

MUSEUM.

The estimated number of visitors to the Museum during the year is 36,180, of whom a large proportion visited the institution on Sunday afternoons.

NATURAL-HISTORY COLLECTIONS.

The whole of the collections of stuffed skins have been examined and thoroughly cleaned by the Taxidermist. No extensive additions have been made to this section, chiefly because it has now become impossible to display, or even to store, such collections properly, owing to the crowded state of the Museum.

Pisces.—Under this head it may be mentioned (1) that specimens of *Retropinna richardsoni* and *Agonostoma forsteri*, caught with a rod four miles up the Hutt River, were presented by the Hon. P. A. Buckley, M.L.C.; (2) a specimen of *Agriopus leucocephalus*, presented by Mr. H. Hawke, of Picton; (3) a jar of fish, received from Mr. T. S. Sandeyer, of Tiritiri, Auckland; (4) a young specimen of the torpedo (*Torpedo fairchildi*) and the Skipper (*Schombressox forsteri*), presented by Mr. C. H. Robson, of Napier.

Aves.—A fine specimen of the egg of the huia (*Heteralocha acutirostris*), presented by Mr. G. M. Hewson, and a specimen of the South Island thrush (*Turnagra crassirostris*), presented by Mr. Geddall, of the Government steamer "Stella," are the most noteworthy under this head. Collections of New Zealand birds have been forwarded to Mr. H. Wharton, England, and to the Australian Museum, Sydney, as exchanges.

Reptilia.—Several species, new to New Zealand, have been determined by the Museum Assistant, and a description of them will appear in Vol. XVI. of the Transactions of the New Zealand Institute. Collections of New Zealand lizards have been sent to Professor Pohlton, of Oxford, and Mr. H. Wharton, England.

Invertebrata.—Twenty-two species of echinodermata and nine of crustacea, presented by Professor von Haast, of Christchurch, have been added to the type collections. A cuttlefish, *Tremoctopus robsoni*, which adds a new genus and species to the New Zealand list, has been presented by Mr. C. H. Robson. The Hectocotylus was found in the pouch of the female, which adds to the value of the specimen. A collection of mollusca, New Zealand and foreign, has been presented to Mrs. Whitaker, of Auckland, in exchange for some northern species. The New Zealand land shells belonging to the Museum have been rearranged and named by Professor Hutton, who, at the same time, has rendered the collection more complete by the addition of some of his new species.

ETHNOLOGICAL.

The most important addition to this section is a Malocolo skull, presented by Mr. F. J. Barnett. The skull is remarkable, showing as it does that there is a tribe in Fiji which, like the Caw-we-litcks Indians, flatten the top of the head in childhood.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Extensive additions have been received under this head, among which may be mentioned forty-four samples of artistic earthenware, made and presented by Messrs. Austin and Kirk, of Christchurch; a black vase, glazed with New Zealand manganese, presented by Mr. Hart, of the Press, Christchurch; Japanese ware, presented by Captain Ito, of H.M.S. "Riujo;" iron, made from Onehunga ironsand, presented by Messrs. Chambers and Co.; olive oil, made from olives grown at Kawau, presented by Sir George Grey, K.C.B.; portrait of Sir David Monro, deposited by Mr. C. Monro; and Chinese ware, deposited by Mr. T. W. Kirk.

The collection illustrating industrial art in the colony has received further additions by a valuable donation of terra-cotta ware, made by Messrs. Boyd, of Auckland, the detailed list of which will appear in next year's report.

Amongst the articles sent from the Museum, either as presentations or exchanges, may be mentioned a collection of New Zealand auriferous quartz to the Perth Museum; a large collection of rocks, fossils, and casts to the Oamaru Museum; New Zealand tanning barks to Messrs. Lightband, Allen, and Co., Christchurch, and to Messrs. Krull and Co., Wellington.

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY.

During the past year the survey has been extended in various districts, and the result embodied in reports, illustrated with maps and sections, which are published, as is usual, in a separate form. A stay of some weeks in the interior of Otago, in connection with the observation of the transit of Venus, afforded me an opportunity of re-examining the auriferous gravels and the associated strata of the Manuherikia and Upper Clutha Plains. The result confirmed my first expressed opinion that the excavation of these wide valleys dates from a very early period, and prior to many important dislocations of the basement rocks. Further, that the deposits by which they have been filled up belong to various ages, and that the source of the alluvial gold is to be found in the earliest formed of these deposits—in which the gold is irregularly distributed, so that it can only be extracted by the process of hydraulic mining. That enormous quantities of alluvial gold still remain untouched in this form in the above district is beyond doubt, but experience shows that it is only under circumstances favourable for obtaining a sufficient supply of water and a good fall for the enormous volume of *débris*, or tailings, that the gold can be profitably extracted. At Tinker's Gully, Drybread, St. Bathans, and other places along the west side of the Manuherikia Plain, the older auriferous gravels have been tilted at high angles, and thus brought into a favourable position for being worked. In other places where they are below the general drainage level of the basin, although equally rich, they could not be profitably worked.