



[Frank McGregor photo.]

The dignified Gothic-style building housing the Canterbury Museum. It was erected in 1870 and has been added to as the collections have grown.

area, near Waikari, have yielded moa bones by the truck load. The largest consignment to date comprised 68 skeletons, all carefully indexed and carried in numbered containers, except for the biggest bones, which reposed on top of the boxes, and it is calculated that their recovery necessitated the removal of 933 cubic yards of soil—no mean feat of digging. In fact, the total number of moa skeletons found in this particular  $\frac{1}{4}$  acre of swamp on the property of Mr. Joseph Hodgen is 148, these figures considerably exceeding the number of skeletons known in all other museums of the world. The Pyramid Valley discoveries have aroused such widespread interest among the public that the authorities are planning to publish in the near future an illustrated brochure giving the full particulars.

Ferdinand von Hochstetter's reconstruction of the moa is the subject of an old steel engraving in the museum. This distinguished Austrian scientist visited New Zealand with the Novara expedition in 1858 to report on the country's geological features and had as one of his assistants the youthful but much-travelled Julius von Haast, who had arrived in the colony only the day before and was later to become Provincial Geologist and discoverer of the pass on the Otago-Canterbury mountain boundary which is named after him and founder of the Canterbury Museum. (He was also geologist for the Lyttelton tunnel scheme and was responsible for the discovery of artesian water beneath the city of Christchurch.)

### Gothic-style Building

The first portion of the present structure of mist-grey stone was erected in 1870 after the Gothic style. Success attended the venture from the outset and within the short space of 2 years a two-story wing was added, and in 1876 the second wing, as substantial as the first, was built to face the Antigua Street (now Rolleston Avenue) frontage, the entrance porch bearing the inscription, "Lo, these are

parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him." (The source of this happily-chosen inscription is the Book of Job, 26.14.)

The last permanent addition was made in 1882, only temporary buildings having been put up since, such as the shelter for the Maori House and an annexe for the largest skeleton of the largest species of whale in the world, the southern blue whale, which was washed ashore at Okarito, South Westland, in 1908. This skeleton is 87ft. long and is estimated to weigh 9 tons. In addition, a room was built for the relief model of Canterbury, occupying 1200 sq. ft., which was constructed by the Public Works Department for the New Zealand Centennial Exhibition in 1940 and which was the gift of the Government to the museum.

### Literary Award Won with "Royal Visitors to New Zealand" Articles

THE New Zealand Women Writers' and Artists' Society's Browning Cup, a new literary award open for annual competition among society members, has been won this year by Mrs. E. B. V. Phillips, lady editor of the "Journal," for the best published prose from July, 1947, to June, 1949. The entry submitted by Mrs. Phillips was the series of articles "Royal Visitors to New Zealand," which appeared in the February, March, April, May, and June issues of the "Journal." Mrs. Phillips is perhaps better known to readers of the "Journal" as "Mary," under which name she has written articles for the women's section for the past 6 years.

### Trilby the Tuatara

Although needing no larger abode than a corner of a showcase, Trilby the Tuatara successfully vies with the Okarito whale in popular interest, for his lineage dates back to when reptiles reigned supreme on the earth and mammals had not yet attained such gigantic stature and importance in the world of nature. Tuataras are a long-lived race and Trilby was no exception to this rule, being in all probability 200 years old when his owner, the redoubtable warrior chief Te Kooti presented him as a token of regard to Mr. A. M. Johnson, Opawa, in the early 1860's, and for fully 50 years he was the star attraction of Johnson's Fish Ponds. He still appeared to be hale and hearty at the time of the clearing sale in 1937, but he evidently