

ROYAL SOCIETY.

MAY, 1865.

The usual monthly evening meeting of the Society was held on Tuesday, the 9th May, T. Stephens, Esq., in the chair.

Among the Fellows present were Dr. Agnew, Hon. Sec., Messrs. E. Swarbrick Hall, W. Henry, J. Davies, D. Lewis, R. Lewis, W. Johnston, H. S. Wintle, W. L. Dobson, F. Abbott, sen., F. Abbott, jun., Lieutenant Lloyd, R.E., &c., &c.

The Secretary laid on the table the usual returns for the past month, viz.,—

1. Visitors to Museum, 670.
2. Ditto to Gardens, 2,104.
3. Periodicals received (the usual).

Meteorological Returns.

1. Hobart Town, from F. Abbott, Esq.
 - (a) Table for April.
 - (b) Summary of observations for ditto.
2. Port Arthur, from J. Boyd, Esq.
 - (a) Table for March.
 - (b) Reading of Government schooner's barometer for ditto.
3. Tamar Heads, from R. Henry, Esq.
 - (a) Table for March.
 - (b) Ditto for April.
4. Swansea, from Dr. Story.
 - (a) Table for March.

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

The Presentations consisted of,—

1. A Golden Pheasant. From J. MacLanachan, Esq.
2. Two Gang-gang Cockatoos (*Callocephalon galeatum*).
3. Beaver Rat (*Hydromys chrysogaster*).
4. Fern (*Thalassius poliocercus*). From Morton Allport, Esq.
5. Fish (*Clinus* sp.).
6. A large Centipede (picked up at sea, preserved in a bottle). From Mr. Turner.
7. Kingfisher. From Mr. Bellette.
8. Hyalea (with drawings). From Lieut. Lloyd, R.E. This specimen was procured at sea, in lat. 35° S., long. 18° W.

Mr. F. ABBOTT read some notes on the importance of establishing a Time Signal in Hobart Town, for the purpose of giving the correct time both to the city and to the surrounding districts. He recommended that a gun should be fired every day exactly at one o'clock, and as this would be attended with some expense he hoped the Society would think the matter of sufficient importance to bring it under the notice of the Executive.

Mr. DOBSON observed if a time gun were established it would be well to be careful in fixing upon a proper site. When he was in Melbourne in February last the firing of the time gun at the University was discontinued as it was supposed to be the cause of some mortality in the Lying-in Hospital, situated in the immediate vicinity.

Mr. ABBOTT said that subsequent observation must have shown this opinion to be erroneous, as when he was in Melbourne, at a much later date, the firing of the gun had been resumed.

Mr. DAVIES thought it was entirely a question of expense, because as to the utility of the time signal there could be no doubt. He found, however, that firing a single gun, say a 32-pounder, could not be done for less than from £150 to £200 a year, a large expenditure for the colony. He was quite in favor, however, of a time ball, as at Greenwich.

Mr. LLOYD said that a much smaller gun than a 32-pounder would do. The sound would not, of course, be carried to the same distance as from a larger gun

but he asked if a system of signals could not be established by the existing semaphores to repeat the time to the neighboring districts without expense.

Mr. ABBOTT did not think that anything but a gun would do. Signals would be affected by the weather, and could not be seen in all the circumjacent districts. A time ball, too, would not be of much use. It was not necessary in town, as St. David's clock always gave the correct time to within a minute or so, and it was not of much consequence to the shipping, as the port was small, and the captains of ships generally brought their chronometers on shore for regulation.

Mr. STEPHENS suggested, as the daily use of a gun was so expensive, that the firing might be done only at stated times, say once a week.

Mr. DAVIES suggested that before any action could be taken, it would be necessary to determine with accuracy to what distance the sound of a gun could be heard. He thought, if requested by the Royal Society, that the Volunteer Artillery might be able to institute some experiments on the subject.

Mr. DOBSON felt that definite information was wanted on many points, such as the expense, the size of the gun, distance to which the sound would be heard, &c.

Mr. JOHNSTON moved that the consideration of the question be postponed, and that a committee be formed to obtain full information on the subject, and to bring up its report to the Society at as early a period as possible. Such committee to consist of Col. Chesney, Mr. Lloyd (R.E.), Mr. Davies, Mr. Dobson, Mr. D. Lewis, and Mr. Abbott.

The motion was agreed to.

The SECRETARY reported that the Council had determined to devote the next evening meeting to a microscopic exhibition, to which each Fellow would have the privilege of inviting ladies. It was hoped the owners of microscopes would put themselves at once in communication with the Curator, as it was desirable that arrangements should be made at least a week before the meetings as to the best mode of exhibiting the various specimens from the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms, &c., which would be submitted to the visitors for examination. It was expected that at least twelve microscopes would be in action.

The usual vote of thanks to the authors of the papers and the donors of presentations having been accorded, the proceedings terminated.