

ROYAL SOCIETY.

SEPTEMBER, 1868.

The monthly evening meeting of the Fellows was held on Tuesday, the 15th September. The Hon. R. Officer, Esq., Vice-President in the chair.

The Secretary (Dr. Agnew) laid on the table the following returns for the past month :—

1. Visitors to Museum, 514.
2. Ditto to Gardens, 1,574.
3. Plants, &c., received at Gardens :—From Mr. W. Knight, jun., a collection of seeds gathered in New Zealand. From A. Verschaffelt, Ghent, Belgium, 391 papers, Seeds of trees, shrubs, herbaceous plants, &c.; 21 collections of florists' flowers, comprising 320 varieties.
4. Plants, &c., sent from Gardens :—For decoration of grounds of Asylum, New Norfolk, 82 Plants. To Mr. R. Henderson, Sydney, 23 Plants; 8 varieties cuttings.
5. Tench supplied to Acclimatisation Society, Nelson, New Zealand, 7.
6. Time of leafing, &c., of a few standard plants in Gardens.
7. Books, &c., received.
8. Presentations to Museum.

Meteorological Returns.

1. Hobart Town, from F. Abbott, Esq., table and summary for August.
2. Swansea, from Dr. Story, table for July.
3. Westbury, from F. Belstead, Esq., table for August.
4. Tamar Heads, from R. Henry, Esq., table for August.
5. Swan Island, Goose Island, King's Island, Kent's Group, South Brun, and Mount Nelson, monthly tables for the half-year ended 30th June, from the Marine Board.

The Secretary read a letter, from which the following is an extract, forwarded by Mr. Boyd, of Port Arthur, giving a detailed description by one of the overseers (Mr. F. A. Keith) of the remarkable tidal disturbance at Long Bay, of the 15th August, which, as is well known, occurred on the same day along the shores of all the Australian colonies and New Zealand :—"At 9 a.m., at low water, a huge wave was seen entering the Bay from the open sea, at the rate (as estimated) of about 11 or 12 miles per hour. The force was such that logs of heavy blue gum timber, which for years had been embedded in the sand, were washed ashore. A launch at anchor in the Bay, was driven for a distance of 100 yards, dragging her anchor and chain cable. A length of about 50 yards of a substantially built wooden jetty was swept away, and the rush of the water was so rapid that several men at work on the jetty only saved their lives by leaping into a launch which they had been engaged in loading. The water having thus risen to the height of *seven* feet, receded as rapidly to the extent of *ten* feet, the rise and fall together having occupied only fifteen minutes. During the day many waves of a similar character rolled into the Bay, the last, which occurred at a late hour, being even greater than the one described, but as its rise and fall were much more slow and gradual, the effects were not so remarkable."

The presentations to the Museum were as follow :—

1. From Mrs. Downing, Battery Point, a Scorpion, with 20 young ones ; two specimens of Squid.
2. From Mr. Young, Bellerive, a Crab, and a specimen of Hippocampus sp.
3. From J. A. Moore, jun., Esq., New Norfolk, a Coot (*Fulica Australis*.)
4. From Mr. Williams, Sandy Bay, Egg cases of Sting Ray.
5. From Dr. Officer, a Platypus (*Ornithorynchus anatinus*).
6. From F. G. Waterhouse, Esq., Curator, South Australian Institute Museum, Adelaide, 91 specimens (55 species) South Australian and other Birds.

This valuable presentation was received as a very liberal exchange for specimens sent to Adelaide from this Museum.

7. From Mrs. C. Meredith, 50 specimens (30 varieties) of Algæ, &c., from Prosser's Bay.

The Secretary directed special attention to the many beautiful forms of these algæ and corallines. A hope was expressed by some of the Fellows that Mrs. Meredith would still continue her labors and add to the value of her gift by future contributions of a similar kind to the Museum.

8. From Mr. William Norris, Franklin, Huon, Nest of an insect taken from the middle of the limb of a tree. The limb was two feet in diameter, and grew about 200 feet from the ground. An insect resembling a Wire-worm was found in the nest.

In reference to this nest Mr. M. Allport observed that the insect which produced it probably belonged to the family of hymenopterous insects, known as wood-boring wasps, as a somewhat similar, though smaller, structure made by one of the same family was common in decaying stumps in many parts of the colony. The nest has evidently been deserted some time, and the wire-like worm, mentioned by Mr. Norris, was probably an interloper. Though the delicate fabric has the appearance of being carved out of the solid wood it is really built of a sort of paper, composed of the woody fibres, worked into a paste by the insect. If a few more colonists would but imitate the good example of Mr. Norris, much interesting information as to our indigenous animals would soon be collected.

The Secretary directed the special attention of the Fellows to the splendid skeleton of the Black Fish (Gen. *Orca*) which had just been set up, and was so creditable to the skill, and practised manipulation of the curator, Mr. Roblin.

Mr. W. Knight, junr., read a paper on a specimen of chrome iron ore from the West Coast of the island. This was carefully analysed by Mr. Knight, who exhibited to the meeting the various compounds he had obtained from the ore, i.e., bichromate of potash, chromic acid, chromate of lead, chromate of potash, sesquioxide of chromium, and hydrated ditto.

In the discussions which ensued no precise information was elicited as to the quantity of the ore which could be obtained.

Mr. Knight, at the request of the meeting, promised to procure further information as to the commercial value of the ore, and the facilities, if any, for obtaining it in quantities for exportation.

In proposing the usual vote of thanks, with special reference to Mr. Knight for his paper, and to Mr. Waterhouse of Adelaide, the mover, (Mr. M. Allport) fully concurred in the remarks previously made by Dr. Agnew, as to the credit due to Mr. Roblin for the preparation of the very fine skeleton of the Black Fish now before them.

The vote having been carried unanimously, and the chairman having specially thanked Mr. Knight, the meeting terminated.