ROYAL SOCIETY.

JULY, 1865.

The monthly evening meeting of the Fellows was held on Tuesday, the 11th July, the Hon. R. Officer, Esq., V.P., in the chair.

The following gentlemen (who had been previously nominated by the Council) were, after a ballot, declared to be duly elected as Fellows of the Society:—Messrs. R. S. Bright, M.R.C.S.L.; J. Doughty, M.R.C.S.L. H. J. Buckland; and C. G. Greig.

The usual monthly returns were laid on the table, viz.:—

1. Visitors to the Museum during June, 424.
2. Ditto Gardens ditto, 1,023.
3. Plants received from Botanic Gardens, Melbourne, 118.
4. Plants sent to Botanic Gardens, Melbourne, 163, and 27 papers of seeds.
5. Plants sent to Messrs. Handaside & McMillan, Melbourne, 54.
6. Books and Periodicals received.

Meteorological Returns.

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

The presentations to the Museum were as follows:—

1. A collection of Australian reptiles, &c., from the Australian Museum, Sydney. Presented by G. Krefft, Esq.
2. Australian Egret *(Herodias syrmatophorus.)* From Dr. Officer.
3. Bittern *(Botaurus Australis.)* From G. C. Smith, Esq., Ouse.
4. Nightjar *(Podargus Cuvieri.)*
5. Brown Hawk *(Ieracidea berigora)*, and Black-cheeked Falcon *(Falco melanogenys)*. From M. Allport, Esq.
6. Specimens of *Sphæria Gunnii* from Longford. From Col. Chesney.
7. Lamprey caught at Risdon. From A. B. Jones, Esq.
8. Mandibles of the Moa *(Dinornis sp.)* from New Zealand. Presented by H. M. Hull, Esq.
9. Indigenous Flax grown on the Glebe at Sorell, prepared and presented by Master Frank Norman.
10. Fibre of New Zealand Flax *(Phormium tenax)* grown in Tasmania, dressed and prepared by Mrs. Gough of Glenorchy. From A. Nicholas, Esq.

In a letter accompanying this presentation Mr. Nicholas remarks that the sample of flax is a "very fair one, and worth in the English market fully £50 per ton, and that by Mrs. Gough's process an industrious person could clean 5 cwt. per diem." He also believes from his own observation that the plant if cultivated in proper localities (exposed to sea air) will thrive even better here than in New Zealand, and would be a very valuable addition to the products of the colony.

A letter from Mr. Krefft was read specifying the names of the collection of fish and reptiles received from the Sydney Museum.

The SECRETARY read a letter from Colonel Chesney, enclosing the following extract from a home paper in reference to a newly discovered grass which is said to afford a very profitable crop. Colonel Chesney states that "a

small packet of seed has been sent me overland, of which a portion has been handed to the Superintendent of the Society's gardens, and some I have sown. Should any Fellow of the Royal Society desire to try the qualities of this new description of fodder on a small scale this season, I shall be happy to supply him with a few seeds, if he will notify his wish to me. I may remark that the seed of Schrœder's brome is as yet very scarce and dear in England."

Extract from the *Worcester Journal*:—

THE SCHRŒDER BROME.

The 'Schrœder Brome,' to quote a French paper, is a perennial grass of extraordinary productive power, lately introduced into France. A Frenchman speaks of having experimented upon it for six years, during which time it never fell off, either in its constitution or its yielding properties. The early period at which it comes forward is an important qualification. The first cut will be ready in March, if the last crop of the preceding year has been taken in good time; it comes even before rye. Four and in some years five cuts may be obtained in the season, and either in the green or dry state it is superior to any other kind of fodder, especially for milch cows, but all graminivorous animals are fond of it. This grass forms the ear and the seed with great rapidity; this is the case with every cutting, when the ear and seed are fully developed, though not quite ripe, and the ears of the first crop have been able to be taken off sufficiently forward to be used as seed when dry, and afterwards to mow the herbaceous part. Any soil almost seems to suit Schrœder brome, but it appears to do best on fresh land. Without doubt the best land will produce the heaviest crops, but it would be difficult to tell on what kind of soil this brome will not grow. This brome lasts about six or eight years without diminution of produce or appearance of dying out. One of the peculiar merits of this plant is that no weeds will thrive under its culture; it comes up quickly, and grows very rapidly; it does not require to be sown thick, but rather deep. It is as green food that this plant is especially useful, but when converted into hay it retains all the valuable properties of the plant when in its green state, but it is greatly decreased in weight. It is no longer in making than meadow hay. The straw is very heavy, and, although a little tough, cows and pigs will eat it without being cut. The Schrœder brome seems to be very desirable food for cows, as it greatly increases the quantity of milk and makes the cream very thick, and the butter made from it has a finer flavor and keeps well, even if the weather be very warm.

The attention of the Fellows was directed to two specimens on the table, one of the bituminous substance from the Hartley mines, New South Wales, which yields on distillation the paraffine oil of commerce; the other of the Dysodyle from the North of Tasmania, or *Tasmanite* as it is now called.

The SECRETARY observed that some weeks ago one of the local newspapers, in a notice of the Hartley mineral, had suggested if the Dysodyle were treated in a like manner it might be found to yield somewhat similar products. He had therefore placed them together, in order that the Fellows might see how great the difference was between them. Both when held to a flame burned readily, but while on combustion the former almost disappeared, leaving only a very small residue of fine powdery carbon, the form and size of the latter remained unaltered. It consisted, in fact, of a fixed earthy Matrix holding the inflammable material in its interstices. When treated chemically in England it has hitherto been found impracticable to purify its products sufficiently to render them available for any useful purpose in science or art.

The SECRETARY read some "Notes on the Geological Structure of the North-east Coast of Tasmania," which had been addressed to him by Mr. Gould. After the paper conversation ensued, in which the Lord Bishop of Tasmania, the Venerable the Archdeacon, Dr. Officer, and others took part, and it was finally agreed that further discussion should be postponed until next meeting, when it was hoped Mr. Gould himself would be present.

Mr. WINTLE read some "Notes on the shaft sunk for coal at the Cascades."

The usual vote of thanks terminated the proceedings.