

REPORT OF THE EDUCATION OFFICER, DOMINION MUSEUM, FOR YEAR ENDED 31ST  
MARCH, 1939.

- I. Organization of Lectures.
- II. Organization of Student Lectures.
- III. Preparation of School Cases.
- IV. Museum Clubs.

I. ORGANIZATION OF LECTURES.

The series of lectures commenced late owing to the training course held at the Auckland War Memorial Museum during February. By the middle of February, schools were circularized concerning the work at the Museum, and all the Wellington primary and post-primary schools, with one exception, wished to participate in the scheme.

A short trial of the Auckland method of schools booking time at the Museum as they required it proved to be unsatisfactory, and, with the consent of the Wellington headmasters, a scheme was adopted by which the schools nominated the days of the week on which they were not able to come. The Education Officer then made a schedule of the schools in rota and informed them on what days they were due at the Museum. The school classes were grouped in five sections:—

- (1) Standards III and IV.
- (2) Standards V and VI.
- (3) Third and Fourth Forms.
- (4) Fifth Forms.
- (5) Sixth Forms.

Only one of these sections attended the Museum at a time, so that lectures could be adapted to the age-groups of the children. Though the scheme was in operation for only two-thirds of the year, 19,498 visits were made by children to the Museum. After trial of several times for lectures, the following scheme was adopted in order to make maximum use of the lecture hall and yet to keep the groups in charge of students small in numbers.

One section of from 90 to 120 children arrived at the Museum at 9 o'clock. These were divided into small groups and taken into the Museum in the charge of students for the group work, which continued until 9.45 a.m., when a second section arrived. Both sections then went into the Lecture Hall for a lecture and film, which usually lasted until about 10.30. After this, the first section left the Museum and the second went out to the group work, leaving about 11.20 a.m.

At the beginning of 1939 this procedure was modified on occasions, when, to suit distant schools, the whole time-table was moved on half an hour.

It is essential that the full round of schools receive the same lecture, as, on two occasions, when the necessary films were not available and the lectures were altered, complaints were made by the schools concerned. With the present organization it seems impossible for children to make more than two visits to the Museum a term, and thus the same lecture must be given for six weeks without change. The lectures given were—

In 1938—

- (1) "The Rise of Life." Film: "Animal Life."
- (2) "The Life of the Plant." Film: "Life Cycle of the Lupin."
- (3) "Life in the Sea." Film: "Some Seashore Animals."
- (4) "Volcanoes." Film: "Volcanoes."
- (5) "A Trip to the Moon."

In 1939—

- (1) "Grass: The Story of the Nomad."
- (2) "Life in Ancient Egypt."

All of the above were given by the Education Officer.

In addition, one set of thirty-four lectures on "Insect Life," with a film, "Butterflies," was given by the Entomologist, Mr. J. T. Salmon; and Mr. W. J. Phillipps also lectured on "Maori Life" on two occasions, using the film "Maori Days."

II. ORGANIZATION OF STUDENT LECTURES.

Through the generous co-operation of Mr. F. C. Lopdell, Principal of the Wellington Teachers' Training College, students have been attached to the Museum on section throughout the year. From six to eight students have formed a group, which is present for six weeks. Three or four days elapse in training them for the first groups they are to take. Thereafter they prepare in the afternoons the new material they need for future groups. In the afternoon, also, they receive lectures from the Museum staff on subjects which might be useful to them as teachers—Maori arts and crafts, modelling and casting, aquaria and insects in schools, and plant preservation.