

In other branches the zoological collections have scarcely been added to. Two specimens of the rare New Zealand long-tailed bat were purchased. Tuatara lizards were brought from an island in the Bay of Plenty, and some were liberated on a rocky islet off Somes Island. It will be interesting to observe if they re-establish themselves on this convenient island.

Mr. A. C. O'Connor, of Wellington, has deposited in the Museum an exceptionally fine head of the extinct Irish elk.

Marine Vertebrata.

Mr. W. J. PHILLIPPS reports on the cetacea and fishes as follows:—

New Zealand Cetacea.—An index has been compiled under specific titles and authors' names on the work dealing with the subject of seals, whales, and dolphins recorded from New Zealand coasts. The index also includes most of the recent literature on the subject in various parts of the world. A large part of the Museum collection of skeletons of these animals which were gathered together by the late Sir James Hector has been indexed, reclassified, and placed in the cases for exhibition.

Trout-fisheries Investigation.—The pursuance of the work on a scientific investigation into questions relative to the trout in the thermal district has occupied a considerable amount of time during the past year. I have been much hampered by lack of many of the most important recent works dealing with the subject; and mostly references which I am able to consult are out of date and very often misleading. Comparatively few scientific men care to undertake the problem of dealing with these species, which exhibit more divergent characteristics inside any given group than do any other fishes. For the most part I have had to rely solely on close personal observation of given sets of individual trout and a study of the prevailing conditions. A condensed report on the results of my observations has been furnished to the Under-Secretary, Department of Internal Affairs.

Foreign Fishes.—The case containing the Museum collection of foreign fishes has been overhauled. Where necessary new spirit has been added to the specimens in jars, and the greater part reclassified and indexed. The majority of the labels had been lost or destroyed, and doubtful or duplicate species have been transferred to the reference collection.

Mollusca.

Miss MESTAYER reports as follows:—

The reference collection of New Zealand Mollusca is being gradually increased, perhaps the most interesting addition being several specimens of a tiny bivalve. They were obtained last March from the holes of the rock-boring mollusca *Barnea similis* (Gray), and may prove to be a new variety of a species of *Lasca* described by the late Mr. Suter.

The Museum is indebted to Mr. A. E. Brookes, of Matamata, for the generous gift of his best specimen of a new *Chiton* belonging to the genus *Lorica*, which will be described this year in the "Transactions of the New Zealand Institute."

Dr. Thomson has obtained a large number of fossil *Brachiopoda* from Weka Pass, and molluscan fossils from that and neighbouring localities. He also collected limpets at Nelson; and Mrs. W. Paine, of Kekerangu, has sent several good gatherings of *Chiton* and limpets from there.

Two small marine aquaria have been established, and are proving very useful for studying the habits of several molluscs, some of which have been in them for nearly six months.

With regard to the show collection, the chief departure has been the installing of a case containing five habitat groups. In these the aim is to give an idea of the associations of some of the commonest New Zealand shells, so they are grouped as—Rock and seaweed dwellers; sand and mud dwellers between tides; dwellers below low-tide mark; deep-sea dwellers; and a camouflage group. In the composition of these groups rocks and sand were freely used, and most of the seaweed was modelled in the permodelle wax. In the deep-sea group an attempt has been made to model in the wax the animals of the three species shown. This case has attracted a good deal of attention, and greatly interests young visitors.

An interesting collection of Australian shells was presented by Mrs. H. M. Taylor, which contains some good specimens of *Trigonia*, also two fine echinoderms with rather thick spines.

Two collections of Samoan Mollusca have been presented by Colonel R. W. Tate, which contain some nice examples of the genera *Conus*, *Cypraea*, *Oliva*, and several others.

Mr. A. C. O'Connor also presented a collection of shells, most of which came from the Pacific islands.

Insects.

Mr. H. HAMILTON reports on the entomological collections as follows:—

Since the production of the last annual report the collections as a whole have received few additions. Practically no field-work has been undertaken, as the summer season was poor for collecting.

Owing to the lack of proper accommodation the extensive collections of insects require more attention than would be necessary if better facilities for work were available. At a conservative estimate there are at least fifty thousand mounted insects housed in one room, and all requiring attention from time to time. Many of these could be made available for public exhibition were the room for extension provided. Many hundreds of visitors have been shown the exotic collections of butterflies, and appreciations of their merits have been freely expressed.

The collection of New Zealand Micro-lepidoptera has now been finally arranged, and field-work will be necessary to fill in many blank spaces. Work on the Coleoptera has been temporarily suspended pending the ultimate destination of the Brounian Collection.

The routine work of labelling and mounting has occupied much time. Donations have been received from collectors in other parts of the Dominion. Among those specially to be thanked are Mr. G. V. Hudson, Mr. A. C. O'Connor, Mr. G. V. Howes, Mr. J. Myers, Mr. R. Harris, Mr. J. W. Campbell, Mr. H. W. Simmonds, and Mr. Styche. Mr. Styche presented many duplicates from a collection of butterflies made in Central Africa. Mr. H. W. Simmonds collected extensively in Fiji, and added to our collections in many branches.

Mr. R. Allan, of Nelson, has promised to collect for the Museum on a tour of the East Indies. Colonel R. W. Tate, Administrator of Samoa, donated specimens of the rhinoceros-beetle from that island, and is making extensive collections of Lepidoptera for the Museum.