

Students.—Many of the students are now becoming well versed in their respective studies, and have now a chance of reaping some benefit for their labours. One has lately been appointed to take charge of the first plant of the cyanide-process erected here.

"I have lately received instructions to visit Hokitika, Kumara, Greymouth, and Brunnerton for one week in each place every quarter. This breaking of the classes here will no doubt affect the attendance and efficiency of the Reefton School.

"In conclusion, I must thank the Committee for their valuable assistance in every way, and also those who have so kindly kept the classes going at the smaller schools during my absence."

Early in the beginning of last year the Committee of the Thames School of Mines represented to the Government that it would be more satisfactory to both the Committee and instructor if the annual examination-papers were prepared by persons appointed by the Government. This was done last year, and the examinations showed that great progress was being made at the Thames and Reefton Schools. The subjects on which examinations were held were: Theoretical and practical chemistry, practical assaying, mineralogy, geology, metallurgy of gold and silver, surveying, mining, pumping and winding, explosives and ventilation, and mechanical drawing. As the papers were mostly all prepared for advanced students they were only sent to the Thames and Reefton Schools, and the students acquitted themselves very well, reflecting the highest credit on the instructors of both schools.

At the Thames School, the large amount of work that has to be done in connection with assaying for the public, testing parcels of ore at the plant at the school, and teaching, was more than one instructor could attend to, and Mr. F. B. Allen, M.A., has been appointed temporarily as assistant to Mr. Park, and entered upon his duties in the beginning of April in this year.

MINOR SCHOOLS.

There is a School of Mines at Nelson, and several on the West Coast—namely, Brunnerton, Greymouth, Kumara, Waimea, Hokitika, Rimu, and Ross. The one at Nelson is conducted by W. F. Worley, the Curator of the Nelson School of Mines, who has a class of lads from 10 years to 17 years of age for mineralogy and blow-pipe analysis. An assay class for adults was opened in May last year, but the number attending being only five it was not kept open for more than three months.

The following is Mr. Worley's report on the work done at the Nelson School of Mines during the past year :—

"I have the honour to submit the following report of work done at the Nelson School of Mines during the past year :—The boys' class for the study of mineralogy and blow-pipe analysis has been well maintained. The class consisted of seventeen lads, whose ages ranged from ten to fifteen years. The work done by this class embraced the study of two hundred ore-specimens, and the blow-pipe analysis of iron, lead, copper, tin, manganese, bismuth, antimony, chrome, arsenic, silver, and zinc. The boys were also shown how to pan off wash-dirt, and thus prospect for gold. The elder boys of the class, those who have been working with me for the last two or three years, are now able to identify speedily all the common ores, and to prove their conclusions by blow-pipe tests. An examination was held at the end of the year, when eleven of the boys succeeded in passing satisfactorily. Dr. Cressey of this city offered two prizes, of the value of 20s. and 10s. respectively, to those boys who should do best at the examination. This generous offer was a powerful incentive to the boys, several of whom did so well at the examination that there was considerable difficulty in deciding who were really the best. The first prize of 20s., however, was awarded to Cyril Oakey, and the second prize of 10s. to Frederick Worley; a third prize of 10s., provided by myself, was awarded to Hardy Kitching, as his work was almost equal to that of the second. I have every reason to be well satisfied with the work of this class. The boys are steady, painstaking workers, who, by and by, will no doubt turn to profitable account the knowledge they are now acquiring.

"An assay class for adults was opened in May, but as only five persons joined, it was not kept open more than three months.

"A course of popular lectures on elementary chemistry was given during the winter months, but the attendance was not good, the average number present being about twenty.

"Several assays were made for the public, but none of them call for special mention."

On the West Coast great enthusiasm is displayed by the miners at the schools so as to acquire a knowledge of the different minerals they meet with in following their avocations. During last year Mr. W. Goodlet was appointed to visit the different schools from Brunnerton to Ross, and to give a series of lectures at each school. On his former visit, Mr. Goodlet found rubies in some blocks of detached rock; but these have not yet been found *in situ*. After Mr. Goodlet had finished his visits to the different schools, which occupied four months, he went in conjunction with some miners into the back country, with the view of finding a lode of tin-ore, but was unsuccessful in the search. Mr. Goodlet's lectures at the different schools on the chemistry of minerals were well appreciated by the miners, and although the benefits derived by a short visit to these schools are small in comparison to that in the principal schools, where teaching is continuously carried on, it gives the miners in the different places a slight knowledge of the composition of minerals, and some of them are now able to assay samples and determine the qualitative analysis. This is in itself a great advantage, as it enables them to readily distinguish the different metals and minerals they meet with.

At Hokitika Mr. W. M. Purkis has taken a great interest in the School of Mines, giving instructions in theoretical and practical chemistry, mineralogy, and blow-pipe analysis. The following is a report by Mr. Thomas H. Gill, the Honorary Secretary to the Committee of the school, for the year ending the 31st March last :—

"I have the honour, by direction of the local School of Mines, to report on the work and progress of our school during the year ending the 31st of March last, and I am pleased to state