

SPECIAL EXHIBITS OF MINERALS.

Minerals for exhibition purposes should consist of large crystals, small crystals occurring in great numbers, or of large specimens of massive minerals. A relatively small number of minerals thus treated both make an effective display, and interest without wearying the casual visitor. These specimens may be acquired in various ways, but probably purchase would prove necessary in most cases. Unfortunately, New Zealand has not yet proved a good collecting-ground for such minerals.

REFERENCE COLLECTION OF ROCKS.

As in the case of minerals, it is desirable that the Museum should possess a good collection of rocks for the purposes of comparison and reference. Rocks differ from minerals in that there are few or no fixed species, the assemblages of minerals which constitute most rocks never being in exactly the same proportion or of exactly the same nature in two different specimens. Rock-species, therefore, are best illustrated by specimens from the same rockmass to which a given name was first applied. Thus rocks in various parts of the world have been termed "dunite," but as the name is derived from the intrusion of the Dun Mountain, near Nelson, a specimen from this locality is obviously the most desirable. To build up such a reference collection from type localities would require the predominance of foreign rocks. Such a collection, though difficult to obtain, would not be much more costly than any other, and would be easy to house; it would be as useful as any other to the general public, and would be of the greatest advantage to officers of the Geological Survey and to other specialists, particularly if microscopic sections of each rock were made.

Technology.

Exhibits illustrating at least the primary industries of New Zealand, such as agriculture, forestry, and the timber industry, the flax industry, mining, and fishing, would be much appreciated by many sections of the community, and would serve a useful educational purpose. I am of opinion that these should be included in the policy of the Museum. No foreign specimens are necessary in this connection.

Fine Art.

As it has been decided by Act of Parliament that a Dominion Art Gallery shall be established in association with the Dominion Museum and under the same Board of direction, all specimens of fine art in the Museum collections, except such as are of greater value as historical or ethnographical specimens, will naturally be exhibited in this department. The Museum already contains the nucleus of a collection, described in a special report appended hereto, and there is also a collection of pictures acquired for this purpose through public subscription by the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts. The growth of this collection cannot be left entirely to voluntary effort if it is to become worthy of the Dominion, and a liberal income is necessary. Since the money that can be spent on fine art is limitless, it is also necessary, in order to preserve a due balance between the Art Gallery and the historical and scientific departments of the Museum, that the proportion of income to be devoted to each should be clearly defined.

Dominion Scientific, Art, and Historical Library.

The Science and Art Act of 1913 states that "there shall be a Dominion Scientific, Art, and Historical Library (hereinafter referred to as the Dominion Library) in the City of Wellington, within or adjacent to the Dominion Museum." This library, equally with the Dominion Art Gallery and the Dominion Museum, is to be under the management and direction of the Board of Science and Art.

The library question in Wellington is rather complex. There was a public scientific library in the old Colonial Museum, acquired jointly by the Colonial Museum, the Geological Survey, and the New Zealand Institute, including also books belonging to the defunct New Zealand Society and a few belonging to the Wellington Provincial Council. Very few of the books were acquired by purchase, and the majority were obtained in exchange for the publications of the New Zealand Institute, the Geological Survey, and the Colonial Museum and Laboratory. These books obtained in exchange for the publications of the New Zealand Institute, or donated to it, were marked with the name of the Institute.

By an Order in Council of the 29th April, 1904, in terms of the New Zealand Institute Act, 1903, there was vested in the Board of Governors of the Institute, "The books bequeathed to the New Zealand Institute by the late Charles Rooking Carter, of Carterton, as shown in the catalogue deposited in the Colonial Secretary's Office, at Wellington, and also the two book-cases containing the said books. . . . The books marked as belonging to the New Zealand Institute at present deposited in the library of the Colonial Museum, Wellington, numbering three thousand volumes or thereabouts."

No attempt has since been made to definitely determine the ownership of the individual books of the old Colonial Museum Library, and the books of the New Zealand Institute still remain in the old library-room of the Museum. The publications since received by the New Zealand Institute through donations or in exchange have been marked with the name of the Institute and added to the old library, but without being bound. In the same library are also housed the books belonging to the Wellington Philosophical Society, obtained mainly by purchase, and regularly bound.

Since 1904 the Dominion Museum has acquired a separate library by purchase and by exchange. These books are stored in the various working-rooms of the Museum.