875 these numbered 729; there are now only 584. I can discover no other explanation of this continued falling off, but that for the last two years the gratuitous issue of histories has been put a stop to, and that a larger proportion of parents do not, apparently, think the teaching of history worth the three shillings required for a school book. The result of my own examination of those who still learn history has certainly not been such as to impress me with a high opinion of the value of this subject in elementary schools. As might have been expected from their tender years, I found that comparatively few of our scholars have any clear or connected ideas of what they are about, their answers showing that the subject is too big for them. The extreme difficulty of obtaining an elementary History of England that is at once unobjectionable on religious grounds—brief enough, without being dry, and yet long enough to omit nothing of the first importance—is also a serious obstacle. Such a skeleton as Ince and Gilbert's gives little that is of any value beyond mere names and dates. Miss Thompson's *Epitome*, though far superior in point of fullness and accuracy, must be insufferably dull reading for children of twelve years old, and, for that reason, is very unlikely to take much hold on their memories. Miss Corner's book, independently of its faults of style, has the grave defect of being unhistorical that is,

it fails to give a faithful representation of things as they befall.

Spelling continues to be so well taught that it may now be fairly reckoned the best point in our Provincial schools. Considering how largely the ability to spell correctly, and to write a bold legible hand may affect a person's future, I think our teachers act wisely in devoting what some may think a disproportionate amount of time to these more mechanical acquirements.

Discipline.—It is gratifying to be able to report that the perpetual chattering of which I complained last year, and from which so few, even of our best schools, were free, has, to a great extent, been put a stop to, so far at least as my own observation goes. It is now the rule, and not, as last year, the exception, for classes to approach and leave the teacher's desk, and to enter and leave school in an orderly and becoming manner. In one respect, also, the organisation of our schools has improved. The number of classes, in compliance with my repeated suggestions, has been diminished, and now seldom exceeds six, even where two teachers are employed.

Bridge-street, Boys', First Division: Mr Price.—(26.)—It is by no means easy, within the compass of a necessarily brief report, to give such an account of the present state of this division of Bridge-street school as will be an exact record of the facts, without doing some injustice to the master, who has now been in office for about eight months. Owing to various causes, one of which was the appointment of several temporary masters in quick succession, this division had become thoroughly disorganised when Mr Price took charge of it. Nor, it must be admitted, has it yet recovered to any appreciable extent under his management from the low condition in which he found it. It would seem to be out of his power to raise even the number of his scholars to the standard of former years. Although I promoted, in February last, 16 well-trained boys from the second division, I found altogether only 26 scholars present at my examination, amongst whom were few of the draft sent in so lately. In arithmetic the boys generally fell far short of the standard of our best country schools, while only one boy in the first class could write a few lines from dictation without a mistake. On the other hand, the boys as a rule read well, and gave good definitions of the meanings of the harder words that they met with. On the whole, I regard the present condition of this division of the school as very unsatisfactory.

Bridge-street, Boys', Second and Third Divisions: Mr Sadd; Mr Wigzell, temporary assistant.—(90.)—I found the boys here carefully and sensibly taught, and in excellent order, but as the whole of the first class had been swept away to the first division less than four months before my examination, this part of the school appeared to great disadvantage. To remedy the unfairness of promoting the best scholars so shortly before my main examination in June, arrangements have been made by which all promotions in the town schools shall take place after the mid-winter holidays, so that drafts may have twelve months preparation before they are finally reported on. Many heart-burnings will be avoided by this change.

First Division, Hardy-street: Mrs Sait.—(53.)—So highly is the quality of the instruction given in this school valued that a large proportion of the girls remain after they have completed their four-

teenth year. Many, indeed, of the best candidates for assistant-teacherships have received all their education here. No school in the Province turns out so many good readers and writers, in proportion to the numbers. The spelling is only fair, and the arithmetic scarcely up to the standard of last year, a large proportion of the girls in the second class having failed to pass. None failed, however, in the first class. Map-drawing is most successfully taught. The discipline is good.

Second Division, Hardy-street: Miss Dement; assistant, Miss Percival.—(80.)—Good work is being done here by two young teachers, both of whom have been trained entirely in our own town schools. The children who are periodically drafted into this division from the Preparatory school are taught to read distinctly and to write neatly. They also work questions in arithmetic, as far as compound division, very correctly, none in the first class, and very few in the second, failing to pass. The dictation of the two first classes is also very creditable.

Preparatory: Miss Cother; assistants Miss Hough and Miss Leach.—(193.)—Although a third teacher has been appointed here (whom I found in charge of 64 children, pent up in a small class-room, capable of accommodating not more than 30), the numbers have increased so much that additional school-room should be provided at once. The best way of meeting the difficulty would be to build a school adjoining the Bridge-street schools, for boys only. The teachers continue to keep excellent order, and to impart more instruction than I should have expected from them under the circumstances.

Haven-road, Mr J. L. Hodgson; assistants, Miss Witney, Miss Burns.—(153.)—This school, which was notoriously over-crowded during the greater part of the last twelve months, has been slightly relieved lately by the opening of two new schools, one at the Port and another in Toi-toi Valley. The number on the roll is still very large, although the average of attendance continues to be singularly low. An unusually small proportion of the scholars, 45 out of 336, have remained at this school after they have completed their twelfth year, and, what is worse, I have reason to believe that the great majority of those who leave so young receive no further schooling elsewhere. I found that the children read well throughout, that writing was well taught, and that the dictation of the upper classes was good. It is to be remarked that the arithmetic here, as at Cobden, is very unpretentious, but also very sound. Only a comparatively small proportion of the scholars attempted the higher rules, but all who did succeeded. Indeed, three scholars only out of the 89 present in the upper division failed to pass in their respective standards.

Hampden-street: Mr Sunley; assistant, Miss Percy.—(92.)—In several respects this school has improved since last year. The arithmetic, especially when the age of the scholars is considered, is remarkably good, none of those present in the two upper classes having failed to pass in the higher standards. These classes also know more of grammar and geography, and write more correctly from dictation than they did. The reading is only moderately good, the writing indifferent. The discipline of the upper division has certainly improved, that of the lower division is excellent. I was surprised to find that so few children over twelve years of age now attend this school, 10 only out of a yearly roll of 170 having reached that age.

St. Mary's, Boys': Mr Richards; second master, Mr Williamson.—(113.)—The number of boys present at my examination was beyond what the schoolroom could fairly accommodate, and beyond the teaching powers of the present staff. I was given to understand, however, that this large influx of scholars was of comparatively recent date. Nevertheless, good order was maintained, under obvious difficulties, and the boys throughout were well taught, the arithmetic being exceptionally good. Not one boy in the first class failed to solve correctly every question in the highest paper of arithmetic set. The upper classes are also very well grounded in the geography of New Zealand. Too little attention is paid to the sounding of the initial "h" and the final "g," this defect marring to a great extent the effect of the otherwise good reading.

St. Mary's, Girls': taught by Sisters of Charity.—(152.)—This school still well deserves the high reputation it has attained for good organisation and sound teaching. The reading, arithmetic, and dictation are quite equal to what they were last year, the writing being, on the whole, better. History is the weak point of the school, none of the classes acquitting themselves even tolerably in this branch. The use of so meagre and ill-written an abridgment of English history as Ince and Gilbert's may have something to do with this general backwardness. The teaching staff of the lower division has been strengthened, and the good effect of this on the younger children is manifest.

Port School: Miss Blackmore.—(76.)—This school, which is intended only for children under nine years of age, was opened five months ago, with the view of relieving the overcrowded Haven-road school. I find, however, that many children who have not previously attended any school come here regularly. The scholars are being carefully and rationally taught, and are in good order. There is some danger, however, lest the multiplication of elementary schools in the town of Nelson, each under the charge of a single inexperienced mistress, should be carried too far. There must always be some waste of power where four or five classes are entrusted to a single teacher. In the country districts this is sometimes unavoidable, but in the towns, as a rule, it seems to me that the fewer schools we have the better.

Toi-toi Valley: Miss Sunley.—(42.)—This school had been open only a month when I examined it. The children were orderly, and fairly taught, but I observed several older scholars who lived not far from more advanced schools, which they had left for no better reason than the pure love of change, or possibly with the idea that they would thus escape from a wholesome but irksome discipline. It is clear to me that every new school which is opened within easy reach of another school does, to a very appreciable extent, weaken the bonds of discipline by affording an additional harbour of refuge to the indolent and refractory. To any one who has studied the question it must be simply marvellous how, with the present extraordinary facilities offered to children for exchanging one school for another, the teachers of the Nelson town schools contrive to preserve even the semblance of discipline.

Clifton Terrace: Mrs. Harrington.—(27.)—I have every reason to be satisfied with what has been done here during the past twelve months. The children are more animated, and can give a far better account of what they have been reading than formerly. The work of the school is carried on in a most systematic fashion.

Hillside: Miss Folckmann.—(18.)—The discontinuance of the half-time system has been followed with the best results, both at Hillside and Happy Valley, and this at no increase of expense. Under its present young, but very energetic mistress, Hillside bids fair to regain the high standard of former years. In arithmetic, not only did every scholar pass in the standard attempted, but there was not one who failed to bring up more than the required minimum of correct answers. The handwriting was excellent, the reading all that could be desired. The discipline was also very good.

Happy Valley: Miss Gill.—(28.)—The children here appear to be thoroughly roused from their former lethargy. The reading, though still far from being good, is more distinct than it was, and is nearly free from drawl. Both arithmetic and dictation have improved, the elements of geography and grammar being now added to the list of subjects taught. If the parents will but continue to send their children with tolerable regularity, I have no fear for the future of this little school.

Stoke: Mr. Barnett.—(57.)—The master was laboring under a very serious disadvantage when I last examined Stoke school. His assistant had left several weeks before, and her successor had not been appointed. In spite of this drawback, good order was maintained, and the children showed that they had been carefully taught, a marked advance having been made in both reading and arithmetic. The copy books are neatly kept, and the first class is well acquainted with the outlines of geography. The spelling, both oral and from dictation, is faulty.

Richmond Boys: Mr. Robson; assistant, Miss Saywell.—(58.)—The children in the upper classes read with perfect distinctness, those in the lower division read far too low, and are indeed at times inaudible. In every other respect the school is in a good state, the arithmetic in particular being very ready and accurate.

Richmond Girls: Miss Spencer; assistant, Miss O'Loughlen.—(55.)—This school passed a decidedly better examination than it did last year. The number of good readers and writers has been added to; the arithmetic, which was the weak point last year, being now remarkably good. The girls have also improved in point of orderliness.

Ranzau: Mr. Cowles.—(32.)—I can report no improvement in this very backward school. The instruction given is of the most elementary character, as an instance of which I observe that the children in the second class were just able to read tolerably from a book that the sixth class at Richmond Girls' School read well. This state of things may be partly accounted for by the fact that the children leave school at a very early age, four only being on the last quarter's roll who had reached their twelfth year. The average rate of attendance is also low.

Hope: Mr. Thorburn.—(40.)—This school is fairly taught, the writing and arithmetic, however, being much in advance of the reading, which is spiritless. Considerable attention is now being paid to geography, in which the older scholars did well. The discipline is hardly strict enough.

River Terrace: Mrs and Miss Bryant.—(54.)—The discipline of this school has improved. The children, in marked contrast to those at most of the Waimea South schools, can both give a clear account of their lesson and explain what the harder words in it mean. They also write very neatly, and have a

fair knowledge of arithmetic. The scholars were formerly sub-divided into too many classes, a fault that still exists in a few of our schools. In compliance with my suggestion, the number of classes has been reduced to six, to the manifest advantage of both teacher and scholars.

Spring Grove: Mr. Edmunds; assistant, Miss Knapp.—(60.)—The scholars here, though still far from being models of good behaviour, are upon the whole better behaved than they were last year. The reading is now fair throughout—in the upper classes it is good; but the writing is hardly equal to last year's standard, and the arithmetic is decidedly worse, the number of failures, especially in the lower classes, being unusually large.

Waimea West Village: Mr. Robson, jun.—(31.)—I was unable to speak with any degree of confidence last year as to the manner in which this school was being taught by the present master, who had then been at work only a few months. I have now no hesitation in saying that, although the numbers have so far diminished that the assistant has been dispensed with, the school is in a very satisfactory state. Excellent order is kept. The children throughout read distinctly, understand what they read, and write neatly. In arithmetic three only of those present failed to pass. The weak point is dictation, which is very faulty. This is one of the not very numerous cases in which the rough and ready test supplied by mere numbers would be utterly misleading. This school is well taught but thinly attended.

Waimea West, North Division: Mr. Walter Ladley.—(33.)—This, as I anticipated would be the case, now takes a good place among our country schools. Writing is most successfully taught, the reading is of more than average merit, and the arithmetic, though still by no means good, better than it was. The children have also greatly improved in point of general intelligence. The discipline is excellent.

Lower Wakefield: Mr. Chattock; assistant, Mrs Chattock.—(85.)—The discipline of this school is much better than it was, but the upper classes cut a sorry figure in almost every subject at my last examination. The single exception, the handwriting, was, as usual, excellent. The arithmetic of the first classes may be said to have been an utter failure, that of the juniors somewhat redeeming the credit of the school. The grammar was also very defective. This state of things will not be wondered at when it is explained that only 57 per cent. of the children attended during the first three quarters of the past year. The ill effects of irregular attendance do not stop at the children—they inevitably re-act on the energies of the master.

88 Valley: Mr. Hill.—(29.)—The present master has not been at work many months, and appears to be doing his work fairly well. Many of the children present at my examination were either new comers or former pupils who had not been at school for many months previous. I was not surprised, therefore, to find the scholars generally backward, especially in reading. They write neatly, the girls being taught, however, the now almost obsolete angular hand, which has very little to recommend it. Good order is maintained, apparently without any approach to harshness.

Upper Wakefield: Mr. Combes; assistant, Miss Ladley.—(51.)—It is gratifying to an Inspector to find that, in nine cases out of ten, energetic and usually successful steps are taken by our teachers to remedy

any defect that has been pointed out in a previous report. The arithmetic at Upper Wakefield was last year spoken of as lamentably defective. This year the upper classes did their sums well, failures occurring only among the younger scholars. The writing from dictation is also much more accurate than it was. Few of the scholars, however, are able to give any explanation of the meaning of by no means uncommon words that they meet with in their lessons. With this exception, the school is now in a creditable state.

Fox Hill: Mr. H. Ladley.—(24.)—Excellent order is maintained here. The penmanship is now as neat as it was formerly slovenly. In other respects there is little or no improvement. The arithmetic, especially that of the younger classes, is singularly incorrect, and none of the scholars can give an intelligent account of what they have been reading. It should be stated, however, in justice to the master, that not a single scholar present at my examination was more than eleven years old, and that the names of only two of twelve years old appeared on the roll for the last quarter.

Motupiko: Mr. Franklyn.—(20.)—The children here are well taught, and in excellent order. An unusually large portion of the school day is devoted to reading, with very good results. The arithmetic is more accurate than it was, and the first class now know something of geography and grammar.

Upper Moutere: Mr. Cook; assistant, Miss Cook.—(50.)—A much needed addition to the formerly overcrowded school-room has made the task of keeping order easier than it was. The children are carefully taught throughout. It would be as well if a little more attention were paid to the geography and grammar of the older scholars, were it but to relieve the monotony inseparable from the teaching of a narrow range of subjects. An occasional oral lesson on geography before the wall map would probably be found a welcome break by both teachers and taught.

Neudorf: Mr and Mrs Desaunais.—(47.)—The upper and lower classes here have improved very perceptibly in writing, arithmetic, and dictation. The younger children still read and give their answers in a mumbling undertone very hard to follow. Few, even of the older scholars, can give an intelligent account—or, indeed, any account at all—of what they have been reading.

Dovedale: Mr Beitt.—(21.)—The state of this school is highly creditable to the teacher. While the writing and arithmetic are at least as good as they were formerly, a great improvement has been effected in the reading. The children also acquit themselves fairly in geography, and can give a clear explanation of the subject-matter of their lesson. They are also remarkably well-behaved.

Lower Moutere: Mr Deck; assistant, Miss Leach.—(53.)—Lower Moutere, under the present management continues to rank high among our country schools. The teaching is sound in every branch, but more especially in arithmetic, not a single scholar having failed to pass. No fault can be found with the discipline.

Motuoka: Mr Bisley; assistant, Miss Guy.—(73.)—The single weak point in this otherwise excellent school is the hand-writing, which is of very inferior quality. The children throughout read well, and understand what they read. Their arithmetic is exceptionally good. The upper classes acquit themselves very well in geography, grammar, and dicta-

tion. The discipline, in both divisions, is perfect. I cannot refrain from again expressing my regret at the continued irregularity of attendance. It is wonderful that the teachers here should be able to effect so much with scholars who are absent during more than a third of the school year.

Ngatimoti: Mr. Sutcliffe.—(32.)—This school is steadily improving. The number of good readers has nearly doubled during the past year, and penmanship is so well taught that one-third of the total number on the roll are marked as good writers. The arithmetic is generally accurate, and the dictation tolerably free from mistakes.

Pangatotara: Mr Hale.—(21.)—The present good state of this school is all the more gratifying because my last year's report was very unfavorable. In arithmetic especially there was not a single failure in the first and second classes this year, only one scholar having succeeded in passing in 1875. The reading is now distinct enough, the handwriting excellent. The dictation of the three first classes is, however, far below the average.

Riwaka: Mr Ponsonby; assistant, Miss Gaskell.—(44.)—Another year of effective teaching has, as I expected, brought this school into a satisfactory condition. The children, though still below the level of our best country schools, read and write fairly, and show a sound knowledge of elementary arithmetic. They are also under far better control than they were.

Brooklyn: Miss Robb.—(22.)—This little school is going on very well. The handwriting is improved, the arithmetic correct as far as it goes, and the reading of average merit. Even the younger children know their tables well.

Long Plain: Miss Burt (late).—(16.)—I visited this school not long before the lamented death of its late mistress. The school was generally in a backward state, certainly not because of any lack of energy or ability on the part of the teacher. Less than half of the number on the roll were present at my inspection, though the weather was fine and the roads good. But little can be done for a class of scholars whose average rate of attendance is only 45 per cent.

Collingwood: Mr Canavan; assistant, Miss Buckridge.—(40.)—The present master, who has been at work only five months, is carrying forward successfully the work of improvement so well begun by his predecessor. In several respects a marked advance has been made already. Eleven scholars passed in proportion and practice, not one having succeeded the year previous. The geography of the first class was also greatly improved. The reading was, as heretofore, of more than average merit.

Ferntown: Mr Roby.—(24.)—Many children have left the district since this school was opened five months ago. Those who remain, a large proportion of whom have not been to any school before, have made good progress. They read distinctly, write neatly, and are very orderly.

Lower Takaka: Mr Hume.—(37.)—The master here, though inexperienced, is doing his work well. Handwriting is very successfully taught. The arithmetic is still backward, but improving. The children can give a very fair account of what they have been reading, and are in excellent order. An instance of the pursuit of knowledge under unusual difficulties, on the part of a scholar here, is worth recording. A lad of 15, who has had no previous

schooling, attends regularly, though his home is separated from his school by nearly eight miles of a rough hill-track and an unfordable river. To cross the latter, he has hewn out a canoe for himself, and each week trudges 75 miles, and ferries himself over a dangerous creek ten times, in order to obtain instruction that many who live within a few hundred yards of the school hold very cheap.

Motupipi: Mrs Robinson.—(18).—Reading and writing are unusually well taught here. The children have also a fair knowledge of geography. The dictation is faulty, the arithmetic of barely average merit. The organisation and discipline leave nothing to be desired.

Westport: Mr and Mrs Larchin; assistant, Miss Blaxall.—(157).—When I last examined here, an inadequate staff of teachers, whose numbers could not be increased without enlarging the school building, was struggling hard against great difficulties with more success than might have been expected. I observed a falling off in the reading of the younger children, and in the arithmetic of every class but the first. In other respects the credit of the school was well maintained. Writing, geography, and dictation were of more than average merit, the two upper classes reading with fluency and spirit, and explaining clearly what they had read. Whatever defects I have pointed out will doubtless speedily disappear after the completion of the spacious school buildings now approaching completion.

Addison's Flat: Miss Mills.—(44).—This is a thoroughly well taught and well disciplined school. Whatever is attempted is done creditably. Few mistakes were made in arithmetic, still fewer in dictation. The children read fairly and understood what they were reading.

Cobden: Mr Ray.—(38).—The children here, especially in the upper classes, read with clearness and spirit, as if they thoroughly understood the subject matter of their lesson. As was the case last year, no scholar failed to pass in arithmetic. Indeed not more than three or four mistakes altogether were made in their sums by the three first classes. When it is considered that Mr Ray, unassisted, has frequently as many scholars under his charge as are usually assigned to two teachers, such a result may fairly be regarded as unique.

Brunnerton: Mr Young.—(43).—This school has been carried on under unusual difficulties. When I visited Brunnerton in April I found 43 children crowded into a small and dilapidated building, proof against neither wind nor rain. (A new school-room is now completed.) In spite of the above drawbacks, the children were fairly advanced in reading and arithmetic. They knew scarcely anything, however, of geography or grammar, and wrote indifferently.

Charleston, St Patrick's: Mr O'Donaghue; assistant, Miss Dulong.—(65).—The present master had been at work only a month at the time of my last inspection. He had contrived, nevertheless, in that brief space to reduce to perfect obedience the rather unruly scholars with whom he had to deal. The scholars had also somewhat improved in other respects, especially in reading. A competent assistant is the one thing wanting to make St Patrick's a good school. (The present assistant was not appointed when I left Charleston.)

Charleston: Mrs West; assistant, Mrs Green.—(46).—Much cannot be expected as yet from this school,

which has not received any aid from the Board previous to last June, and which is, moreover, attended by very young children—three only out of seventy-three having attained their twelfth year. Nothing but elementary work has hitherto been attempted. The reading of the first class is good, the writing fair, the arithmetic throughout very faulty. Good order is kept.

South Spit: Miss Craddock.—(16).—Although this hardly rises above the level of an infant school, it would be hard upon the 16 children who attend to cut them off from all opportunity of getting instruction by withdrawing the small subsidy. Admitting that the standard attained is not such as would satisfy the requirements of "the revised code," however leniently interpreted, it may be pleaded that the children are learning habits of order and obedience, and are being prepared, however imperfectly, for a higher class of school.

Brighton: Mrs Murphy.—(34).—I have not found in any Nelson school children of the same age who can read so well as those at Brighton. The average age of the ten scholars in the first class is only 8½, yet they can read fluently the 4th Irish book, which is not usually attempted by children under ten or eleven years old. This special excellence is doubtless mainly due to a very painstaking teacher, but the keen interest taken by the parents in the progress of their children must also have largely contributed to the result. In other branches the children are fairly, but by no means remarkably, advanced.

Reefton: Sheil-street, Mr Brown.—(41).—A great improvement has taken place here since the master limited the number of his pupils to about 40 daily. The reading throughout is very good, the children, especially in the upper classes, understand what they have read, are well grounded in geography and grammar, and write fairly well from dictation. The arithmetic, though elementary, for the most part, has the great merit of being very correct. The discipline is all that could be desired.

Reefton, Church-street: Mr Delany; assistant, Miss Ceresits.—(61).—This school was opened less than a year ago, and has been under the charge of the present master for a few months only. Some time must elapse before this can be brought up to the level of even a third-rate country school. Very few, even in the first class, can read with anything like fluency, a passage of easy prose. The dictation is full of mistakes, and the hand-writing, with few exceptions, an illegible scrawl. The arithmetic, though backward, is better than the reading and writing. Most of the children have yet to learn the rudiments of discipline.

Ahaura, St. Mary's: Sisters of Charity.—(35).—Great improvement has been made in this school during the past year. The number of good readers has been nearly doubled, the hand-writing is more shapely, and no scholar in the first class failed to pass in an arithmetic paper which required a knowledge of proportion and practice. The number of scholars who succeeded in arithmetic this year, as compared with last year, was as 14 to 2. The discipline appeared to me hardly strict enough.

Ahaura, St. Andrew's: Mr Haswell.—(33).—The master here, who had been engaged during the previous ten months at No Town, where he had done excellent work, had been appointed to St. Andrew's only seven weeks at the time of my visit. The scholars were being carefully taught, and, though very young, promised well. Few mistakes were

made either in arithmetic or dictation, and the reading was generally of fair quality.

No Town: Mr Robb.—(20.)—The present master had been at work five weeks only when I examined his school. He appeared to be thoroughly competent. The children read distinctly, and could give a good account of what they had been reading. They were also well grounded in their tables, and in other respects showed unmistakable signs of having been carefully taught. It is only fair to attribute the good state of this school to its late master, Mr Haswell.

Lyell: Mr Goldstucker.—(8.)—The few scholars who were present at my examination were fairly taught. The work of the school was being carried on in a small cottage at a great disadvantage, the former school-room having been recently blown down.

Granville: Miss Melody.—(22.)—This school was unfortunately closed for the winter holidays when I last visited Granville, in April. I was, however, very favorably impressed by what I saw in November, great progress having been made during the previous six months. The mistress, though very young, possesses a considerable power of controlling and instructing scholars, some of whom are nearly as old as herself.

Nelson Creek: formerly Mr. Conolly, now Miss Gawne.—(15.)—The inhabitants of Nelson Creek, who had last year the ambition of maintaining two schools within a few yards of each other, have hitherto found it impossible to retain for many months together any teacher in the single school that now survives. Three teachers have left the place during nine months. A mistress has lately been appointed under a twelve months' engagement, an arrangement

that offers some prospect of being permanent. The master whom I found in charge of the school had taken office merely in order that the school might not be closed again, and was evidently not at home in his work. The children were disorderly, and, as might be expected, knew very little.

Totara Flat: Mrs. Thurogood.—(13.)—Although this little school had been open only seven months when I inspected it, much had been done during that period. The scholars read and spelt remarkably for their years, and were thoroughly grounded in their tables. The extraordinarily high rate of attendance (90 per cent.) shows that the services of the teacher are properly appreciated in the neighborhood.

Karamea: Mrs. Naylor.—(35.)—The teacher of this remote, and, indeed, almost inaccessible school, has contrived in a short space of time, and under unusual difficulties, to produce excellent results. When I examined the school, at the end of March, it had been open only nine months. The 35 children present were huddled together in a room measuring only 15ft. by 9ft. Yet the older scholars read fairly, wrote tolerably well from dictation, and worked money questions in arithmetic very correctly, not one in the first class failing to pass the second standard. The other class were equally well taught, and all the scholars were remarkably well drilled and orderly.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

W. C. HODGSON,

Inspector.

July 6, 1876.

RETURN OF NUMBERS AND ATTENDANCE FROM JUNE TO DECEMBER, 1875.

SCHOOLS.	SEPTEMBER QUARTER.						DECEMBER QUARTER.					
	Boys.	Girls.	Total.	School Days.	Daily Attendance.	Percentage.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.	School Days.	Daily Attendance.	Percentage.
1. Bridge-street, Boys', 1st division	40	..	40	52	23	56	40	..	40	53	27	64
2. do. do., 2nd ..	102	..	102	57	68	67	92	..	92	56	76	82
3. Hardy-street, Girls', 1st ..	..	85	85	56	65	76	..	85	85	55	55	64
4. do. do., 2nd ..	24	71	95	56	63	64	23	74	97	56	68	69
5. Preparatory	141	49	200	56	126	61	146	65	211	55	146	69
6. Haven-road, 1st & 2nd divisions	134	108	242	66	134	55	139	110	249	56	163	65
7. Hampden-street, 1st and 2nd divisions	54	50	104	57	62	60	67	50	117	57	80	69
8. St. Mary's, Boys'	112	..	112	56	75	67	113	..	113	57	76	67
9. St. Mary's, Girls, 1st and 2nd divisions	..	184	184	56	123	66	..	185	185	56	141	76
10. Clifton Terrace	13	18	31	59	19	61	15	18	33	48	24	76
11. Hillside	12	11	23	8	17	73	10	9	19	52	16	84
12. Happy Valley .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	14	12	26	45	20	77
13. Stoke	33	30	63	64	46	73	33	32	65	61	46	71
14. Richmond, Boys'	70	..	70	59	54	77	73	..	73	58	50	68
15. Richmond, Girls' .. ..	..	68	68	56	53	82	..	69	69	57	56	83
16. Ranzau	24	18	42	61	22	53	27	22	49	60	30	61
17. Hope	22	21	43	64	30	69	24	20	44	48	30	69
18. River Terrace	21	37	58	53	34	57	21	35	56	60	28	50
19. Spring Grove	54	46	100	59	67	67	48	42	90	54	60	66
20. Lower Wakefield, 1st and 2nd divisions	49	46	95	60	60	63	50	45	95	60	42	45
21. Eighty-eight Valley	13	14	27	64	19	70	14	13	27	57	14	52
22. Upper Wakefield	37	39	76	54	43	70	33	39	72	58	38	57
23. Fox Hill	24	9	33	54	24	74	24	15	39	47	26	67
24. Motupiko	12	11	23	62	16	70	17	11	28	62	16	57
25. Waimea West, North division	21	22	43	63	36	84	18	27	45	59	35	78
26. Waimea West Village	37	21	58	63	34	58	35	23	58	58	31	53
27. Upper Moutere	35	28	63	61	44	69	40	26	66	59	43	62
28. Neudorf	25	23	48	57	36	74	26	24	50	53	40	80
29. Lower Moutere	26	33	59	52	31	53	26	29	55	54	40	73
30. Motueka, 1st and 2nd divisions	52	63	115	64	78	67	51	62	113	53	69	58
31. Ngatimoti	14	17	31	53	19	63	13	20	33	58	19	58
32. Dovedale	12	17	29	34	22	71	13	17	30	46	21	64
33. Pangatotara	15	16	31	58	14	46	16	17	33	59	16	48
34. Riwaka	42	38	80	62	63	78	44	37	81	58	69	85
35. Brooklyn .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10	14	24	60	15	63
36. Takaka .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	23	15	38	24	17	44
37. Long Plain	14	14	28	52	14	50	16	21	37	51	16	43
38. Motupipi	13	10	23	59	14	62	11	10	21	51	13	61
39. Collingwood	31	30	61	68	40	66	32	30	62	48	39	63
40. Westport	100	87	187	59	113	60	108	96	204	58	160	78
41. Addison's Flat	10	18	28	60	17	60	12	24	36	55	29	80
42. Cobden	23	22	45	53	32	71	24	24	48	53	38	78
43. Brunnerton	18	21	39	57	28	71	19	21	40	53	29	72
44. Charleston, St. Patrick's	43	25	68	65	54	80	42	30	72	54	45	62
45. Charleston, Mrs West's	19	32	51	65	39	76	21	29	50	55	44	88
46. Reefton Mr Brown's	37	24	61	65	37	61	32	20	52	58	35	67
47. Reefton Mr Croft's	22	33	55	66	25	45	27	38	65	54	49	75
48. Brighton	18	8	26	62	18	65	20	7	27	55	23	85
49. Ahaura, St. Mary's	10	24	34	64	22	64	12	28	40	53	28	70
50. Ahaura, Mrs Clarkson's	11	17	28	60	19	69	9	19	28	67	20	72
51. South Spit	17	9	26	62	21	80	6	13	19	53	17	88
52. No Town	20	16	36	66	23	63	18	13	31	52	26	84
53. Lyell	11	13	24	57	20	83	13	14	27	56	20	75
54. Granville	11	8	19	66	16	84	11	7	18	60	12	67
55. Waipuna	7	5	12	64	10	80	7	5	12	51	9	78
56. Nelson Creek	14	12	26	66	20	77	..	..	..	..	..	..
57. Totara Flat .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	5	9	58	8	89
58. Karamca	20	14	34	68	25	73	20	15	35	57	27	71
	1739	1645	3384	..	2220	62	1802	1731	3533	..	2430	68

NELSON GOVERNMENT GAZETTE.
 RETURN OF NUMBERS AND ATTENDANCE FROM JANUARY TO JUNE 1876.

SCHOOLS.	MARCH QUARTER.					JUNE QUARTER.						
	Boys.	Girls.	Total.	School Days.	Daily Attendance.	Percentage.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.	School Days.	Daily Attendance.	Percentage.
1. Bridge-street Boys: 1st Division	47	...	47	43	27	57	30	...	30	49	25	84
2. " " 2nd & 3rd Divisions	102	...	102	47	84	82	104	...	104	49	86	83
3. Hardy-street Girls: 1st Division	...	56	56	48	48	86	...	56	56	48	51	86
4. " " 2nd " "	...	101	101	48	64	63	...	98	98	48	75	76
5. Preparatory ...	159	76	235	48	153	65	163	78	241	48	181	71
6. Haven-road: 1st and 2nd Divisions	134	104	238	48	161	67	121	83	204	48	153	74
7. Hampden-street: 1st and 2nd Divisions	65	49	114	48	90	79	70	56	126	49	93	76
8. St. Mary's Boys ...	124	...	124	48	93	75	128	...	128	51	97	78
9. St. Mary's Girls ...	...	194	194	48	160	82	...	200	200	51	157	78
10. Clifton Terrace ...	18	16	34	50	24	70	16	15	31	56	24	77
11. Hillside ...	10	10	20	54	17	85	12	13	25	56	19	74
12. Happy Valley ...	16	14	30	54	20	67	18	15	33	56	24	72
13. Stoke ...	34	32	66	47	47	71	35	30	65	59	52	79
14. Richmond Boys ...	67	...	67	49	48	72	68	...	68	60	56	83
15. " Girls ...	...	63	63	48	52	76	...	66	66	60	57	90
16. Ranzau ...	23	20	43	40	28	64	26	20	46	57	30	65
17. Hope ...	27	24	51	48	33	64	25	22	47	60	33	71
18. River Terrace ...	28	38	66	55	38	57	28	37	65	56	38	60
19. Spring Grove ...	47	53	100	64	58	60	46	44	90	57	66	61
20. Lower Wakefield: 1st and 2nd Divisions	51	46	97	53	65	67	53	54	107	53	77	68
21. 88 Valley ...	13	13	26	48	17	67	15	17	32	59	24	74
22. Upper Wakefield ...	33	41	74	52	49	71	34	39	73	59	44	65
23. Fox Hill ...	24	13	37	56	26	70	22	12	34	60	23	67
24. Motupiko ...	17	13	30	19	18	60	19	14	33	55	22	67
25. Waimea West: North Division	22	25	47	35	33	69	21	26	47	62	35	75
26. " Village ...	30	21	51	33	22	43	31	21	52	60	30	57
27. Upper Moutere ...	35	26	61	47	43	71	37	30	67	59	46	69
28. Neudorf ...	30	27	57	52	43	75	32	23	55	52	41	75
29. Lower Moutere ...	27	35	62	50	44	71	27	31	58	59	42	72
30. Motueka: 1st and 2nd Divisions	55	68	123	53	74	60	47	66	113	57	77	68
31. Ngatimoti ...	15	19	34	50	27	80	18	18	36	61	27	79
32. Dovedale ...	15	18	32	45	20	60	11	18	29	53	19	61
33. Pangatotara ...	21	21	42	47	29	69	21	21	42	58	24	57
34. Riwaka ...	45	38	83	41	71	85	46	40	86	50	63	73
35. Brooklyn ...	13	15	28	33	19	67	12	14	26	58	19	73
36. Takaka ...	26	29	55	47	32	58	24	25	49	56	32	68
37. Long Plain ...	16	17	33	52	14	42	14	14	28	13	16	57
38. Motupipi ...	13	13	26	48	17	65	13	11	24	52	15	60
39. Collingwood ...	32	28	60	62	36	58	26	22	48	39	36	75
40. Westport: 1st and 2nd Divisions	113	90	203	43	165	81	120	91	211	61	159	75
41. Addison's Flat ...	17	33	50	60	41	82	17	29	46	57	36	78
42. Cobden ...	25	27	52	49	39	74	29	30	59	59	35	58
43. Brunnerton ...	25	26	51	53	35	68	31	25	56	56	38	68
44. Charleston: St. Patrick's	41	35	76	54	59	77	47	39	86	55	68	79
45. " Mrs West's	25	32	57	60	45	79	...	...	...	...	...	...
46. " Church-st.: Mr Brown	33	27	60	56	42	70	36	27	63	62	43	62
47. " Church-st.: Mr Delany	35	45	80	63	62	77	33	38	71	55	60	85
48. Brighton ...	24	14	38	59	35	82	24	11	35	62	28	80
49. Ahaura: St. Mary's	12	21	33	55	25	75	13	27	40	62	26	65
50. Ahaura: St. Andrew's	18	16	34	23	32	94	19	18	37	62	34	92
51. South Spit	8	13	21	48	18	61	7	14	21	62	18	80
52. No Town ...	23	14	37	63	29	64	20	16	36	63	28	63
53. Lyell ...	14	15	29	54	24	88	...	...	16	62	15	93
54. Granville ...	12	7	19	62	14	70	10	6	16	62	10	88
55. Waipuna ...	7	5	12	58	10	80	7	5	12	62	10	85
56. Totara Flat	5	5	10	60	9	90	8	5	13	65	10	85
57. Karamea ...	23	15	38	58	30	79	...	...	...	...	...	...
58. Fern Town	20	23	43	44	32	74	15	18	33	61	23	70
59. Port	35	33	68	42	45	65	41	38	79	49	61	77
60. Nelson Creek	11	12	23	25	22	92	16	17	33	63	30	90
61. Toi-toi Valley	...	...	...	...	...	...	27	24	51	27	33	65
	1960	1884	3844	...	2757	71	1933	1827	3760	...	2807	74

ANNUAL RETURN OF NELSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOR THE YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 1876.

SCHOOLS.	NUMBERS.	AGE.				READING.			WRITING.			ARITHMETIC.				GRAMMAR.	HISTORY.	GEOGRAPHY.
		Under Seven.	Seven to Nine,	Nine to Twelve.	Twelve and upwards.	Beginning.	Moderate.	Good.	Beginning.	Moderate.	Good.	First Four Rules.	Compound Rules.	Proportion and Practice.	Fractions, Decimals, &c.			
1. Bridge-street, Boys', 1st division	64	..	..	13	51	..	..	64	..	11	53	..	..	54	26	64	24	64
2. do. do., 2nd division	156	..	72	62	22	73	41	42	83	66	7	44	36	21	..	82	42	82
3. Hardy-street, Girls', 1st division	97	..	4	43	50	..	7	90	..	6	91	..	..	59	34	97	34	97
4. do. do., 2nd division	149	13	59	66	11	108	41	..	73	24	..	30	22	..	..	22	..	22
5. Preparatory	334	261	73	..	..	334	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
6. Haven-road, 1st and 2nd divisions	336	103	82	106	45	170	93	73	54	81	37	47	73	43	19	88	43	88
7. Hampden-street, 1st and 2nd divisions	171	61	65	37	10	117	27	27	73	33	9	25	31	29	29	29	..	29
8. St. Mary's, Boys'	170	3	21	87	59	65	60	45	82	43	29	38	36	61	28	45	45	45
9. do., Girls', 1st and 2nd divisions	263	34	80	94	55	114	93	111	51	110	90	84	44	79	33	140	64	140
10. Port	81	35	30	15	1	70	11	..	25	..	..	11	2	..	..	..	..	..
11. Clifton Terrace	40	12	10	10	8	21	11	8	13	9	7	4	1	6	..	8	8	8
12. Hillside	28	5	7	6	10	9	8	11	1	6	7	4	8	8	..	11	5	14
13. Happy Valley	30	11	5	10	4	18	12	4	12	6	3	4	4	..	..	12	..	12
14. Stoke	74	13	21	26	14	33	11	30	19	14	19	10	13	19	13	30	17	30
15. Richmond, Boys'	81	15	29	22	15	41	17	23	16	16	23	15	16	24	15	41	23	41
16. Richmond, Girls'	80	15	21	27	17	22	7	51	6	19	33	14	18	17	7	51	16	36
17. Ranzau	53	14	17	13	9	25	17	11	25	4	10	4	2	10	2	11	11	11
18. Hope	61	15	17	14	15	33	7	21	19	10	19	5	14	14	13	19	..	28
19. River Terrace	82	22	23	18	19	49	8	25	24	16	15	13	9	9	2	21	21	21
20. Spring Grove	119	16	39	40	24	52	23	44	25	29	25	7	5	13	..	61	..	44
21. Lower Wakefield, 1st and 2nd divisions	121	28	39	27	27	64	35	22	17	17	23	15	27	5	4	22	..	37
22. Eighty-eight Valley	34	7	7	10	10	14	10	10	11	6	4	7	..	7	1	10	..	10
23. Upper Wakefield	82	19	16	27	20	34	34	14	34	21	13	6	6	18	6	29	..	29
24. Fox Hill	45	12	13	12	8	25	13	7	14	12	7	3	9	7	..	20	..	7
25. Motupiko	31	10	4	11	6	14	9	8	8	11	2	6	5	3	..	8	8	8
26. Waimea West, North Division	62	9	10	24	19	25	18	19	19	8	10	18	13	10	6	14	14	20
27. do. Village	51	9	9	17	16	18	14	19	14	4	15	9	5	14	2	19	..	19
28. Upper Moutere	73	14	25	18	16	35	20	18	10	14	13	7	7	9	..	21	12	21
29. Neudorf	58	13	15	18	12	24	23	11	14	18	7	7	10	13	2	18	11	11
30. Lower Moutere	75	18	12	22	23	22	27	26	8	22	14	7	17	24	14	38	26	38
31. Motuka, 1st and 2nd divisions	141	27	46	41	27	57	26	58	37	32	17	35	21	21	20	67	21	67

37. Ngatimoti	..	..	..	..	..	40	8	11	13	8	12	14	14	9	6	13	6	10	6	4	9	..	9
38. Dovedale	..	..	..	..	..	35	4	14	9	8	12	9	14	9	7	7	6	6	5	..	14	..	14
39. Pangatotara	..	..	..	..	..	42	17	7	12	6	19	12	11	9	11	10	3	12	11	7	11	..	11
40. Riwaka	..	..	..	..	..	95	23	14	37	21	50	17	28	18	30	12	21	6	16	..	21	..	27
41. Brooklyn	..	..	..	..	..	32	10	8	10	4	12	14	6	7	11	..	9	9	..	..	9	..	9
42. Takaka	..	..	..	..	..	59	18	12	16	13	32	15	12	5	15	11	12	6	4	..	11	..	11
43. Long Plain	..	..	..	..	..	33	9	11	9	4	20	13	..	8	13	..	9	4	..	..	10	..	10
44. Motupipi	..	..	..	..	..	29	5	4	11	9	9	13	7	6	12	6	6	8	6	..	20	..	20
45. Collingwood	..	..	..	..	..	85	18	18	25	24	38	23	24	35	15	16	9	8	11	..	30	..	15
46. Fermtown	..	..	..	..	..	43	14	12	9	8	27	7	8	13	3	6	7	3	5	..	8	..	8
47. Westport, 1st and 2nd divisions	..	..	..	..	..	236	80	65	62	29	145	46	45	36	24	31	39	20	15	6	62	..	62
48. Addison's Flat	..	..	..	..	..	46	18	11	11	6	24	12	10	26	12	2	5	5	7	..	10	..	10
49. Cobden	..	..	..	..	..	58	13	15	17	13	20	20	18	17	16	5	24	8	10	10	18	..	18
50. Brunnerton	..	..	..	..	..	61	16	21	13	11	30	19	12	23	11	3	6	5	7	4	14	..	14
51. Charleston, St Patrick's	..	..	..	..	..	93	25	22	32	14	48	20	25	31	22	6	21	12	5	2	37	..	37
52. Charleston, Mrs West's	..	..	..	..	..	73	29	23	18	3	47	16	10	27	6	3	10	2	..	..	..	..	..
53. Reefton, Mr Brown's	..	..	..	..	..	95	18	39	32	6	31	38	26	45	14	5	15	14	..	..	..	..	..
54. do. Mr Delany's	..	..	..	..	..	95	51	27	13	4	55	32	8	38	6	2	14	3	2	..	32	..	45
55. Brighton	..	..	..	..	..	43	23	13	6	1	19	15	9	22	4	1	5	3	2	..	18	..	17
56. Ahaura, St Mary's	..	..	..	..	..	48	15	9	18	6	17	16	15	13	7	9	5	4	14	..	6	..	6
57. do. Mr Haswell's	..	..	..	..	..	42	13	17	7	5	25	12	5	16	6	2	9	6	..	..	14	..	14
58. South Spit	..	..	..	..	..	28	9	8	6	5	24	4	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	13	..	13
59. No Town	..	..	..	..	..	44	18	10	10	6	26	10	8	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
60. Lyell	..	..	..	..	..	35	20	7	6	2	24	7	4	5	4	..	16	2	..	..	7	..	12
61. Granville	..	..	..	..	..	19	7	5	7	..	11	4	4	6	3	..	4	1	..	..	4	..	4
62. Waipuna	..	..	..	..	..	12	5	3	4	..	8	4	..	3	4	..	6	3	..	..	..	..	..
63. Nelson Creek	..	..	..	..	..	22	10	7	5	..	17	5	..	9	3	..	4	2	..	..	4	..	4
64. Totara Flat	..	..	..	..	..	13	7	1	5	11	2	..	..	6	1	..	7	2	..	..	..	..	..
65. Karamea	..	..	..	..	..	39	12	13	8	6	21	12	6	15	11	..	5	..	..	..	1	..	1
66. Toi-toi Valley	..	..	..	..	..	50	22	17	8	3	50	..	..	4	4	..	6	11	..	..	4	..	11
67. East Takaka	..	..	..	..	..	23	6	6	6	5	15	8	..	6	8	..	4	5	..	..	3	..	3
						4913	1347	1321	1381	864	2534	1160	1219	1263	955	750	758	624	726	313	1498	584	1484

NELSON GOVERNMENT GAZETTE.

ABSTRACT OF ACCOUNTS OF THE CENTRAL BOARD OF EDUCATION FROM JUNE 30,
1875, TO JUNE 30, 1876.

Dr.		Gr.	
To Balance in Bank	£362 12 0	By Salaries	£7,848 17 5
„ Provincial Grant	9600 0 0	„ Repairs, Rents, and Committee allowances	905 7 6
„ Rents of Reserves	238 16 6	„ Sites and New Buildings	454 12 0
		„ Books, Maps, and School Fittings	711 13 1
		„ Printing, Postage, Law Expenses, Stationery	167 13 3
		„ Interest on Overdrafts	9 10 0
		„ Credit Balance, June 30, 1876	103 15 3
Total	£10,201 8 6	Total	£10,201 8 6

Audited and found correct,

ALFRED GREENFIELD,

Provincial Auditor.

CHARLES Y. FELL,
WILLIAM ROUT,
M. CAMPBELL,

} Members of Central Board of Education.