

OCTOBER, 1879.

The monthly evening meeting of the Society was held on Tuesday, October 14. His Excellency the Governor in the chair.

The Hon. Secretary, DR. AGNEW, drew attention to the following returns, received since last meeting, viz. :—

1. Number of visitors to Museum during September—On Sundays, 1,231 ; on week days, 1,278. Total, 2,509.
2. Do. to Gardens, 4,571.
3. Plants and seeds received at Gardens—From the Royal Gardens, Kew, 60 packets seeds. From Mons. C. Huber, Hyeres, France, 3 do. From Mr. S. Purchase, Sydney, 36 large Araucarias. From Mr. C. F. Creswell, 18 plants. From the Botanic Gardens, Melbourne, 6 packets palm seeds. From Mr. James Jones, 3 packets seeds. From Mr. James Dall, Nelson, New Zealand, 6 species Tree Ferns.
4. Plants, etc., sent from Gardens.—To Mr. C. F. Creswell, 36 plants. To Mr. James Jones, Melbourne, 36 do. To Botanic Gardens, Sydney, 2 bags Sphagnum moss. To Botanic Gardens, Melbourne, 2 do. To Messrs. Shepherd and Co., Sydney, 2 do. To the Acclimatisation Society, Queensland, 2 do.
5. Time of leafing, flowering, etc., of a few standard plants in the Botanic Gardens during September.

HIS EXCELLENCY observed that this return supported some remarks he had made at a similar period of a former year, to the effect that in this country the sycamore and oak acted in a manner reverse of what took place in England. There the leafing of the oak followed that of the sycamore, whereas here the reverse was the case.

6. Books and periodicals received.
7. Presentations to Museum.

Meteorology.

1. Hobart Town, from F. Abbott, Esq.—Table for September.
2. Mount Nelson and Bruny Island, from the Marine Board.—Tables for September.
3. Western Australia, from the Government Observer.—Printed report of Observations for 1879.
4. New Zealand, from Dr. Hector.—Printed tables for January, February, and March, 1879.
5. Melbourne, from the Government Observer.—Tables for June, 1879.

The presentations to the Museum were as follows :—

1. From Mr. A. McDowall, Logan.—Skin of a Crocodile (*Crocodylus Johnstonii*), from the Upper Herbert River, Queensland. An Australian Aboriginal's letter, in the form of a notched piece of wood, with translation.
2. From Mr. E. J. Freeman.—Four specimens of Vegetable Ivory, from Fiji.
3. From Mr. T. Young, Margate.—Casts of Fossils from the mudstone in that locality.
4. From Mr. H. Featherstone, Sorell.—15 Copper Coins and Tokens.
5. From T. Giblin, Esq.—A Prussian Thaler, Wilhelm III., 1805.
6. From Mr. Glover, Franklin.—An Opossum Mouse (*Dromicia gliriformis*), with two young ones in the pouch.
7. From Mr. F. H. Long.—Specimen of Tin, with Gold, Iridosmine, etc., from Castray River, West Coast, Tasmania ; sample of Sapphires, etc., from same locality.
8. From the Rev. R. Rawson.—Copy of an inscription on a stone on Bosworth Field, marking the spot where Richard 3rd was killed.
9. Large Specimen of "Native Bread" (*Mylitta Australis*).—From Mr. Jacks, Swansea.

The SECRETARY reported that the proceedings of the Society for 1878 were now ready for distribution to the Fellows on application.

The BISHOP submitted specimens of the larva and chrysalis of the Codling Moth, taken from the tree the same morning.

Mr. BARNARD exhibited eggs, larva, chrysalis, and fully developed insect of the Codling Moth, and read extracts in reference to it from Johnson's Cottage Gardeners' Dictionary, 1857.

Specimens of the Colorado Beetle (*Chrysomela decem-lineata*) were placed on the table for inspection.

The BISHOP read a paper on the "Law of Storms," supplemented by a report on a Cyclone, which occurred between Tasmania and New Zealand in 1876, furnished by Captain Chandler, formerly of the United States steamer Swatara. The probable course of the Cyclone was illustrated by a chart.

Mr. A. B. CROWTHER read a paper on "The Habits of the Platypus." Discussion took place, when the conflicting theories as to the generation of the animal were noticed. After referring to the admirable investigations of M. Verreaux at New Norfolk, and the writings of Professor Owen (Annals of Nat. Hist., Vol. 2, 2nd series) thirty years ago, Mr. STEPHENS remarked that viviparous generation was generally accepted as a certainty.

Mr. E. SWAN stated Professor McCoy was still of opinion that additional information was required before this point would be considered as finally settled. [In a paper on this subject, by the learned Professor, which appeared in the *Australasian* of the 10th August, 1878, the following passage occurs :—"The whole interest attaches to a very short interval, for the little naked young found by several observers could have only been a short time out of the egg, if such were really laid; and on the other hand, at a period very shortly before this, the ova have been, by ourselves and many others, found in the ovaries as large as cherries; but whether the young are excluded from the eggs while still within the body of the mother, and brought forth alive, so as to make the animal ovo-viviparous, as so many reptiles are, or whether the creature is oviparous, and the eggs are laid, and the young afterwards break out, as in all birds, is still the point to be determined."]

It was agreed that specimens of the female Platypus should, if possible be obtained during the next breeding season, commencing about the middle of November, at intervals of a fortnight. The gravid uterus, in various stages of development, could then be dissected here, or transmitted to Professor Owen, agreeably to his wish expressed to our late member, the Rev. W. W. Spicer, in 1877.

The BISHOP read a paper on "Sewage and Health."

HIS EXCELLENCY, in confirmation of some points alluded to by the Bishop, adduced a striking instance of the value of the Earth Closet System. In a large prison at Fremantle, Western Australia, where the death-rate previous to his visit had been excessive, he (the Governor) directed Earth Closets alone to be used, and the effect was that the subsequent diminution of disease and death was most remarkable. Similar good results from attention to the closet system had also come under his notice in New Zealand.

Further discussion having taken place,

Mr. JUSTICE DOBSON, after alluding to the value and interest of the papers just read, proposed the usual vote of thanks, which was carried, and the proceedings then terminated.