Through the standstill of many of the mines in the Hauraki Goldfields, North Island, a formerly extensive field for practical mining work has been much narrowed for our students, and a number have found it rather difficult to secure working places during the vacation. However, so far as I have learnt, many have been successful on the West Coast of this Island and at Reefton, and there is only a small number of them at present still unemployed, and these have chances of soon getting work. One has gone to a prearranged place at the Great Western Silver-lead Mine, Zeehan, Tasmania. The students' travelling-expenses by sea are this year much increased, I am sorry to say, owing to the Union Steam Ship Company having seen fit to withdraw the formerly granted liberal reduction in fares.

Regarding the number of students likely to attend the school next year, it will, in all probability, not reach that of previous years. As far as the register shows, there should be thirty-six students returning for completion or further prosecution of their studies; but, of these, three are doubtful, as, judging from repeated failures, they are apparently unable to pass in some of the subjects. Reckoning, therefore, thirty-three as the returning number, this would be increased by the uncertain number of new entries, which very probably will not be as large as in former years, on account of the new regulation, that for the future all new students entering for the object of gaining any of the diplomas or certificates of the school require to have passed the matriculation examination of the New Zealand University. There are, so far, only two new students certain of entry, viz., one from Canterbury, who applied for registration some time ago, and one from our Boys' High School, who is the winner of the scholarship recently established by the liberality of the Hon. Mr. Lee Smith. Going by past experience, before the rush to the school set in, the attendance number of regular students for next session may, I think, reach forty; whilst, in addition, three or four occasional students can always be counted upon.

The Lecturer in General Geology, Dr. Don, made with his students during the session an extended field excursion, about which he reports as follows: "The excursion extended over four days. We did not find it convenient to make our usual trip south of Dunedin, but instead the Oamaru excursion was extended so as to take in the interesting Kakanui series. The places of interest visited were Sandymount and Highcliff, on Otago Peninsula; the miocene beds of Hampden, with the Moeraki series and Katiki beds; and the lower Kakanui River, with the interesting altered limestone near the mouth; further, the bedded volcanic tuffs of Cape Wanbrow, and the limestone quarries at various points around Oamaru, including the diatomaceous deposits of Weston and other parts of the district. These excursions were well attended, and much enjoyed by the students."

The highly instructive value of such geological field observations, as detailed by Dr. Don, has been pointed out by me in previous reports; but it requires to be mentioned here that Dr. Don liberally lightens the expense of the excursions to the students by open hospitality at his home near Oamaru.

The provision by the Council of a second theodolite, which was urgently needed for the large class in practical surveying (as pointed out in my last year's report), was highly appreciated by the lecturer, Mr. Begg, and the students. Mr. Begg wrote to me on this head as follows: "The acquisition of another theodolite for the school proved a great boon, as it enabled the whole class of the second year's course of fourteen to carry on field practice at the same time. A considerable amount of useful work was got through during the mid-winter vacation, including road, railway, and mining engineering. The work done by the nine students attending the lectures of the first year's course comprised the reduction of traverses, calculation of areas, keeping level-books, calculating grades and quantities, and drawing of plans to scale."

As mentioned in my last year's report, the provision of new drawings of typical mining machinery, appliances, &c., for the mining classes becomes with every year more pressing. Those in use may, with some repairing, last through next session, but, I am afraid, not beyond that. On account of a new edition of "Dana's Text-book of Mineralogy" (the one we use) having come out, in which the systematic arrangement of the minerals is considerably altered, it will be necessary to rearrange our teaching collection of minerals (over one thousand specimens) according to the new system—a task I shall try to finish during the vacation.

Following the custom of previous years, I may, from information received during the year, give the following short account of the careers of a number of our Associates: J. Chisholm is manager of cyanide works and assayer at Murrin Murrin, Western Australia; W. A. McLeod has a well paid post as lecturer at the Technical School, Hobart, Tasmania; P. McLeod is director of the Coromandel School of Mines; R. C. Boydell is general manager of the Sunlight Gold-mining Company at Metz, New South Wales; E. Graham and D. Mathieson have established themselves as public assayers and cyanide experts at Charters Towers, Queensland; E. Bray is cyanide manager at Charters Towers, Queensland; H. E. Stephens is battery manager and cyanide manager at the Lachlan Gold Estates Company, New South Wales; A. Mosley is manager of cyanide works at Mount Allen, New South Wales; A. C. Street has a good post in the service of a mining syndicate in the Island of Borneo; Adam Hay is assayer at the Mount Lyell Mine, Tasmania; D. V. Allen is battery manager's assistant at the Kauri Gold Estates Mine, Opitonui. Those past students I mentioned in my last year's report are, so far as known, still in the positions they occupied at that time.

The work done for the public since the end of last year's session by Mr. F. B. Stephens, the lecturer in metallurgy, in assays, and analyses, and with the testing plant, and by myself in the determination of minerals and rocks, was as follows:—

Assays and Analyses charged for at Fixed Rates. Executed by Mr. F. B. Stephens.

1898.
Nov. 3. Assay of sample of sand, for gold, for Harty and Co., Dunedin.
Nov 6. Assay of sample of iron ochre, for iron, for Mr. Smaill, Dunedin.