

ROYAL SOCIETY.

APRIL, 1865.

The monthly evening meeting of the Fellows was held on Tuesday, the 11th April, J. Barnard, Esq., in the chair.

The following gentlemen having been previously nominated by the Council, were, after a ballot, declared to be duly elected Fellows of the Society:—James Lord, Esq., Hobart Town; E. M. Lloyd, Esq., R.E., Hobart Town; and as corresponding member, the Rev. Julian E. Woods, of Penola, South Australia.

The following returns were laid on the table:—

1. Visitors to Museum during March, 663.
2. Ditto to Gardens ditto, 2,127.
3. Seeds received at Gardens. From Justin Browne, Esq., six varieties of Chinese peas.
4. Plants sent from Gardens. To Mr. Diehl, Dunedin, 48 roses, 12 shrubs; to Mr. H. Low, London, one case plants; to A. Verschaffelt, Ghent, Belgium, two large tree ferns.
5. Books and Periodicals received.

The SECRETARY drew special attention to the two valuable illustrated Botanical Works, by Dr. Mueller, presented by the Victorian Government.

Meteorological Returns.

1. Hobart Town, from F. Abbott, Esq.
 - (a) Table for March.
 - (b) Summary of Observations for ditto.
2. Tamar Heads, from R. Henry, Esq.
 - (a) Table for February.

The SECRETARY read the usual Analysis of the Observatory Records for March, together with a Health Report for the month, by E. Swarbrick Hall, Esq.

The following presentations were brought under the notice of the meeting:—

1. From C. Degraives, Esq.—A model of a Cingalese boat, two dirks from Algeria, two Spanish knives, two fossil shark's teeth from Malta, a mineralogical specimen.
2. From P. Seal, Esq.—Portions of the hull of the steamship "Royal Charter," wrecked in Moelfra Bay. Also part of the woodwork of a sofa from the wreck of the same vessel.
3. From A. Nicholas, Esq.—Specimen of Whalebone, showing its mode of growth from the jaw.
4. From Mr. Russell, Sandy Bay.—A large excrescence from the root of a honeysuckle tree.
5. From Mr. Bellette.—Skin of white hawk (*Astur Novæ Hollandiæ*).
6. From T. Stephens, Esq.—A specimen of Slate quarried for roofing purposes, at Middle Arm on the Tamar; two cones and flower of a rare species of *Banksia* (*B. media*) from the "Sisters," near Rocky Cape; and a portion of the stem of a Tree Fern. (*Alsophila Australis*) from Table Cape.

In reference to the specimens presented by him, Mr. STEPHENS observed that the slate was associated with bands of blue and white limestone, and quartz rock, the series being highly inclined and contorted, and overlaid in places by horizontal beds of an impure limestone, containing upper Palæozoic fossils, and passing upwards into carboniferous sandstone. Like all the other slates which occur along the north coast, and in other parts of the colony, it differed from the roofing-slates of Great Britain in that it was only fissured along the planes of stratification, and possessed no true cleavage. It was not of a sufficiently durable character to be valuable for roofing, but might be utilised for other purposes.

The species of *Banksia* producing the large cones which were exhibited, was found only in one spot in Tasmania, a narrow belt some three miles in length near Rocky Cape on the north coast, growing in almost pure quartz sand to a height of 30 feet. It is not uncommon in the south of Gipps' Land

nd other parts of Australia. Mr. Stephens also remarked that Table Cape might be registered as a new locality for the *Alsophila Australis*. Its chief peculiarity consisted in the persistence of the bases of the fallen fronds along the whole stem, and in the prickly epidermis with which they were covered. It is described in Hooker's Flora as occurring near the Asbestos Hills, and at Macquarie Harbor, but it had, he believed, been found by Mr. Gunn in other places.

Mr. M. ALLPORT observed that this tree fern is also found on Maria Island, where it grows away from the watercourses, and may be readily distinguished from the common tree fern by the greater breadth of the fronds in proportion to their length, and the slender stem which scarcely exceeds a foot in diameter when the tree is 25 feet high.

A parcel of small pearls, procured on the East Coast, from our salt-water mussel was exhibited. In reference to pearls Mr. M. Allport observed that the Unio (fresh-water mussel) of Tasmania closely resembles the pearl bearing Unio of Great Britain, and it is remarkable that it is found only in those rivers running to the north and west coasts, while it is absent in those running to the southward and eastward, though many of both sets of streams take their rise within a very short distance of each other, in the same mountains.

The address of the Chairman of the Physical Section of the Royal Society (E. Swarbreck Hall, Esq.) on the opening of the session of 1865 was read by the author. That portion of it which alluded to the new illuminating agent was illustrated by the burning of a small portion of magnesium wire, which had been procured for the occasion from Mr. Knight, (the Pyrotechnist) by Dr. Hall. The light was inconceivably brilliant, and had something of a bluish tint. The Secretary read some further details as to its capability from a lecture delivered by Professor Roscoe at the meeting of the British Association held last year at Bath.

The attention of the Fellows was directed to the exhibition of the apples and pears, from the Royal Society's Gardens, of which 70 varieties were on the table.

The usual vote of thanks to the author of the paper just read, and to the donors of presentations, having been passed, the proceedings terminated.