

## VISUAL EDUCATION IS BASIS OF MUSEUM SERVICE

"DAD, what kind of a bird is a harrier?

 as far as I know, son, it's one who goes in for cross-country running. But I'm not too sure; better ask your mother."

"Well, Dad, what's a termite?"

O it goes on-how, what and why? Or at least it used to. To-day, parents need not be fountains of erudition to satisfy the youthful mind, for the Dominion Museum's education service--

plies school-children with answers to In 1944, however, a teaching assistant most of their questions. It can tell them all about the harrier - and show them a mounted specimen—explain the termite and its depredations, or describe how the Maoris used the adze. Countless subjects are dealt with in suitable language and young inquirers may see and handle actual specimens to their hearts' delight.

The other day a representative of The Listener called on the officer in charge, D. W. McKenzie, and asked how the service was working in these days when Museum space was at a premium.

He told us, first of all, something of its history. The service, he said, started in 1938. Then, in 1942, the Dominion Museum was closed to the public-as it still is-and school visits stopped. The education officer was transferred to school-teaching and for a time only the

though working under difficulties-sup- loan of exhibits to schools continued. was appointed to the Museum staff, and groups of school-children once again made regular visits.

## Exhibits Visit Children

The service was started by the Carnegie Corporation to show what could be done in New Zealand both by taking the Museum to the children and the children to the Museum. Four educational officers were appointed in the four main Museum centres, and all had found, said Mr. McKenzie, that the best way to teach children was to let them get their noses right up against the exhibits. The Museum in each main centre has its own territory, the Dominion Museum covering schools from Nelson to Napier.

Eight or ten Training College students work at the Museum for a six-weeks





EXHIBITS FOR SCHOOLS: The upper photograph shows members of the Educational Officer's staff with cased exhibits for despatch to schools. The lower reveals the detail in a larger display cabinet, with plasticine scale-models of prehistoric mammals placed against an appropriate background.

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