

Two hundred unmounted specimens from South Africa, obtained during the Boer War, were presented by Miss Madeline and Master Frank Browne, of Lower Hutt. For assistance in identifying these and other South African specimens I am indebted to Mr. H. W. Simmonds. An arrangement was entered into with Mr. Allen, of Nelson, whereby the Museum benefited to the extent of a set of all specimens collected by him in Java, Borneo, and the Solomon Islands, in consideration of mounting his collections. An exchange was made with the Queensland Museum by which we received eighty-eight Australian *Hymenoptera* in return for New Zealand *Lepidoptera*.

ACQUISITIONS.

Few purchases were made during the year, for good and sufficient reasons. There are, however, two notable exceptions. An autograph letter of Captain Cook was obtained from London, and, although not adding anything to our knowledge of New Zealand early history, it will undoubtedly be of the highest interest as an exhibit. The other important purchase was also of historical material, being a large collection of portraits, maps, diagrams, &c., relating to the Maori wars of the "sixties," gathered during many years with loving care by Mr. W. F. Gordon, of New Plymouth. This collection, which will retain the name of the Gordon collection, forms, together with the Robley collection of water-colours, a fitting nucleus for the national historical collection, the growth of which, it is hoped, will be the principal feature of the current year's activity. Towards the history of the present war the Museum has received from the Defence Department a partial set of the badges of the various regiments, while Colonel Rhodes has been asked to inquire in Egypt as to the best means of procuring war trophies, copies of newspapers published in the trenches, and other historical matter.

An interesting series of photographs and models of New Zealand yachts was donated during the year by various gentlemen, through the initiative of Mr. P. Freyberg. These have been placed on exhibition alongside the models of ships and of H.M.S. "New Zealand," and it is hoped to extend this series ultimately into a collection illustrating the history of navigation in general, and in New Zealand in particular.

A few ethnographical specimens have been obtained during the year by purchase, but it is now increasingly difficult to obtain such Maori specimens as the Museum needs to complete its series except at exorbitant prices or in association with large collections of commoner articles which are not required. A few stone and greenstone implements and some fish-hooks have been the chief purchases. The most important donation has been a further series of ancient Egyptian articles from the Egypt Exploration Fund.

Zoological specimens other than insects have been acquired chiefly by donation, and include a sea-snake (*Hydus platurus*) found at New Plymouth, and a rare fish (*Oxynotus brunensis*) from Cloudy Bay. Mr. R. W. Oliver has forwarded an extremely valuable collection of shells from the Kermadec Islands, illustrating his recent paper in the "Transactions of the New Zealand Institute." Miss M. Mestayer, an indefatigable collector of marine shells, has not only presented many rare species of Molluscs, including some paratypes, but has brought in from time to time unusual marine invertebrates of other groups. Land shells have been collected by myself from Mount Egmont and Marlborough. The insects have been already noticed above.

A large series of geological specimens, both rocks and fossils, have been collected by myself during the Christmas holidays in Taranaki, and during May, 1915, and February and March, 1916, in Marlborough. These have been added to the Geological Survey collections in the Museum awaiting determination. The rocks consist chiefly of the Amuri limestone and flints of Marlborough, the volcanic rocks in the underlying Cretaceous (Utatur) rocks, and the igneous intrusives of Mount Tapuaenuku. The fossils come from Upper Tertiary and raised-beach deposits at Waitotara and Hawera, in Taranaki; Upper Tertiary rocks in the Lower Awatere Valley, Marlborough; Middle Cretaceous (Utatur) beds in the Clarence and Awatere Valley, including a new ammonite from the Isolated Hill Creek, Ure River, and from a new fossiliferous horizon in the Herring or Seymour River, Clarence Valley. The rocks of the last locality lie unconformably beneath the Utatur rocks, and the fossils consist chiefly of *Inoceramus*. Unfortunately this locality was only discovered on the homeward journey out of the Clarence Valley, and there was not opportunity to make a full collection.

J. ALLAN THOMSON, Director.

The Under-Secretary, Department of Internal Affairs, Wellington.

V. REPORT OF OFFICER IN CHARGE, WAR FUNDS OFFICE.

Wellington, 31st May, 1916.

UPON the War Funds Act coming into force on the 11th October, 1915, the administration of the Act came under the control of the Minister of Internal Affairs. I was placed in charge on the 17th November last.

An early endeavour was made by the War Funds Office to ascertain particulars of the various Patriotic Societies operating throughout the Dominion, with the result that some 120 societies were recorded. A circular setting forth the requirements of the Act was sent to each of these societies, and returns were obtained from a majority of them with more or less promptitude. It was soon evident that there was a large number of societies operating which had not sent in returns required by the Act, and special effort has been made to place these societies on