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MUSEUM.

The number of names entered in the Visitors' Book during the year is 12,000, but as comparatively few make use of this register, it does not give even an approximate idea of the number of persons who visit the Museum, and it is very desirable that some mechanism should be provided for recording, as done in other similar institutions. The additions to the Museum will be found in the usual report printed in pamphlet form (Sixteenth Annual Report, 1880-1).

NATURAL HISTORY COLLECTIONS.

The additions to the Natural History collections have not been very extensive, but, nevertheless, comprise some specimens of high scientific interest.

Mammalia.—The most important items under this head are (1) a very fine skeleton of the killer-whale (*Orca pacifica*), which was stranded near Wanganui, and secured for the Museum through the kindness of Mr. S. H. Drew; (2) skins of the sea-lion (*Otaria hookeri*), from the Auckland Islands; and a skeleton of the sea-elephant (*Morunga elephantina*), collected by Mr. Burton, Taxidermist to the Museum.

Aves.—Amongst the birds recently added to the collections, and specially worthy of notice, are (1) a very fine capercaillie (*Petrao urogallus*), purchased by Dr. Hector; (2) a series of gannets (*Dysporus serrator*), showing the nestling, young in first year's plumage, and the adult, obtained at Gannet Island, and presented by Captain Fairchild, of the Government steamer "Hinemoa"; (3) specimens of the merganser (*Mergus australis*), the flightless duck (*Nesonetta aucklandica*), and a series of shags, collected at the Auckland Islands by Mr. Burton.

Pisces.—(1) A cask of Australian fishes, received in exchange from the Curator of the Australian Museum; (2) a fine specimen of *Ophisurus serpens* from Mahia Lagoon, captured and presented by Mr. J. Cunningham; (3) a splendid collection, consisting of 205 specimens, illustrative of the Ichthyology of North America, presented by the United States National Museum, have been received and placed in the "stock room" until accommodation can be provided in the Museum.

Reptilia.—A magnificent collection of North American reptiles, comprising 50 species and 92 specimens, has been received from the United States National Museum, but, like the fishes, cannot be displayed for want of proper accommodation.