

## MEMORANDUM CONCERNING COLONIAL MUSEUM.

Referring more particularly to the main object of the Museum, I have to report that it already contains a very fair series of specimens illustrative of the geology of New Zealand, which, in addition to the collections made in the course of the survey during the past year, comprise those made during the Geological reconnaissance of the Province of Wellington, by the Hon. Mr. J. C. Crawford; duplicates from the Otago collections; minerals and ores from the Nelson Province, principally presented by Mr. Wells, of the Dun Mountain Company; Canterbury building stones, and a suite of the igneous rocks passed through in the Lyttelton tunnel, from Dr. Haast, and many other miscellaneous collections contributed by private individuals, all of which will be fully detailed and acknowledged in a descriptive catalogue which will be prepared as soon as the collections can be satisfactorily arranged.

For the present the following Abstract is sufficient to show the important extent to which collections have accumulated during the first year of the establishment of the Museum:—

*Abstract of Contents of the Colonial Museum.*

|                                                                                                    | No. of Specimens. |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Rocks, minerals, and fossils,—                                                                     |                   |
| New Zealand ... ..                                                                                 | 5,972             |
| Foreign ... ..                                                                                     | 3,325             |
| Recent Shells—                                                                                     |                   |
| Including New Zealand, Australian, and general type collections                                    | 2,846             |
| Specimens of Natural History—                                                                      |                   |
| Miscellaneous collections of woods, fibres, wools, Native implements, weapons, dresses, &c. ... .. | 1,811             |
| Total number of specimens ... ..                                                                   | <u>13,954</u>     |
|                                                                                                    | Square Feet.      |
| Area of building at present occupied by temporary offices ... ..                                   | 564               |
| Area at present occupied by specimens and passage space ... ..                                     | 1,384             |
| Total area of present building ... ..                                                              | 1,948             |
| Space required for the proper display of specimens not at present accessible, about ... ..         | <u>1,200</u>      |

In addition to the collections made in connection with the Geological Survey, those transferred to the Department by the New Zealand Society, and the large collection deposited by the Honorable Mr. Mantell, the Museum contains contributions from 44 private individuals.

Total number of visitors up to the end of August, 1866,—1,600.

The first arrangement of the collections in the Museum was principally effected by the Honorable Mr. Mantell, to whom I am under great obligations for having undertaken the superintendence of the Museum during my absence for six months in the northern part of the Colony, and it is mainly to his zealous exertions and cordial co-operation that the rapid formation of the Museum is to be attributed.

Feeling the great inconvenience which must have arisen if I had not been able to rely on the valuable assistance and experience of Mr. Mantell, I am led to suggest the advisability of providing for the control of the Museum by the appointment of trustees in place of the present arrangement, by which the responsibility for the care of so large an accumulation of valuable property devolves on the Government Geologist, who, from the nature of his duties must necessarily be absent for long periods of time from Wellington.

## LABORATORY.

The following statement gives the principal results of the analytical operations that have been conducted in the chemical laboratory by Mr. Skey.

The great importance of having the nature of the mineral and other substances which are constantly being discovered in all parts of the country, carefully determined, is obvious, and it has previously been pointed out that the accommodation and appliances afforded for this purpose by the present Laboratory are so insufficient as to endanger the accuracy of the results obtained, and cause great loss of time and waste of material.

## COALS.

The chemical investigation of the properties and relative value of the coals of New Zealand has been carried on in continuation of the results already published in the Supplement to the Jurors' Report on the New Zealand Exhibition of 1865, pages 373 to 387 and 439 to 443, and most of the details of the following analyses have been embodied in a special report on that subject.