

The late Director of the school at Coromandel (Mr. P. J. McLeod) having recently obtained an important appointment in one of the other colonies, no full report has been received. I am, therefore, only able to present a very brief summary of the position of the school. The reports sent in from the several schools are as follows :—*

THAMES SCHOOL OF MINES.

Mr. F. B. Allen, M.A., B.Sc., Director, reports as follows :—

During the twelve months ending 31st March, 1901, several important changes have taken place in connection with the Thames School of Mines, and its sphere of usefulness has been extended by the erection of a handsome museum, well stocked with mineral exhibits.

In September, 1900, Mr. E. J. Williams, drawing-master, was suddenly called away to England on private business, and his place was taken and has since been held by Mr. A. B. Harding. Mr. Williams proved himself to be a careful, painstaking, and efficient teacher; the students made quick progress under his tuition, and his departure was much regretted. Mr. Harding, however, has ably carried on the work, and has maintained a good average attendance at the classes. It is extremely satisfactory to see these drawing classes so well attended, and the students doing good work, for drawing, although of great importance to the mining engineer and every mining man, is often neglected.

At the end of January, 1901, Mr. W. H. Baker, B.Sc., severed his connection with the school to take charge of the newly formed Karangahake School of Mines, and he has since been appointed lecturer in assaying, chemistry, &c., at Launceston, Tasmania. Mr. Baker performed his duties as assistant here for two years zealously and well, and entirely to my satisfaction, and will, I have no doubt, in his new position, reflect credit on the Thames School, where he received part of his scientific training as well as his training as a teacher.

The following table is interesting as showing the positions now held by past assistants at the school :—

Former Assistants, Thames School of Mines.	Date.	Position now held.
A. Purdie, M.A.	1892	Director of Technical Education, Perth, W.A.
F. B. Allen, M.A., B.Sc.	1893-96	Director, Thames School of Mines.
P. G. Morgan, M.A.	1896-97	Director, Waihi School of Mines.
W. McLeod, B.A., B.Sc.	1897-98	Director, Charters Towers School.
W. H. Baker, B.Sc.	1899-1900	Launceston School of Mines.

One of my senior scholars, Mr. R. B. McDuff, has acted as temporary assistant during February and March, and has performed his duties in a highly satisfactory manner; so well, in fact, that at the end of March he was offered, and has accepted, the position of Director of the Karangahake School of Mines. As no assistant has been appointed to the Thames School in Mr. Baker's place, I am thus left without even temporary assistance in the meantime. For the sake of the efficient working of the school it is to be hoped that an appointment will be made in the near future.

During the year Mr. P. H. Grumitt has been engaged in the battery whenever parcels of ore have been received for treatment. He has performed his work faithfully and efficiently, and is still my battery-foreman. It was found necessary to erect a framework under the main driving-shaft in the experimental plant, owing to the development of a considerable amount of vibration, which was threatening mischief to the bearings and the general safety of the structure. The rocking motion has now been stopped, and the mill is in good working order. The outside of the battery building as well as all the school-buildings proper, both inside and out, have been repainted at considerable expense. This work has been well executed, and, besides greatly improving the general appearance of the school, will tend to preserve the buildings, and will certainly make the class-rooms far more attractive for the purposes of study and laboratory practice.

During the year I have been busily engaged collecting samples for the museum, and in naming, labelling, and classifying the exhibits, and by the end of the year had the whole collection in good order, so that in January, 1901, the museum was formally opened to the public by the Hon. the Minister of Mines. The museum itself, built by Messrs Lovatt Brothers twelve months ago, under the supervision and according to the designs of Mr. D. Mahoney, architect, measures 60 ft. by 25 ft., and is a lofty building, well lighted by high windows, and provided with gas-light. It occupies a good position facing the Beach Road, and bears the title "Thames School of Mines, 1885," that being the year the school was inaugurated on the Thames.

The approaches to the museum have lately been filled in and levelled off, and, as a suitable picket-fence has been erected in front of and along one side of the building, this part of the school property presents a good appearance. The whole of the school-buildings have been repainted, and it now only requires the erection of a new picket-fence in place of the present dilapidated paling-fence to make the whole of the school thoroughly presentable.

The show-cases, constructed according to plans and specifications drawn up by myself, have all been placed in position and filled with exhibits. They consist of 80 ft. of wall-cases 7 ft. high, and five large double centre-cases, all fitted with sloping shelves well calculated to afford an easy and unobstructed view of the exhibits. There are, besides, six flat wall-cases, which are held on trust for the Thames Public Library Committee.

I have personally collected, during the last two years, a very large number of the samples of rocks and minerals exhibited in the museum, and the collection as a whole is largely illustrative of the Hauraki Peninsula, and has been arranged with the object of being of practical utility to the student, the miner, and the prospector.

* It will be noticed that some of these reports are made for the year ending 31st March.