

my own appointment. I therefore visited the various mines and mills within reach, and succeeded in enrolling in all sixty-five students, and these formed three separate classes—viz., one in Reefton, one in Crushington, and one at Progress Mine.

The subjects taken up were practical and theoretical chemistry, assaying, surveying, mining, metallurgy, and mathematics, and the following table shows the average attendance in each:—

Subject.	Total Number.	Average Attendance.
Mining	16	9
Surveying	16	9
Chemistry	18	11
Assaying	13	6
Mathematics	23	10
Metallurgy	8	5

These figures include the three classes already mentioned.

Only eleven of our students sat for the annual examination, and, though the actual results were somewhat low, there were reasons why this was only to be expected—that is, that some of our students had not had quite six months' tuition, and the whole ground covered by the examination papers had not been gone through. The results were as follows:—

	Practical Chemistry (Junior).	Theoretical Chemistry (Junior).	Theoretical Chemistry (Elementary).	Practical Assaying (Senior).	Practical Assaying (Junior).	Metallurgy of Gold.	Mining.	Surveying.
N. Lawn	77	...	...	...	...
R. Cowles	65	51	...	...
S. Weston	61	27	...	...	46	...	...	...
R. Wynn	69	...	87	...	...	...
F. Hansby	26	...	53	...	...	...	...	...
J. Auld	43
J. Oats	44
W. Saunders	27	...
B. McGrath	33	...
W. S. Lawn	39	40
W. Blackadder	59	...	...

The work in the practical classes—chemistry, assaying, and surveying—was greatly hampered by our want of material and equipment, and in all classes by the very scattered nature of the district and the long distances students have to travel to attend. For the surveying class we have now received from the Mines Department a new level, staff, and 5-chain tape, so that we are now well equipped in this respect, and I anticipate good work during the present year. For the assaying class we have received a new balance and flattening-mill, which will fill a long-felt want, but we are still in need of many things for this and also for the chemical classes.

The only sources of income for the school are the grant from the Mines Department and the students' fees, but I am of opinion that at least £50 a year might be raised locally by an energetic committee, and am in hopes that this will be done in the present year. Then, if the Department would also subsidise this amount, or even subsidise the full amount of our fees, instead of only up to £50, as at present, we should be able to conduct the school with much more success.

In regard to assays for the public, there appears to be very little prospecting going on in the district, and the established mines, with one exception, employ their own assayers. I have put through thirty-seven samples in all since I have been in charge.

In conclusion, I have to express my thanks to Mr. Ashby, our secretary, and to the other members of the committee for their assistance in the work of the school, and hope that we shall be able at the end of this year to show a marked improvement in our practical results.

WESTPORT SCHOOL OF MINES.

The hon. secretary, Mr. E. Young, reports as follows for the year ended 31st March, 1903:—

In the absence of a regular Instructor, practical teaching has been carried on by the President (Mr. Bradley) and Mr. Sydney Fry. There has been an average attendance of five students. Mr. Fry has now kindly offered to act as Instructor, and a fresh start will shortly be made under his tuition.

The work done in the school during the year has included seventy-six chemical and fire assays of gold-bearing and other minerals, besides twenty-two coal-analyses, and a large number of miscellaneous tests. Some volumetric analysis was also done.

A special feature of the work during the past six months has been the analysis of samples of local, colonial, and foreign coal. This work has been performed by Mr. Percy Bingham, Admiralty Coal Inspector, and Mr. J. Bradley, manager of the Corporation gasworks and President of the school.

In view of the great utility of thorough coal-testing appliances in a district like this, the school has ordered from Messrs. Fletcher, Russell, and Co., Warrington, England, a complete plant for coal-analysis, towards the cost of which the Westport Coal Company has generously donated the sum of £10. This plant will include apparatus for the analysis of the gases derived from coal.