

AUGUST, 1897.

A meeting of the Royal Society of Tasmania was held in the Art Gallery of the Museum on Monday evening, August 2nd. Sir Lambert Dobson presided, and there was a moderate attendance. A number of apologies for unavoidable absence were received.

Mr. C. Cameron Swan was elected a member of the society.

CORRESPONDENCE.

The following letter was read and referred to the Trustees of the Museum and Art Gallery :—

“Cullenswood House,” Cullenswood,

July 26th, 1897.

THE SECRETARY, ROYAL SOCIETY,

Sir,—I beg to bring to your notice, and that of the Council generally, the advisability of the Royal Society taking some steps this session to have the duty on “works of art” coming into this colony removed. The Society is the custodian of the Art Gallery, and among its many useful functions is the stimulation and encouragement of art, which fact seems to saddle it with some responsibility in the matter of getting the duty removed. It is not too much to say that a tax, or duty, on anything which is of educational value to a young community like ours, or which tends to raise the standard of culture in the nation, cannot be too strongly condemned. Familiarity with art in its best forms effects a permanent influence for good in the mind of a young generation, and the objectionable duty in question strikes a fatal blow at that influence. Tasmania is the only colony in the Australian group which taxes works of art, and this is a matter of universal reproach against our community on the continent. The revenue gains but little from the duty, which is a strong point in favour of its abolition or material reduction. I would therefore suggest that a deputation from the Council be formed to wait, at an early date, upon the Treasurer, and request the abolition of the duty either this year or next.

I have, etc., W. V. LEGGE, Member of Council R.S.

—Mr. T. STEPHENS said he had a pleasant duty to perform before the business of the evening commenced. As that was the first occasion upon which His Honor had presided since the title in connection with the Jubilee celebrations had been conferred on him, he desired, on behalf of the society, to congratulate him. Sir Lambert did not require any flattering remarks from them. Everyone knew his worth as a citizen and a Judge of the Supreme Court, and those present knew the value of his services in connection with their society. On behalf of the Royal Society he desired to congratulate their chairman upon the marked honour which had been conferred upon him.

Several other members also congratulated the chairman upon the recognition of his merits.

Sir LAMBERT DOBSON, who upon rising was received with applause, thanked the society for its congratulations with regard to the marks of distinction that Her Majesty had been pleased to confer upon him. He had always endeavoured to discharge his duty quietly and humbly, and if his attempts had been so far successful that those who were in a position to judge thought it right to confer the distinction of K.C.M.G. upon him he felt proud of having his services so recognised. It was a recognition of work done, and in the future he would endeavour to discharge his duties as satisfactorily as in the past.

PAPER ON THE REFERENDUM.

Professor JETHRO BROWN, M.A., LL.D., read a paper entitled “Some Historical Aspects of the Referendum.”

OBSIDIAN BUTTONS.

A paper "On the Occurrence of Obsidian Buttons," by Messrs. W. H. Twelvetrees, F.G.S., and W. F. Petterd, C.M.Z.S., was read by the SECRETARY, Mr. A. Morton.

A NEW TRITHURIA.

A paper written by Mr. L. Rodway on "A New Tritburia," was taken as read.

The various subjects dealt with during the evening were afterwards discussed.