

VISIT ABROAD OF DIRECTOR.

The Director left New Zealand on 7th March, 1938, on the invitation of the Carnegie Corporation of New York. He visited the following countries, studying museum work in the principal centres: Hawaii, United States of America, Canada, England, Scotland, Wales, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Holland, Belgium, France, and Egypt. In addition, museums were visited at the following ports on the outgoing and incoming journeys: Suva, Colombo, Singapore, Batavia, and Rabaul. In most museums contacts were made with the Director and staff, and several arrangements for exchanges were made. The Director returned to New Zealand on the 14th November, 1938.

EDUCATIONAL WORK.

The educational work of the museum has been actively carried out under the guidance of the Education Officer, who was made available to the Museum through the generosity of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, to whom the Management Committee feel the community is greatly indebted. In 1938 the education work was commenced with the aid of students from the Wellington Teachers' Training College, who at present are at the Museum in groups of six to eight for a period of six weeks at a time. They take the children in groups of from ten to fifteen each for practical work and lectures on Museum exhibits. These last for three-quarters of an hour, and are carried out with the help of specimens for handling, lantern-slides, and films. The children then are assembled, and have a lecture in the main hall from the Education Officer or one of the Museum staff. On account of the late start owing to organization difficulties and the fact that the second half of the third term had to be devoted to making up cases for country schools, only two terms' full work was available for school attendance. Even so, nineteen thousand visits were paid by children from all the schools in the Wellington District from Standard III primary to Form VI in secondary schools. One hundred and twenty-nine lectures were given by the Education Officer, thirty-four by the Entomologist, and two by the Ethnologist. The members of the staff also helped in giving series of lectures to students in preparation for their teaching. During the year 148 cases of specimens and pictures were prepared for circulation to country schools.

PUBLIC LECTURES.

Five public lectures were given in the Museum during the year, the average attendance being about 110. The subjects and lecturers were "The Rise of Life," by D. W. McKenzie; "Some Danish Castles, including Hamlet's Elsinore," by Mr. Johannes C. Andersen; "Volcanoes of New Zealand, Past and Present," by Dr. P. Marshall; "Secrets of the Insect World," by Mr. J. T. Salmon; "Maori Art," by Mr. W. J. Phillipps.

NATIVE-PLANT EXHIBITION.

From 15th to 19th February an exhibition of native plants was held in the Maori Hall of the Museum and the adjoining foyer. It was opened by the Hon. W. E. Parry, Minister of Internal Affairs. There was a good attendance of the public, including school-children, at this function, and for the rest of the time for which the exhibition was open. Altogether, about three hundred and fifty kinds of plants were shown and classified under their proper families. In addition, there was a special exhibition arranged by the New Zealand Native Plant Preservation Society. Assistance also was given by the Wellington Beautifying Society, the Plant Research Bureau, the Arthur Pass National Park Board, the Botanical Gardens in Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin, and many private individuals. As a result of this exhibition a large number of species of living plants has been acquired by the Museum. It is proposed to keep them as a basis for future exhibitions. For this purpose it is hoped that a propagating-house will be provided as soon as is possible.

EXCHANGE EXHIBITS.

The interchange of loan exhibits under the scheme inaugurated by the Carnegie Corporation Committee is being regularly carried out. The new exhibit from the Dominion Museum, which will go into circulation in April, 1939, is entitled "The Maori and the Whale," and deals with the mythology of the whale and the uses to which cetaceans were put by the Maori. The museums participating in this exchange are those at Auckland, New Plymouth, Whanganui, Napier, Wellington, Nelson, Christchurch, and Dunedin. Very instructive and interesting exhibits have been in circulation, each being shown for two months in each museum.

MAORI COLLECTIONS.

During the past year further shelving has been erected in the Maori ethnology room, enabling classification of reference material to be continued. The large collections of adzes have been assembled, and were duly classified under types by Mr. H. D. Skinner, who spent some days on the work. In connection with the Museum educational work, the whole of the Maori reference material has been re-examined and certain typical Maori artifacts loaned to the Education Officer for use in circulating exhibits to schools. Numerous lectorettes, together with practical demonstrations in Maori technique, have been given to groups of training-college students attached to the Museum.

The Dominion Museum collection of old photographs of Maori carved houses has been classified according to districts, and records of previously unknown localities supplied where possible. An endeavour is now being made to have compiled a complete census of all Maori carved houses of the North Island; and to this end photographs of Maori houses are being collected whenever possible.