



SIR JAMES AGNEW, K.C.M.G., M.D., M.E.C.

## Obituary.

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SIR JAMES WILSON AGNEW, K.C.M.G., M.D., M.E.C., Senior Vice-President of the Royal Society of Tasmania. Died on 8th November, 1901, in the 87th year of his age.—Born at Ballyclare, Ireland, on the 2nd October, 1815, he studied for the medical profession in London and Paris, and at Glasgow, where he graduated M.D., as his father and grandfather had done before him, and came to Australia in 1839. After a short stay in New South Wales and Victoria (then known as Port Phillip), he accepted from Sir John Franklin the offer of appointment as medical officer to an important station at Tasman's Peninsula, where he devoted the greater part of his leisure time to the study of natural history. Prior to his removal to Hobart for the more extended practice of his profession, in which he subsequently attained a position of acknowledged eminence, he had assisted in founding the Tasmanian Society, and he became an active member of the Royal Society, into which the former Society merged in 1844. Shortly after the retirement of Dr. Milligan, its Secretary and Curator, in 1860, he undertook the duties of Secretary as a labour of love, in order that the whole of the limited amount available out of income might be appropriated as salary for the Curator of the Museum. From that time onwards, except during occasional periods of absence from Tasmania, he continued to act as chief executive officer of the Royal Society in the capacity of Honorary Secretary for many years, and latterly in that of Chairman of the Council; and to the admirable manner in which those self-imposed duties were discharged,

the records of the Society will bear enduring testimony for those who were not personally cognisant of his work. As far back as 1843 he contributed to the original Society an exhaustive account of the structure, habits, and venomous properties of Tasmanian snakes. This was followed in 1864 by a paper "On the Poison of Venomous Snakes," which, after describing in detail some of his experimental researches, gives full directions for the necessary remedial treatment in cases of snake-bite, and is still a standard authority on the subject.

It is not by the number of papers appearing in the journals that the value of the services of such a man is to be gauged. A glance through the records of the Royal Society will show that he was ever on the look out for opportunities of promoting its work in the cause of Science, and in the public interest. He took an active part in the various projects for acclimatising the Salmonidæ in Tasmania, and defrayed the whole cost of the last importation of salmon ova from the mother-country, which was carried out with complete success, a cordial vote of thanks being accorded to him on the occasion by both Houses of Parliament. This, however, was only one of many instances of his liberal support of public enterprises which he deemed deserving of encouragement, and as to those with which he was more directly connected, the Library of the Royal Society, as well as the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, will for all time bear witness to his generous benefactions to those institutions. He was not a politician in the ordinary sense of the term, but was a valued Member of the Legislative Council for many years, and held office without portfolio in various Ministries up to 1886, when, as Premier and Chief Secretary he took an active part in the re-organisation of the Department of Education and other business of great public importance. He was created K.C.M.G. in 1894.

But it is not only for such qualities as were evidenced in his public life, or in the practice of his profession, that the memory of Sir James Agnew will be held in affectionate remembrance. Of his private benevolence, and of his readiness to help any institution or enterprise that appealed to his sympathy, there can be no official record. Nor is it possible, even for those who knew him best, to give any adequate description of the versatility of his genius, which enabled him to take a keen and intelligent interest in everything that came in his way, from the translation of an Ode of Horace, or some literary criticism, to the discussion of *arcana* connected with his own profession, or the latest discoveries in mechanical and electrical engineering. This active interest in everything that concerned humanity continued throughout his life, and his faculties happily remained unclouded to the end.

“ He had reaped  
The harvest of his days, and fell asleep,  
Amid their garnered sheaves.”

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RICHARD STONHEWER BRIGHT, M.R.C.S., E., L.M., L.S.A. Died 28th October, 1901.—Born at South Audley-street, London, in 1835, he was educated at Christ's Hospital and King's College, and, following in the steps of his father, took up the study of the medical profession, and qualified for membership of the Royal College of Surgeons in 1857. Commencing his professional career on his arrival in Tasmania in 1858, he continued in active practice until his death, having been for 41 years Honorary Surgeon at the

General Hospital, Hobart. At the Intercolonial Medical Congress, held at Brisbane in 1900, he was unanimously elected President of the Congress to be held at Hobart in 1902, an honour which he did not live to enjoy.

Dr. Bright was an old and valued member of the Royal Society of Tasmania, having been elected Fellow in 1865, and a member of the Council in 1897. He was also President of the Medical Section of the Royal Society.

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HON. CHARLES HENRY GRANT. ASSOC. M. INST. C.E., M.E.C. Died 30th September, 1901, in the 70th year of his age.—Born at Great Marlow, Buckinghamshire, England, on the 9th November, 1831, he was educated at King's College, London, where he achieved distinction in mathematical studies, and he subsequently gained large experience in Telegraphy and Railway Engineering, both in England and in Canada. He came to Tasmania in 1872 to superintend the construction of the Main Line of Railway between Hobart and Launceston, of which he acted as General Manager until the line became the property of the State in 1890. He was elected a member of the Legislative Council in 1892, was a leading member of many public institutions, and was one of the representatives of Tasmania at the Federal Convention held in Adelaide, Sydney, and Melbourne in 1897-8. He was elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Tasmania in 1872, and a member of the Council in 1880, and was one of the original Trustees of the Tasmanian Museum and Botanical Gardens, taking an active and conspicuous share in all the duties which thus devolved upon him.