A lesson in geological method was the chief object aimed at in the lecture, and this way of treating the subject proved more interesting to the audience than a mere description of the geological conditions would have done. The interesting geological features of this part of the district were, of course, dwelt upon, but, as the information supplied was similar to that which has been given several times in the reports of the Mines Department, there is no need to recapitulate it here.

On the 30th October, at Wakefield, under the auspices of the Wakefield Branch of the Farmers' Union, a lecture on nitrogen was delivered. The subject was treated from an agricultural rather than a chemical standpoint. After proving, by reference to well-authenticated analyses of plant-substances, the importance of nitrogen to the farmer in the production of farm-crops, an attempt was made to show (1) how the nitrogen gets into a naturally fertile soil; (2) how the nitrogen gets out of the soil by incessant cropping; (3) how the nitrogen may be restored to an exhausted soil—(*a*) by growing leguminous crops, (*b*) by adding to the soil natural or artificial manures rich in nitrogen. The chief artificial nitrogenous manures were described; their points of difference and suitability or unsuitability for special crops explained. The cost per hundredweight and the quantities to be used for the various crops were also given. Mention was made of the other important elements of plant-food, but they were not dwelt upon in particular.

Geological Exploration.

During the year several excursions were made to Flaxmoor Hill, Kaka Hill, and the smaller hills lying round about them. Several specimens of rock were selected from these places, and from these rock-specimens about a dozen micro-rock-sections were prepared. These are now being studied, and it is hoped that during the year some conclusions will be arrived at concerning the character and the history of these rocks.

Conclusion.

In a former report mention was made that the typical ore-specimens prepared by Dr. Kranze and presented to the Nelson School of Mines by the Mines Department, had been loaned to the Nelson Institute for exhibition in their museum on condition that myself and students could have free access to them for purposes of study. I regret to say that since writing the foregoing part of this report the museum has been burned down, and that the specimens referred to have been much damaged by fire and water. They will require well cleaning and relabelling, after which they will, I believe, be again serviceable. Until the museum is rebuilt I shall have to find another room in which to teach mineralogy.

WESTPORT SCHOOL OF MINES.

The Secretary, Mr. Edward Young, writes as follows:—

I beg to forward you herewith copies of balance-sheet and Council's and Director's reports of our school to the 31st March last, as adopted at the annual meeting held on the 14th instant. The names of officers and other members of the Council elected for the ensuing year are as follows: President, Mr. James Bradley; Vice-president, Mr. A. D. Bayfeild; Secretary and Treasurer, Mr. E. Young; Director, Mr. S. Fry; other members, Messrs. A. Stitt, C. D. Harney, R. Connell, for Westport; J. Dixon, for Denniston; T. Young and W. Young, for Millerton; and James Fletcher and K. Ross, for Granity. Mr. C. N. Greenland was reappointed auditor.

Council's Report.

Your Council have much satisfaction in reporting that the school has made great progress during the past year. The scope of its practical work has been much extended and its financial position has steadily improved. The balance-sheet to the 31st March, now laid before you, shows a credit balance, including building-fund, of £166 2s. The local revenue for last year, £80 3s., is the largest yet received for a similar period.

In addition to the classes at Westport and Denniston, a branch school has been established during the past year at Millerton, which has been largely attended. It is at present carried on in rented premises, but arrangements have been made with the Millerton Library Committee for the permanent use of a room in their building. Another branch of the school has also been lately opened at Granity, and a large class enrolled. The total number of students in all branches of the school, as shown in the Director's report laid before you, is forty-three. The present number of subscribing members is forty-eight. The Council is happy to report that the question of a site for the Westport School has now been settled. A part of the old Court section, measuring 50 ft. by 81 ft., has been gazetted to the school.

Negotiations have been going on during the past year with a view to the erection of a common building for the School of Mines and the Technical School, but no definite arrangement has yet been made.

At the recent annual examinations the candidates from this school were again very successful, some of the results being among the highest in the colony, a fact highly creditable both to students and Director, and demonstrating the thorough efficiency of the school as a teaching-institution.

A large amount of assay-work has also been done during the past year.

The Director, Mr. Sidney Fry, reports as follows under date of the 19th March, 1906:—

I have the honour to report that the Westport School of Mines has made decided progress during the past year. In addition to the branch at Denniston, two others have been started—one at Millerton (formed last June), and another at Granity (formed in the present month).