

the crushing and quartering operation just explained, be reduced to the small quantity required for the assay.

I finished my Otago tour by one lecture at Arrowtown to a crowded house of about a hundred and fifty miners and others.

I very much regret that, on account of unavoidable interruptions in my tour and the necessity of paying a prolonged visit this year to the West Coast and the Nelson and Collingwood Districts, I was unable to make a longer stay in the Skipper's District, and was not able to visit at all Macetown, Cromwell, Naseby, and the important alluvial diggings between Clyde and Naseby, at all of which I had always large and very appreciative audiences. These districts had, however, compensation in the assaying and blowpipe six-weeks visit of Messrs. Butement and Irving to the Invincible, Skipper's, and Macetown Districts; and the five-months tour of Mr. Hamann over the Riverton, Tuapeka, Bannockburn, and Naseby Districts, which he has described in his report forwarded to you herewith.

WEST COAST GOLDFIELDS.

On the 3rd March I proceeded with Goodlet, *via* Christchurch and Otira Gorge, to visit the West Coast schools. These had been for the preceding four months under the charge of Messrs. Fenton and McLymont, Mr. Fenton having the direction of the schools from Denniston to Reefton, and McLymont of those from Greymouth to Ross.

It was with some misgivings about the condition of these schools that I went to the Coast on this occasion. These misgivings arose from the circumstance that on my last visit I was not able, for lack of time, to devote to each school more than one or, in a few cases, two or three days; and after that flying visit the schools on the Coast had been all left for six months without any supervision or provision for conducting classes. Such neglect—which was, however, unavoidable—I was afraid would tell seriously on the vitality of the schools, as it left them some grounds for suspecting that they would be left very much to their own resources.

The moment I reached Hokitika, however, I found not only that these misgivings were groundless, but that all the schools on the Coast from Ross to Denniston—a distance of 130 miles, and containing eleven schools—were in a state of great activity, organizing classes, raising funds, building and equipping class-rooms and laboratories, erecting assaying-furnaces, fitting up mineralogical museums and glass-covered cases for the display of their mineral collections. So vigorous and hopeful and full of life did I find these schools all along the Coast that for the first time since my arrival in the colony sixteen years ago did I experience the sensation of having my own faculties aroused and energies stimulated by contact with others, and participation in a work which was being carried on by others more vigorous and hopeful than myself. It was a new experience to me, and proved beyond a doubt not only the vitality of this school-of-mines movement, but its progressive character. All the best men in every district are the leaders in the movement, and they are men who are accustomed to look after their own interests, and quite able to do so. Their connection with the movement as its promoters and supporters, since its origin two and a half years ago, is a guarantee that it will develop into a colonial institution of a permanent character.

It was in the schools of the Hokitika District and at Reefton that this energetic character was most discernible. At Hokitika itself the school has now fitted up a laboratory, with its working-tables, shelving, tanks, gas-chamber, assaying-plant, and assortment of chemicals and apparatus, very little, if at all, inferior to the chemical laboratories in our university colleges. They have also got classified, named, and arranged in glass cases a very valuable collection of minerals, of which the splendid collection presented by Government forms the nucleus. The organization and management of the school here has from the commencement been in very able hands, and they have set an example of vigour which the other Westland schools are successfully following. The Hokitika School has had from the first the best services of Dr. Giles and Messrs. Purkiss and Souter, who, however, have not confined their attention to their own school, but, by visits, and lectures, and correspondence, have greatly aided in the building-up of schools in other districts—notably in Ross, Rinnu, Kanieri, and Stafford.

The Ross School I also found in a very vigorous condition. This school owes its existence very much to the action of Messrs. McJannet and Grimmond, supported by Messrs. Wylie (manager of the Ross United), Davy (manager of the Mont d'Or), Cameron, Salter, Lockington, Petrie, Purvis, Halligan, and other good workers. A strong feature of this school is the number of upper-form school-boys and grown young men that frequent its classes. This is mainly due here, as in so many other places, to the hearty co-operation of the teacher of the public school. The Ross School is now well housed in a building which they have fitted up with working-tables, shelving, a collection of minerals, chemicals, and apparatus, and, indeed, all the requisites of a working-laboratory. They are now, I understand, collecting funds for erecting a good assaying-plant to test the quartz brought down by the prospectors now and then from the ranges. Mr. McJannet, who has done more than any one else for these classes in Ross, spares himself no trouble in assaying samples of stone brought in, and in showing the process to others. I look on the Ross School as one of the most promising on the Coast from its position, being the outlet of all the country to the southward, being in the middle of rich alluvial deposits, and having a background of hitherto-unprospected and very likely reefing-country.

On this visit I delivered two lectures in Ross, and, with Mr. McJannet and Goodlet, conducted an assaying-class all day long at the Bank of New Zealand and blacksmith's forge. During the day we assayed twenty-five samples of quartz and pyrites, with results of from nothing up to $1\frac{1}{2}$ oz. of gold per ton.

On the 10th April I lectured at Kanieri to a full house of about a hundred and fifty. The Kanieri School of Mines have built a room for themselves, and fitted it up with tables, shelving, and other working-appliances; and they have a small stock of chemicals and apparatus. Owing, however, to the difficulty of getting any one to instruct them in the use of their chemicals, they have not as yet made much progress; but they have abundance of energy, and, with the periodical