

erected, and a flat-topped glass-fronted and roofed addition to the joint-central case has been constructed. Sloping shelves have been made and fitted on pegs throughout to the number of 163. The whole mineral collection has been entirely worked over. The specimens which were in the former geological gallery, and those from the ethnological room, have been combined into one collection and classified as compounds and combinations of the various elements. The models illustrative of the metallurgical processes have been lent to the School of Engineering, but they are to be returned shortly.

*Palæontological Room.*—The floor space in this room has been entirely rearranged. Desk-cases back to back have been adapted to each other, and arranged athwart the room, so that the light from both sides should sweep their length. Table-stands, resting on iron pedestals between these desk-cases, have been devised. These have added to the room a great deal of additional space, and convenience for the accommodation of some of the larger specimens which would not fit into the desk-cases. A substantial stand has been erected for the skeleton of the Irish elk, while the tusks of the great Siwalik elephant have been erected on the same side of the room as the Megatherium stand. In addition the wall-cases have been fitted throughout with new shelves to the number of 240, requiring for their adjustment the fitting of 72 supports, the drilling of 960 holes, the cutting of 480 grooves, and the insertion of 960 pegs. The whole of the foreign fossils have been transferred to the shelves, but as yet nothing has been accomplished in the way of mounting and labelling the specimens. This work may be reached in the beginning of next year, and its accomplishment will occupy a long time. Before, however, the mounting can proceed without confusion, sets of drawers will require to be made to fit beneath the desk-cases to contain those specimens which ought to be removed from the study collection, for I intend that those specimens alone which are characteristic of the different geologic periods shall be exhibited in the desk-cases, in which there will be no superabundant space when they are properly set out and fully labelled. In the drawers beneath the cases the important but less characteristic fossils will be arranged for the use of students studying foreign geology more closely.

*Library and Herbarium.*—The Herbarium has had several additions. The library has acquired by gift, through the munificence of the Hon. W. B. Mantell, of Wellington, over one hundred volumes. The proceedings of the Zoological Society of London, and several volumes of the scientific results of the "Challenger" voyage, have been added during the year by purchase. The American and the Australian Societies and the British Museum have, as usual, sent us many of their publications, a liberality which—having no means of returning in kind—we can acknowledge by offering to these institutions only our best thanks.

The library is still far from being all that is required for the efficient working of so large an institution as this Museum now is, in which so many different subjects are illustrated. One very great want is the regular reception of the more important serial scientific journals, and I would respectfully suggest to the Board that a sum of money should be placed on the estimates annually—irrespective of the additions that will for some years be necessary for the placing of the library on a good foundation—for this object. Without these publications the officer in charge of the Museum cannot be expected to keep up to date with the latest information on the subjects with which he has to deal. It is also necessary that the keeper of the Museum should have facilities for studying the collections in the other museums in the colony, and of seeing for himself the geological features of the country, and some of its mineral fields. The two short journeys, each of a few days' duration, which I have made for the purpose of examining certain strata *in situ*, enabled me to master in a few hours information which it would have taken weeks of reading to accomplish.

Our material for exchange purposes is now very scant, and in some departments entirely exhausted. We are in debt to more than one institution. It is necessary, therefore, that something should be done in the way of adding to our New Zealand exchanges in those departments which are the chief desiderata abroad.

The printing-press presented to the Museum during the year is in process of being thoroughly overhauled, and put into perfect working. One of the assistants will then receive instructions in the art of type-setting. After some practice, it is to be hoped, he will be able to set up and print off the labels required for the Museum, the writing of which, in a clear and yet compact form, occupies so much time. Eventually a great deal of time will be economized in the rewriting of soiled and dusty or damaged labels, since a number of copies of each label will be kept in store. The labelling and mounting of specimens has proceeded throughout the year at all times when the assistant charged with this duty has not been engaged in the galleries.

The material for a catalogue of the exhibited specimens is gradually being compiled. It can proceed, however, only *pari passu* with the mounting and arrangement, when finally settled, of these exhibits.

The taxidermist has, during the year, prepared a large number of birds' skeletons for the purpose of my instituting comparison between their bones and those from the kitchen-middens, swamps, and caves of New Zealand. The birds' skins in store have all been re-examined, and carefully labelled. A considerable number of moulds of objects of interest have been made in plaster of Paris, from which casts will be taken for the collection.

My own work has been so fully detailed to the Board, in a report of some length, sent in on the 20th of last month, that I think it unnecessary to recapitulate it here.

The building itself, and the work-rooms, are all in good repair. An efficient water-supply has been established by the erection of a ram, which drives the water to the top of the Museum, for connection with the sink fitted into the room set apart for the curator's dissecting-room. The macerating-tanks have been connected with the main sewer, which will be a great improvement on the former disposal of their overflow. A sink is still required for the taxidermist's room; but as provision was made in the present system for such a contingency, connection can be made with ease, and at little expense, at any time.