

OBSERVATORY

The new sidereal clock has been placed in position for some months, and the chronograph having now arrived, the work of observation and distribution of correct time will be greatly facilitated as soon as the instruments have been thoroughly established.

The time-signals have been given with fair regularity, the transit observations being taken, as hitherto, by the Ven. Archdeacon Stock, B.A., who also personally superintends the setting of the local time-ball on those days for which time is notified in the morning paper; signals are also sent on those days to Lyttelton for the purpose of rating the clock which drops the time-ball at that port; but the utility and accuracy of the system might be greatly increased if it were extended to the other chief ports of the colony, and if a direct mechanical control of the local clocks were effected from the Observatory as is done in other countries.

LABORATORY.

During the past year 357 analyses have been performed in the Colonial Laboratory, so that the laboratory number now arrived at is 3,034.

These are classified as follows: Coals, 14; rocks and minerals, 50; metals and ores, 95; examination for silver and gold, 152; water, 11; miscellaneous, 35. Total 357.

The result of all analyses having any general interest are stated in full in the Laboratory Report, together with the information given by the contributions of the specimens upon which these results have been obtained.

Weights and Measures.—Only a few sets of standard weights and measures have been verified and re-issued, according to the requirements of the Act, during the past year; but the majority of the sets at present in use by the local Inspectors will have to be verified, as the statutory term for which they were issued will have terminated.

LIBRARY.

Two hundred and fifty volumes have been added to the Library of the Institute, which is now in such a crowded state as to render the provision of further accommodation absolutely necessary. Together with the Library of the Philosophical Society, it now comprises 4,000 volumes, nearly all of which are valuable works of reference.

Patent Office Library.—This Library has been arranged in the Lecture Hall, and is now accessible to the public, on application to the curator. It contains 1,420 volumes.

Public Library.—This Library, formerly the property of the Provincial Council, has been arranged and catalogued, and comprises 1,200 volumes, but unfortunately, in many cases, important works are rendered incomplete through volumes having been taken away before the collection was removed to the Museum, and, as no record appears to have been kept of persons to whom books were lent, it is now impossible to enforce their return.

Including private collections of books which are deposited in the Museum, the library available for reference and study numbers about 8,500 volumes.

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JAMES HECTOR.

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