

Battery.

The battery still continues to be patronised by the general public for the treating of small test parcels, which was the object for which the battery was primarily erected. During the year twenty-five parcels were crushed and treated, consisting of $37\frac{1}{2}$ tons general ore, 7 cwt. tailings, $3\frac{1}{2}$ cwt. slag, and 125 lb. of picked stone. The result was a yield of 200 oz. retorted bullion, valued approximately at £570. As the outcome of a special grant from the Mines Department, the oil engine and specimen-stamper have been overhauled and the battery generally put into a state of repair. Towards the end of the year our amalgamator, Mr. Hugh Macdonald, tendered his resignation, after a period of four years' service. During the whole of this time he has carried out his duties in a satisfactory and conscientious manner. Mr. A. S. Ford, who has had many years' experience in battery-work, has been appointed as his successor.

WAIHI SCHOOL OF MINES.

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL.

The Council has pleasure in reporting that the progress of the school during the year has been satisfactory. The attendance has been practically the same as in the previous year. A fewer number of students sat for examination, but the results have been higher.

The teaching efficiency of the school has improved since the installation of the electric plant and the reorganization of the electrical classes under a permanent teacher.

In 1904 the average attendance was fifty-eight and the candidates for examination thirty-two. In the year under review the average attendance was fifty-six and the candidates for examination twenty-two. The highest marks in the colony were obtained by students in seven subjects at the recent examination.

During the visit of the Hon. the Minister of Mines to this locality in June a strong endeavour was made to induce him to consent to the certificates being indorsed by the examiners or that the Department should issue them for the whole colony signed by a Chief Examiner or other authorised agent or body. The Minister, however, would not agree to either proposal, and matters in this respect stand unchanged.

During the year there have been many changes and much confusion in the arrangements of the electrical classes owing to the unfortunate disablement of Mr. Wright and his temporary retirement from the position of instructor. At the opening of the school Mr. Wright was almost incapacitated, and for a time carried on the classes with much difficulty, finally having to obtain leave of absence; and it was not till August that a substitute, Mr. Lancaster, was appointed to carry on the work. Since the advent of that gentleman much more interest has been taken in this branch, the attendance at these classes being now sixteen; and it is becoming imperative that Mr. Lancaster should have more time to devote to his work in this centre. It will also soon be necessary to provide a workshop for practical instruction in this important subject. With this end in view, the Council has been collecting information and making inquiries as to the possibility of obtaining a grant for the purpose of erecting and equipping a workshop from the technical education vote; but this vote is so hedged with conditions that it is doubtful if a school of this class can come within its scope without a radical change in its constitution and management.

In May Mr. P. G. Morgan, M.A., who had occupied the position of Director of the school since its inception, accepted an appointment on the Geological Survey staff and resigned his post at the school. The Council feels that the greatest credit is due to Mr. P. G. Morgan for his devoted attention to the work and welfare of the school during his term of office as its head, and that the present successful position of the institution is owing largely to Mr. Morgan's capacity for work and the great interest he threw into it from the start of the school. Mr. A. H. V. Morgan, M.A., was appointed to the position of Director on the resignation of Mr. P. G. Morgan.

During the year the expenditure of the school has not been unusually high. The total cost of the institution has been £717, of which £46 has been spent in completing the electric-light plant and in small additions and improvements to the buildings, and £29 in new instruments. The Government during the year has paid in subsidies and grants a sum of £462, and the Waihi Borough Council again gave £100. There has been a slight improvement in membership fees, but the revenue from this source is still meagre, and shows a regrettable lack of practical interest on the part of the community in general. A united effort should be made to improve this condition and cultivate a healthier interest on the part of our townspeople.

The electric-light plant, which was in hand at the beginning of the year, was completed and started running in March, and has given satisfaction on the whole. As anticipated, the maintenance of this light has added somewhat to the general expenditure; but its installation was necessary for practical demonstration in the electrical classes, and will be more and more useful as these classes advance.

Financially, the Council has just been able to make both ends meet, the year closing with an overdraft of £15. Subsidies on salaries and donations already due by the Mines Department will, however, wipe this off and leave a balance in hand for the ensuing year.

The thanks of the Council are due to the Rev. J. L. Pattullo, Messrs. R. E. Williams, R. Morgan, and M. F. Haszard for prizes presented for competition at the annual examination, and to Mr. P. G. Morgan for his presentation of a dumpy level to the school.

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR, MR. A. H. V. MORGAN, M.A.

The attendance at the school during the past year was very satisfactory, the average number of students being fifty-six, with a class attendance of 117. The following table shows the attendance for each term in the various classes:—

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