

It is satisfactory to record that the activities of the Town-planning Institute have been greatly increased and much valuable educational work has been done, in the form of public lectures by members, and the regular publication of *Community Planning*, the official journal of the Institute.

The outstanding event of the year was the completion and approval of the Napier Business-area Town-planning Scheme, 1931, the first statutory scheme to be put into operation in the Dominion. Special regulations were enacted under the Hawke's Bay Earthquake Act, 1931, to facilitate the preparation of the scheme, and, in particular, to minimize the claims for compensation and strengthen the hands of the local authority in negotiating for the acquisition of land for street-improvements. The working of these regulations will be watched with great interest throughout the Dominion, in view of the opinion of the municipal authorities and the Town-planning Board that no real progress can be made with the preparation of town-planning schemes until the financial provisions of the Town-planning Act of 1926 have been amended.

Two members of the Board, Mr. G. A. Troup and Mr. G. P. Newton, resigned, and Mr. T. C. A. Hislop and Mr. A. G. Harper were appointed in their stead.

DOMINION MUSEUM.

The necessity to economize has had a marked effect on the activities of the Museum, and only routine work, involving little expenditure, has been carried out.

Death of Mr. Elsdon Best.—Mr. Elsdon Best, who for a period of twenty-four years was a member of the staff engaged on writing the ethnology of the Maori race, died on the 9th September, 1931. Mr. Best's publications include ten Bulletins of the Dominion Museum, several books, and numerous smaller papers, and constitute a comprehensive and entirely reliable account of the ethnology of the Maori race. They treat especially of mythology which is always a difficult subject for study. Altogether Mr. Best's work placed him in the front rank of the world's ethnologists and his loss to the Museum is especially severe.

Maori Ethnology.—Considerable progress has been made with the fitting-up of the second war canoe, the top strakes for both sides having been completed. Other work included the carving of certain portions of the two patakas, which are being prepared for exhibition. The Maori workshop has been thrown open to the public one day each week and has created a lot of interest. It is also used regularly by art students. The most important addition to the collections is a large series of Maori artifacts collected by the late Captain J. Bollons in all parts of New Zealand. These are especially valuable for research purposes as all are localized. A very old and valuable carved pataka doorway from Whakatane was presented by Mr. H. J. S. Johnson.

Other Collections.—Work has been carried out in each department in classifying and recording. Details of all accessions are now entered on cards while all that is known of the main collections is being collected on similar cards bearing the registered numbers of the specimens. Collecting has been done on Little Barrier Island, the Tararua Mountains, Tauranga, and Taumarunui. From Mount Hector, in the Tararuas, a good series of specimens of the North Island "vegetable sheep" was obtained. An important donation is the herbarium built up by Dr. L. Cockayne, C.M.G., F.R.S., during his many botanical explorations. The labels are being carefully looked over by Dr. Cockayne before the specimens are transferred to the Museum.

International Exchange Service.—Thirty cases of publications from the Smithsonian Institution and a few publications from European Exchange Services have been received and distributed to various recipients throughout the Dominion.

Work for publication.—At the time of his death, Mr. Elsdon Best had completed the manuscript for Bulletins on Maori Forest Lore and Maori Mythology, Part 2. These still remain to be published. Papers have been published by the Director on "Ancient Maori Oven on Mount Egmont," "National Botanic Gardens," and "The New Zealand Double-crested Shags." Mr. Philipps has published four papers on fishes and two on Maori ethnology. A paper on New Zealand seaweeds, by Miss Heine, is in the press.

WAR FUNDS.

Of the numerous patriotic funds that were raised in connection with the Great War fifty-seven are still on the active list, two having exhausted and one having transferred their funds during the year.

The latest records of the value of assets held show—

	£	s.	d.
Twenty-eight incorporated societies	620,842	16	10
Seven Red Cross organizations	113,586	19	3
Three Blind Soldiers and Veterans Homes Funds	76,395	19	11
Twelve unincorporated societies	3,682	17	0
One Navy League Fund	4,917	10	9
Five Returned Soldiers' Clubs	20,490	7	2
One Social Fund	1,704	17	8
	841,621	8	7
National War Funds Council	157,345	14	2
	£998,967	2	9