

## WELLINGTON PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

ANNUAL MEETING: 5th April, 1905.

Professor Easterfield, President, in the chair.

*New Members.*—Dr. J. M. Bell, Mr. H. M. Christie, Mrs. H. M. Christie, and Dr. L. Cockayne.

The President announced with regret the death (which took place in February, 1905, at Tamworth, New South Wales) of Mr. Ambrose Quail, a former member of the Society, and an occasional contributor of papers to the Transactions.

Mr. G. V. Hudson said that Mr. Quail's death—of which he now heard for the first time—was a serious loss to science. Formerly a resident of Palmerston North, Mr. Quail had removed some time ago to Queensland. His special branch of study was the minute structure of insects: he might be described as an entomological microscopist. He excelled as a draftsman; and it might safely be said that no better drawings than those of Mr. Quail were to be found in entomological publications. He had been a valued contributor to the "Transactions of the New Zealand Institute," and to the "Transactions of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science."

The Secretary, Mr. Thomas King, read the annual report and statement of accounts.

The report stated that seven meetings had been held during the session of 1904, and that the total number of papers read at these meetings had been twenty-two, which exceeded by seven the number read during the preceding session. The roll had been purged by the deletion of the names of a number of persons who had ceased to be members by reason of the non-payment of their subscriptions. Three members had resigned during the year, and eight new members had been elected. The total membership was now 104.

The receipts, including a balance of £75 6s. brought forward from the previous year, amounted to £163 10s., and the expenditure (including two years' contributions to the funds of the New Zealand Institute) to £119 0s. 5d., leaving a balance in hand of £44 9s. 7d. The Research Fund, on fixed deposit with the Bank of New Zealand, amounted to £39 19s.; so that the total sum at the credit of the Society was £84 8s. 7d.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 1905.**—*President*—Mr. Martin Chapman; *Vice-Presidents*—Professor T. H. Easterfield and Mr. G. Hogben, M.A.; *Council*—Mr. Edward Tregear, Mr. G. V. Hudson, F.E.S., Professor H. B. Kirk, Mr. C. E. Adams, B.Sc., Sir James Hector, K.C.M.G., F.R.S., Dr. A. K. Newman, and Mr. J. W. Poynton; *Secretary and Treasurer*—Mr. Thomas King; *Auditor*—Mr. E. R. Dymock, A.I.A., N.Z.

Responding to a vote of thanks moved by Mr. Martin Chapman, Professor Easterfield, the retiring President, said that he must congratulate

the Society on its excellent record of work for the year. Once again he felt it right to remark that in all cases the papers which had come before the Society had been the result of careful work by the authors themselves, and were not merely popular descriptions of other people's work, as was the case with the papers of so many societies. He thought it a sign of great promise that in Wellington, notwithstanding the extreme "business" character of the people, we were able to find a large number of observers capable of contributing something from their own observations. It was work of this kind to which we must ultimately look for the advancement of any branch of science.

*Paper*.—"Two New Ferns," by H. C. Field. (*Transactions*, p. 495.)

*Exhibit*.—Professor H. B. Kirk exhibited under the microscope a specimen of a rare species of *Volvox*.

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FIRST MEETING: 3rd May, 1905.

Mr. Martin Chapman, President, in the chair.

*Papers*.—1. "The Estimation and Detection of the Alkaloids by Means of their Double Sulphocyanides," by P. W. Robertson, M.A., Rhodes Scholar. (*Transactions*, p. 51.)

Professor Easterfield congratulated Mr. Robertson on his investigations, and said that the author's test for the detection of the presence of certain alkaloids was likely to prove a very useful one.

2. "Flints from Miramar" (with exhibits), by Henry M. Christie.

3. "Struggle between a Brown Spider and a Common Worm," by Henry M. Christie.

4. "Capture of an Octopus at Lyall Bay," by Henry M. Christie.

Professor H. B. Kirk gave an account of various biological laboratories visited by him during a recent trip to Europe.

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SECOND MEETING: 7th June, 1905.

Mr. Martin Chapman, President, in the chair.

*Papers*.—1. "Natural Photography," by Coleman Phillips.

2. "On New Zealand Earthquakes," by G. Hogben, M.A. (*Transactions*, p. 502.)

Mr. A. McKay agreed generally with Mr. Hogben, but desired to point out that while, as Mr. Hogben had argued, the lines of seismic activity in New Zealand were, broadly speaking, parallel to the great fault-lines of the country, yet very many of these lines of faulting (at Okarito, for example) converged upon, and even intersected, one another. Mr. McKay said that the line of activity south of Banks Peninsula to which Mr. Hogben had referred was unknown to himself.

Dr. Newman mentioned that settlers on the east coast of the North Island were of opinion that the country along the coast-line in their district was gradually tilting up. He illustrated the experience of a settler,

who found that his carts, when loading wool in the sun-boats, had now to negotiate a very different depth of water from that which was the rule some years ago.

Mr. Hogben, in his reply, referring to the case of the settler of whom Dr. Newman had spoken, expressed the hope that we might soon see good bench-marks all round the coasts of the colony, or, failing these, some suitable instruments, such as the simple clinometer recommended by the British Association.

3. "Results of Dredging on the Continental Shelf of New Zealand" (Part I), by Charles Hedley, F.L.S., Sydney; communicated by A. Hamilton. (*Transactions*, p. 68.)

*Exhibits.*—At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. A. Hamilton, Director of the Colonial Museum, Wellington, exhibited and described some recent additions to the Museum. Mr. Hamilton also exhibited a wooden tablet from Easter Island bearing lines of hieroglyphics presumably inscribed upon it by the ancient inhabitants of the island.

#### THIRD MEETING: 5th July, 1905.

Mr. Martin Chapman, President, in the chair.

*New Member.*—Mr. Percy B. Philson.

*Papers.*—1. "Recent Discoveries of Moa-bones on Miramar Peninsula, Wellington," by Henry M. Christie.

In the discussion which followed the reading of this paper, Mr. Edward Tregear, dealing with the much-debated question of the period at which the moa became extinct, expressed the opinion that at present the whole subject was beset with difficulties: it was impossible to come to a definite conclusion. Although the geologists tried to convince us that within quite recent times the Maoris were feasting on the moa and its eggs on Miramar Peninsula, he himself was not prepared to admit that Maoris living in or near our own times had ever seen the bird. It seemed to him that it must be much more than four hundred years since the moa became extinct.

Mr. A. McKay defended the view that the moa had survived to very recent times. He instanced places near Wellington where he had collected very many moa-bones and egg-shells. At one of these spots he had found "gallons" of the egg-shells, which had plainly been cooked, and the contents of which had doubtless been eaten. To his mind the evidence was overwhelming that the moa was here a hundred years ago. He gave reasons for believing that moa-eggs (some of them in process of incubation) had been eaten in abundance by the Natives in different parts of the colony.

2. "Feeding-place of Starlings," by Henry M. Christie.

3. "Some New Compounds of a Similar Nature to Antifebrine," by P. W. Robertson, M.A., Rhodes Scholar. (*Transactions*, p. 45.)

Professor Easterfield pointed out that the work embodied in Mr. Robertson's paper could claim, in addition to its scientific interest, a direct utilitarian value.

## 4. "Experiments in Telepathy," by J. W. Poynton.

It was moved by Dr. A. K. Newman, and seconded by Mr. Edward Tregear, "That, this being the last meeting of the Society which Mr. P. W. Robertson will attend prior to his departure for Oxford, the meeting extends to him its congratulations on his securing a Rhodes scholarship, and offers him its best wishes for success in his future career."

The motion was carried by acclamation.

Mr. Robertson thanked the meeting heartily for its motion of good will, and expressed his acknowledgments to the Society for its action in allowing him to publish in the Transactions the results of his work.

*Exhibits.*—Miss Mestayer exhibited: (1) A specimen of carborundum; (2) a specimen of *Scutum ambiguum*; (3) specimens of several other shells.

## POPULAR LECTURE: 19th July, 1905.

Mr. Martin Chapman, President, in the chair.

A popular lecture on "The Indians of the Far Canadian North" was given by Dr. J. M. Bell, Director of the New Zealand Geological Survey.

The lecture was open to the public, and a very large number of persons attended.

Dr. Bell illustrated his lecture by an interesting series of lantern-slides from photographs taken by himself in Canada.

On the motion of Mr. G. Hogben, seconded by Mr. Edward Tregear, a vote of thanks was passed to Dr. Bell for his lecture.

## FOURTH MEETING: 2nd August, 1905.

Mr. Martin Chapman, President, in the chair.

*New Members.*—Dr. Arnold W. Izard and Messrs. James McDonald, T. R. Fleming, Ernest F. Hadfield, and W. J. Harland.

An advance copy of Vol. XXXVII (1904) of the "Transactions and Proceedings of the New Zealand Institute" was laid on the table.

*Exhibit.*—Dr. A. K. Newman exhibited a Maori war-trumpet.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. W. H. Warren played on the instrument a number of army regulation bugle-calls. He explained that most of the army calls could be given on this trumpet.

Mr. Edward Tregear said that the trumpet was used in former times by the Natives for signalling in a sort of telegraphic code, as well as for war purposes.

*Papers.*—1. "A Rare Image of the Maori God of Eels (Tuna)," by Dr. A. K. Newman. (*Transactions*, p. 130.)

The author exhibited the image described in the paper.

2. "Notes on Insect Swarms on Mountain-tops in New Zealand," by G. V. Hudson, F.E.S. (*Transactions*, p. 334.)
3. "Notes on a Meteoric Appearance," by Martin Chapman. (*Transactions*, p. 143.)
4. "Note on the Facultative Saprophytism of *Alternaria solani*," by A. H. Cockayne.
5. "On some *Foraminifera* and *Ostracoda* obtained off Great Barrier Island, New Zealand," by Frederick Chapman, A.L.S., F.R.M.S., Palæontologist Natural History Museum, Melbourne; communicated by A. Hamilton. (*Transactions*, p. 77.)

Mr. T. W. Kirk, F.L.S., Government Biologist, by invitation addressed the meeting on "Potato and Tomato Diseases" and on "Nitrogen-fixing Bacteria," illustrating his remarks by a number of exhibits.

¶A hope was expressed that Mr. Kirk would renew the subjects at a subsequent meeting, and give members an opportunity of discussing them more fully than was possible in the limited time available on this occasion.

Mr. Kirk promised to do so

#### FIFTH MEETING: 6th September, 1905.

Mr. Martin Chapman, President, in the chair.

*New Members.*—Mr. J. S. Tennant and Mr. Thomas William Downes (Wanganui).

Mr. T. W. Kirk continued his remarks (adjourned from the previous meeting) on "Potato and Tomato Diseases" and on "Nitrogen-fixing Bacteria."

In illustration of the points touched upon, he threw upon the screen a number of lantern photographs. He strongly insisted upon the economic importance of the subjects.

A number of questions were asked by members, and duly answered by Mr. Kirk.

A vote of thanks was passed to Mr. Kirk for bringing these questions before the Society.

*Paper.*—"On Temporary Stars," by Martin Chapman. (*Transactions*, p. 139.)

*Exhibits.*—1. Mr. G. Hogben exhibited and described seismograms taken at Wellington and Tokyo of the great Indian earthquake of the 4th April, 1905.

2. Mr. Martin Chapman exhibited a specimen of Maori chewing-gum.

He said that this substance was found on most parts of the coast of the North Island, and also at the Chatham Islands. The specimen in question had been given to him by a Chatham Island Native. The Maoris were rather fond of chewing this substance, much in the same way as

white children were addicted to chewing indiarubber. The Natives called it *mimiha*, meaning the hair seal; or *pakake*, signifying whale; also *waka-atua*, "canoe of demons" They said that its common form resembled that of a canoe. Mr. Chapman said that to him the substance appeared to be crude petroleum, completely sun-dried—i.e., the volatile parts had evaporated, leaving only the heavy or pitch-like residue.

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SIXTH MEETING: 4th October, 1905.

Mr. Martin Chapman, President, in the chair.

*New Members.*—Mr. and Mrs. Joseph A. Tripe, and Messrs. G. A. Hurley, J. M. A. Ilott, and C. B. Morison.

The Chairman announced that an extra meeting of the Society would be held on the 1st November, and that a popular lantern lecture on "New Zealand Birds" would probably be given at the beginning of December by Mr. Edgar F. Stead, of Christchurch.

*Papers.*—1. "Maori Place-names, with Special Reference to the Great Lakes and Mountains of the South Island," by James Cowan. (*Transactions*, p. 113.)

Mr. Justice Chapman, referring to the list of place-names mentioned by Mr. Cowan as having been compiled by himself (Mr. Justice Chapman), said that in listening to the paper he had been struck by the fact that the results obtained by Mr. Cowan from personal investigations amongst the Natives showed almost absolute agreement with those obtained by himself, although he had derived his information from people living a hundred and fifty miles away from the Maoris consulted by Mr. Cowan. It was rather surprising that two independent inquirers should come to such agreement in work of the sort. It was very difficult to get information about these place-names from authentic Maori sources, although easy enough to obtain so-called information from Natives possessing no real claims to knowledge. He agreed with Mr. Cowan in thinking that the majority of Native place-names were personal names. He complimented Mr. Cowan upon the accuracy of his work.

2. "Ruas on Seatoun Heights," by H. N. McLeod.

3. "On *Flabellum rugulosum*," by Henry Suter, Auckland; communicated by A. Hamilton. (*Transactions*, p. 334.)

4. "Notes on New Zealand *Mollusca*. with Descriptions of New Species and Sub-species," by Henry Suter, Auckland; communicated by A. Hamilton. (*Transactions*, p. 316.)

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ANNUAL MEETING: 4th October, 1905.

Mr. Martin Chapman, President, in the chair.

The Council's annual report and annual statement of receipts and expenditure were read and adopted.

The report mentioned (*inter alia*) that six meetings had been held during the session of 1905, and that twenty-one papers in all had been read.

The attendance at most of the meetings had been good.

Two members had resigned, and seventeen new members had been elected. The total number of members now on the roll was 110; but this was likely to be reduced somewhat, as the roll was about to undergo further revision, several nominal members being in arrears with their subscriptions.

In recognition of his invaluable services to science and to the Society, Sir James Hector, K.C.M.G., had been elected an honorary life-member of the Society.

The statement of receipts and expenditure showed that the receipts (including a balance of £44 9s. 7d. brought forward from the previous financial period) amounted to £106 8s. 7d., and the expenditure to £70 4s. 6d., leaving a credit balance of £36 4s. 1d., which, with the sum of £41 3s. at credit of the Research Fund with the Bank of New Zealand, made a total of £77 7s. 1d. in hand.

The previous annual meeting having been held in April, 1905, the period covered by the present statement was one of only some six months: but, these six months being the months of session, the expenditure was relatively heavier than the receipts. The present meeting had been called in October, instead of in the following autumn, because of an alteration in the rules of the New Zealand Institute. Under one of the new rules of the Institute it was necessary that matter intended for insertion in any given year's volume of the Transactions and Proceedings should be in the hands of the editor of that publication not later than the 31st December of such year. This made it desirable to hold the annual meeting at some convenient time towards the end of the session, and no doubt future Councils, following the precedent set on the present occasion, would arrange their dates accordingly each year.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 1906.**—*President*—Mr. Martin Chapman; *Vice-Presidents*—Professor T. H. Easterfield and Mr. G. V. Hudson; *Council*—Professor H. B. Kirk, Mr. C. E. Adams, B.Sc., Sir James Hector, K.C.M.G., F.R.S., Dr. A. K. Newman, Mr. J. W. Poynton, Mr. A. Hamilton, and Mr. T. W. Kirk, F.L.S.; *Secretary and Treasurer*—Mr. Thomas King; *Auditor*—Mr. E. R. Dymock, A.I.A., N.Z.

#### SEVENTH MEETING: - 1st November, 1905.

Mr. Martin Chapman, President, in the chair.

*New Member.*—Mr. Henry Rix-Trott.

The Chairman said that it was his sad duty to announce the death of Captain F. W. Hutton, F.R.S., of Christchurch, President of the New Zealand Institute.

He said that Captain Hutton was very widely known by reason of his scientific work, and the loss which the colony sustained by his death was a very great one. Captain Hutton was a man of the highest scientific attainments, and one whose work was of great value to New Zealand.

On the motion of the Chairman, seconded by Professor T. H. Easterfield, the following resolution was unanimously passed: "The Council and members of the Wellington Philosophical Society desire to place on record their sincere regret at the death of Captain F. W. Hutton, F.R.S., President of the New Zealand Institute, and their high appreciation of his

work in almost every branch of natural history; and they direct that a copy of this resolution be sent to Mrs. Hutton."

*Papers.*—1. "Notes on some South Island Birds and Maori Associations in connection therewith," by James Cowan. (*Transactions*, p. 337.)

Captain Gilbert Mair complimented Mr. Cowan on his paper. As to the shining cuckoo (*pipiharauroa*), Captain Mair pointed out that although, so far as the South Island was concerned, Mr. Cowan might be correct in saying that the bird did not appear until October, it was a mistake to think that the real time of its arrival in the colony was as late as this. As a matter of fact, in some parts of the North Island this yearly visitor appeared about the 21st September. Captain Mair's father, who lived in the Auckland Province from 1818 onwards, used regularly to hear the bird's cry on or about that date.

2. "The Transformation of Barley into Malt," by Percy B. Phipson.

With the aid of drawings on the blackboard, and of specimens of the grain, Mr. Phipson gave an explanation of the process of obtaining malt from barley. The exhibits showed the various stages through which the grain passed before it was finally converted into malt.

Professor T. H. Easterfield and Professor H. B. Kirk spoke highly of the extreme clearness with which Mr. Phipson had set forth a subject which was not always treated very satisfactorily in the text-books.

3. "Some Historic Maori Personages," by Thomas W. Downes, Wanganui. (*Transactions*, p. 120.)

In the discussion on this paper, Captain Gilbert Mair said that he considered that a painting of Te Rauparaha which was executed by the late Mr. C. D. Barraud, of Wellington, in 1845 was the best portrait in existence of that warrior.

Mr. Hamilton pointed out that the value of Mr. Downes's communication lay in the fact that he had enjoyed the privilege of access to the sketch-books of the late Mr. Gilfillan. As Mr. Downes's photographs had been produced entirely without handwork or retouching of any kind they were to be relied upon as accurate copies of the original sketches.

4. "Tram-line and Railway Curves," by Miss Maud Rigg, M.A., Jacob Joseph Scholar in the Victoria College, Wellington; communicated by Professor R. C. Maclaurin.

#### POPULAR LECTURE: 6th December, 1905.

Mr. Martin Chapman, President, in the chair.

A lantern lecture on "New Zealand Birds" was delivered by Mr. Edgar F. Stead, of Christchurch.

The lecture was open to members and their friends, admission (to avoid overcrowding) being by ticket. A full audience was present.

A large and extremely interesting series of photographs of birds and their nests, from negatives taken from life by Mr. Stead, was shown on the screen, each picture being briefly described by the lecturer.

On the motion of Professor T. H. Easterfield, seconded by Professor H. B. Kirk, a hearty vote of thanks was passed to Mr. Stead.