

The attendance number of students for next year's session will probably exceed that of the past session. Counting the three students who, as before mentioned, have completed their studies and the four occasional ones who entered for special subjects only and whose return is doubtful, the school will lose seven students, leaving twenty to be relied upon with tolerable certainty to continue their studies; but, judging from numerous notifications received during the year, there will likely be an accession of nine or ten, if not more, new students. Under present conditions only twelve students could be accommodated in four of the classes.

The lecturer in general geology, Mr. J. R. Don, infused much interest and enthusiasm for the science amongst the ten students of his class by making four field excursions with them during the session—the best kind of practical instruction in geology, and which, no doubt, greatly contributed to the excellent results of the recent examination in the subject, comprising six first-class and four second-class passes. The first excursion, during one day, was to Highcliff and Hooper's Inlet, Otago Peninsula, for the study of the there prevailing volcanic rocks. The second, also during one day, was to the Wairongoa mineral springs and thence round through the Green Island country, for inspection of the old quartz workings and the Walton Park coal-mine. The third excursion, requiring two days, extended as far as Oamaru, for the study of the country around Palmerston, thence onwards of the Moeraki boulder and Hampden beds and of those of Oamaru and the Devil's Bridge. The fourth, of one day, was to the Blue Spur, near Lawrence, for inspection of the celebrated auriferous drift deposit, and the enormous fault by which it is affected, as also of the extensive elevating and sluicing operations of the Blue Spur Consolidated Company. Mr. Don very liberally paid the greater portion of the travelling-expenses connected with these excursions, and he expresses his special thanks to Mr. Howard Jackson, the general manager of the Consolidated Company, and to Mr. Loudon, the manager of the Walton Park coal-mine, for information and assistance kindly given to him and the students during the inspection of their mines. He also thanks Mr. Thomson, the owner of the Wairongoa mineral springs, for his kind permission to inspect his property.

Regarding the careers of some of our past students, about which I received information during the year, I may mention that Edward Paterson, to whose success in the Transvaal I referred in my last year's report, has since bettered his position as manager of cyanide works, and now earns a salary of £1,000 a year, with free residence. Walter Fulton has been successful in obtaining the appointment of manager of a mine near Johannesburg at a salary of £500 a year, with free residence and perquisites valued at £200 additional. Frank B. Stephens, the pioneer of our students in the Transvaal, held well-paying responsible positions there from the time he entered the country, but being always in delicate health he followed medical advice for a change of climate and went to Australia, where, soon after his arrival, he obtained a good position in Northern Queensland. The climate there proving, however, more harmful to him than that of the Transvaal, he had to resign the post, and after paying Dunedin a short visit, and not finding any favourable prospects in New Zealand, he returned to the Transvaal, and obtained there without any waiting a good position again. Other four of our past students—John Chisholm, H. C. Boydell, D. J. Matheson, and P. Morgan—are engaged in the Thames gold-mining district—J. Chisholm, I was told, as assistant-manager of a battery and cyanide works, and the others as practical miners, their intention being to devote three years to practical mining work for qualifying themselves for the metal mine-manager's examination of the New Zealand Mining Department.

There is every reason to hope that the practical teaching facilities of the school will be increased in a most important direction by the provision of a small model testing-plant for larger samples of auriferous quartz, concentrates, and tailings, enabling the students to learn practical battery-work, amalgamation, and the cyanide gold-extraction process on a scale sufficiently large for qualifying them to engage afterwards as assistants in, or as managers of, more extensive establishments of the same kind. Numerous applications were received at our laboratory during the year for testing auriferous material on a larger scale than by simple fire assay, but had to be refused for want of such a testing-plant, and miners, not only within this province, but even on the southern part of the west coast of this island, have been, and are still, obliged to send samples for testing over the great distance to the Thames School of Mines. Thus the expected provision of the plant, by the liberality of the Hon. the Minister of Mines (Mr. Cadman), besides greatly benefiting the metallurgical classes of the school, will meet an evident great need regarding gold-mining enterprise; and as our lecturer in metallurgy (Mr. Fitzgerald) thoroughly understands the practice of the above indicated processes, miners can confidently rely on the accuracy of the results of tests of any samples entrusted to him. The council being acquainted with the history of the movement (initiated by Mr. J. A. Chapman, one of our principal mining men in town) that led to the promise by the Hon. Mr. Cadman of a parliamentary money vote covering the cost of the testing-plant, I need here only relate some special incidents connected therewith, and how the case stands at the present time. When in the early part of the year the Hon. Mr. Cadman passed Dunedin on his travels through the Otago goldfields, accompanied by Mr. H. Gordon (Inspecting Engineer of the Mining Department), both gentlemen, at the invitation of Mr. James Allen, inspected our metallurgical laboratory, and expressed themselves satisfied with the space and convenience provided for a small testing-plant when the building was erected. Later on we received notice from Mr. Allen that the Mining Department required plans and estimates of cost of the necessary machinery and apparatus, including expense of erection, but with the proviso that the sum must not exceed £300. Mr. Fitzgerald thereupon at once prepared the plans, and assisted by Mr. Cutten (the lecturer in applied mechanics) I furnished the estimate of cost. Mr. Allen next informed us that Mr. H. Gordon, who, as the inspecting engineer of the Mining Department, had the matter in hand, was much interested in it, and proposed that we should obtain a plant that would really serve as a model for the students. Although generally approving of the nature and relative positions of the different parts of the plan proposed by us—namely, five horse-power gas-engine, three-stamper battery with