

proposed staff of instructors. In this scheme of classes for the year there is ampler and more satisfactory provision made for the Coromandel Peninsula than for the other districts of the colony. To this advantage the goldfields on the Hauraki Gulf are entitled from the splendid efforts the miners there made to establish on the Thames a permanent school of mines, conducted by a resident staff. To secure this end a powerful organization was formed, with a strong committee, on which every district from Coromandel to Waiorongomai is represented. They succeeded in raising in three weeks by subscription upwards of £500, which they are devoting to the erection of lecture-rooms, laboratory, and museum, on a site which they have purchased. The membership of the school now reaches the splendid number of 507, at an annual subscription of 10s. each. This school is deserving of every encouragement that the Government can give it. The district under its charge is a wide one, and comprises the important mining centres (gold and silver) of Coromandel, Te Aroha, Waiorongomai, Karangahake, Waihi, as well as the Thames itself.

The Thames proper has 301 members; Coromandel, 66; Te Aroha, 44; Waiorongomai, 43; Karangahake, 38; Waihi, 15: total, 507 members.

With gentlemen so well qualified as Messrs. Montgomery and Henderson, who are amply qualified to cover the subjects of chemistry in all its branches, metallurgy, assaying, mineralogy, mining, geology, mathematics, and surveying, there is good provision made for carrying on the work of a good practical school of mines. Great results may be expected to steadily flow from such an institution, not only in the discovery of new minerals in the district and the best methods of treating minerals which are known to exist there, but also in the important work of instructing the miners and prospectors in the best methods of testing ores with the view of identifying them and ascertaining their value.

It is part of the functions of the Thames School of Mines to provide materials and instruction to the outlying districts from which members are enrolled, and, from the constitution of the central school and the importance to it of these branches, as well as from the promises made to them by the committee, I have every confidence that their reasonable claims in that respect will be fairly met.

There are now at work, with the best means available on the West Coast, mining schools at the following centres, each with its assortment of chemicals and apparatus, partly purchased with their own funds and partly presented to them by Government *pro rata* to their subscriptions: Ross, Rimu, Kanieri, Hokitika, Stafford, Kumara, Greymouth, Reefton, Westport. There are several other centres on the Coast awaiting Government help to furnish their laboratories—Nelson Creek, Charleston, Lyell, Denniston, and Waimangaroa.

In Otago also there are schools now in operation at the following centres:—

1. Lawrence, with a collection of chemicals and apparatus, and other appliances, which cost about £60, £40 of which was provided by the Lawrence Athenæum and Mining Institute. The institute is proposing to build forthwith a lecture-room, laboratory, and museum, and it proposes to take under its patronage and provide materials and means of instruction for the outlying districts of Waipori and Roxburgh, as well as conduct classes in Waitahuna Gully, Waitahuna Flat, Blue-spur, and Weatherstone. The Lawrence Mining Institute will then bear to these districts the same relation as the Thames Central School will do to the whole Coromandel Peninsula, and will in that respect deserve the fullest support of the Government, in view of the wide and varied field it proposes to serve.

2. Bannockburn, with branches at Nevis, Cromwell, Clyde, Alexandra, and Bendigo.

3. Naseby, which will be expected to provide for Hamilton, Hyde, Rough Ridge, and probably Black's and Tinker's.

4. Efforts are being made to form a school at Queenstown, and I believe some funds are already in hand for that purpose, but no effective steps have yet been taken.

5. Riverton and Orepuki. At Riverton £10 have been subscribed, and an assortment of appliances is now being provided. The school is fortunate in possessing Mr. Golding, one of the masters of Riverton school, as its guiding spirit, he having had a training in chemistry and other subjects in Otago University.

Under this scheme for 1886–87 there will be ample provision made for all parts of the colony. Places which were overlooked last year for the want of time and means will be overtaken, and receive a fair share of the attention of the staff in the future.

I shall be able in a few days to forward for your consideration the details of the visits of the proposed staff to each of the districts. This will include provision for Nelson and Collingwood Districts, as well as Charleston, Addison's Flat, Waimangaroa, Denniston, Nelson Creek, No Town, Lyell, and probably Owen's Reefs, all of which were omitted in last year's course.

I have, &c.,

JAMES G. BLACK.

The Hon. the Minister of Mines.