

much new light upon them. The contrast between the handsome and comparatively fair Reshiats and the ill-favoured and artificially deformed Buma and Marlé people is singularly marked, although the tribes reside near each other. The Buma-Marlé women wear lip ornaments, closely resembling those of the Botocudo and other savages of the Amazon basin. Dwelling on the west side of Lake Rudolf, the Turkana tribes set some of the most curious fashions in hair-dressing that even the African mind has devised.

For some time to come this district, first entered by Count Teleki and Lieut. von Höhnel, will be the base for new exploring journeys of high importance; but it is difficult of access, and all those who have tried to follow in the footsteps of the pioneers, have so far been obliged to turn back unsuccessful. H. R. M.

THE BEETLES OF NEW ZEALAND.¹

TIMES have changed since the founders of entomology considered it sufficient to use the words "in Indiis," when they were unacquainted with the locality of an insect they were describing; nor would it be possible now to publish a volume of "Insects of India," like Donovan's, issued no longer ago than the beginning of the present century, in which many of the species represented on the plates are conspicuous South American or African butterflies. At present it is hardly considered lawful to describe an insect without an exact locality, and the number of species has increased to an extent of which the older entomologists never dreamed. We cannot at present be acquainted with much fewer than 300,000 species of insects from all parts of the globe, and yet none but a few, even among entomologists themselves, have any conception of how much yet remains to be done before our knowledge of the insects of the world can be considered anything like complete; and some entomologists of great experience now mention ten millions as a mere guess at the approximate number of existing species.

But our knowledge of the insects of various countries is now being largely extended by the publication of local monographs of different groups of insects, mostly, but not always, relating to the *Lepidoptera*. These monographs are of the greatest value as a basis for future research, and are especially important in the case of island for several reasons.

Firstly, an island has a restricted area, and hence its fauna forms a compact whole; nor can there usually arise much difficulty in ascertaining what species are really indigenous.

Secondly, from the restricted area of islands, and the facilities they offer for colonisation and cultivation, the bulk of the native fauna and flora is peculiarly liable to be exterminated, not merely from the advance of cultivation, with its usual accompaniments of clearing of forests and drainage of marshes, but from the irruption of powerful competitors in the shape of dominant, if not almost cosmopolitan species from abroad.

Thirdly, many insular species, especially in the case of oceanic islands, are endemic, being peculiar to the locality, and found nowhere else in the world, and are thus liable to be lost to science for ever. Nor are we yet in a position to estimate the value of such species. It is even not impossible that in some cases, at least, they may be the last remnants of the productions of some long-vanished continent, and they may some day prove of service in helping us to map out the rough features of the former geography of the world.

The volume before us, although issued as parts v., vi., and vii. of Captain Broun's "Manual of New Zealand *Coleoptera*," is really a supplement to the well-known and extremely useful work published by the Geological Survey and Museum Department between 1880 and 1886. These parts, issued as i.-iv., comprised 973 pages, and included descriptions of 1756 species. The present supplement continues the pagination to 1504 pages, and includes descriptions of 836 new species, thus raising the number of New Zealand beetles to 2592; and Captain Broun considers that over 700 species still remain undescribed. It will therefore be seen that, notwithstanding the extremely insular character of the New Zealand fauna, there is every reason to believe that the number of species of *Coleoptera* will ultimately far exceed that of our British beetles, which are not now considered to amount to quite 3000 species.

Dr. Hector, the Director of the Colonial Museum, Wellington, remarks, in his preface to Capt. Broun's work:

"Of the present additions, 660 have been described by Captain Broun, 172 by Dr. David Sharp, four by Mr. Matthews, and one by M. Fauvel; and in order to place these species in proper systematic position, Captain Broun has found it necessary to establish several new genera."

It is impossible to criticise a work like this, consisting almost entirely of technical descriptions of genera and species. A very few corrections to the former parts of the work are prefixed to this volume, in addition to a not very formidable list of errata. It is obvious that there could be no room in a book of this kind for more than a few of the most important comments which might be made on the earlier portions.

There is a good systematic index at the beginning of the volume, and we do not think that as there is no synonymy, the absence of an alphabetical index is of any importance. But we should have liked to have seen an index of localities, for although the places mentioned may be, and probably are, familiar to New Zealand colonists, yet other coleopterists may wish to know, at least, in which island each insect was taken; and in the case of mountain species, the approximate altitude, if known, should be recorded. We cannot have too much or too exact information on matters of this kind. W. F. KIRBY.

NOTES.

THE preliminary arrangements for the seventh International Congress of Hygiene and Demography, to be held at Budapest from the 1st to the 9th of next September, are well advanced, as many as 440 papers having already been promised. Most of these treat of hygienic subjects, but 78 papers are devoted to demography. The Congress will be opened by the Archduke Karl Ludwig.

THE Government has decided to place the direction of the Customs and Inland Revenue Laboratories under one administrative chief, to be styled the Principal Chemist of the Government Laboratories. The Principal Chemist will also receive references from the Board of Agriculture, the Local Government Board, and other Government departments. The appointment, which is in the gift of the Treasury, has been offered to, and has been accepted by, Prof. Thorpe, F.R.S., who thereby vacates the Chair of Chemistry in the Royal College of Science, which he has held since 1885.

DR. ARTHUR W. BISHOP, late Assistant Professor at the Heriot-Watt College, Edinburgh, has been appointed, by the Secretary of State for India, Professor of Chemistry in his Highness the Maharajah of Travancore's College at Trivandrum, Travancore.

¹ "New Zealand Institute. Manual of the New Zealand *Coleoptera*." By Captain Thomas Broun. Parts v., vi., vii. Published by the Board of Government. Wellington, New Zealand. (Government Printing Office: Samuel Costall, 1893.)