

# ROYAL SOCIETY.

SEPTEMBER, 1872.

The monthly evening meeting of the Society was held on Tuesday, the 10th September. M. Allport, Esq., in the chair.

C. H. Grant, Esq., who had been put in nomination, was after a ballot declared duly elected a Fellow of the Society.

The Hon. Secretary, Dr. Agnew, brought under notice the usual monthly returns, viz. :—

1. Visitors to Museum during August 1,340.
2. Ditto to Gardens 1,930.
3. Plants received at Gardens :—
  - a. From Botanic Gardens, Melbourne, 20 species of Eucalyptus (new varieties), and other plants.
  - b. From Mr. J. Baily. 30 imported plants, including 11 new varieties of holly.
  - c. From Mons. J. Verschaffelt, Ghent, Belgium, 170 plants, of which all but 30 were dead on arrival.
  - d. From Mr. G. Brunning, 18 varieties of Fuchsia, and 12 ditto of Verbena.
  - e. Time of leafing, &c., of a few standard plants in Botanic Gardens during the month.
  - f. Books and Periodicals received.
  - g. Presentations to Museum, &c.

### Meteorology.

1. Hobart Town, from F. Abbott, Esq., Table and Summary for August.
2. Port Arthur, from A. H. Boyd, Esq., Table for August.
3. Westbury, from F. Belstead, Esq., Table for August.
4. Tamar Heads, from R. Henry, Esq., ditto.
5. Swansea, from Dr. Story, ditto.

The presentations were as follows :—

1. From H. S. Lewes, Esq., A collection of weapons, &c., of Aborigines of Victoria.
  - a. A Stone Tomahawk of Mulgoa Tribe, near Penrith, N. S. Wales.
  - b. A ditto, dug up on site of a very ancient camp at Buckley's Basin, River Barwon.
  - c. Basket made by Aboriginal women at the Protector's Camp, Upper Yarra, Victoria.
  - d. Shield, Waddy, and Club, of natives of the Lower Murrumbidgee District, Victoria.
  - e. Two Waddies, and two Clubs, from Lower Loddon District.
  - f. Boomerang, Waddy, and Club, from Upper Yarra, Victoria.
2. From C. Degraeve, Esq.—Sample of Tin Ore and metallic tin smelted from the same, from Brisbane, Queensland.
3. From Mrs. Robinson, Cascades—Tin Ore from New South Wales.
4. From Mr. F. Abbott, jun.—A Blue Mountain Parrot (*Trichoglossus multicolor*.)
5. From Captain G. McArthur—Lower Jaw of Square-headed Grampus (*Orca* sp.)—Lower Jaw of Cestracion from Jervis Bay—24 specimens of land shells (*Bulimus* sp.) peculiar to Howes Island.

6. From J. W. Graves, Esq.—Cast of face of Timmy, an Aborigine of Tasmania; Cast representing an interview between G. A. Robinson and a group of Tasmanian Aborigines.
7. From the Zoological and Acclimatisation Society of Victoria, Proceedings of the Society, Vol. 1.
8. From Mr. F. J. Salier—A “Frigate,” or Man-of-War, Bird.
9. From Lady Dry—A specimen of the Superb Fruit Pigeon (*Lamprotreron superbus*), shot at Quamby by the late Sir R. Dry, after a heavy northerly gale.
10. From Skelton Emmett, Esq.—A young specimen of a Tree Fern (*Cyathea affinis*) from Circular Head.

As to presentation, No. 9, the Secretary remarked that this pigeon was not indigenous to Tasmania. The preparation was that of a young bird, which consequently had not been able to contend against the “heavy northern gale,” and had been blown across the Straits. An extract from Gould’s Handbook, Vol. II., page 108, was read, pointing out the extreme beauty of the bird. Its habitat is the northern portion of Australia, and the islands of the Pacific.

The presentation (No. 11) of the *Cyathea affinis* was brought under particular notice as being a specimen of the Fern which formed the subject of Mr. Stephens remarks at the July meeting.

Bearing on the subject of Mr. Gould’s paper, read at last meeting, the CHAIRMAN read the following letter from Mr. Joseph Barwick of the Tea Tree :—

(Copy.)

“Tea Tree.

“September 2nd, 1872.

“DEAR SIR,—Having seen a copy in *The Mercury* of a paper read by yourself at a meeting of the Royal Society, written by Mr. Gould in reference to a large unknown animal supposed to exist in some of the lakes of Tasmania, and having positively known of such an animal, I take the opportunity of sending an account of as near as possible under what circumstances I became aware of its existence. In the autumn of 1852 I was lying in ambush near Lake Tiberias for wild ducks. It was a fine moonlight night, when my attention was attracted by a commotion in the water some 15 yards from me among the debris of a fallen tree. I noticed a large animal, which, after watching him for some time, I concluded must be a large devil. I fired at him, which caused him to flounder in the water. I saw he was seriously wounded and went in to secure him, but when I got within 3 yards of him I saw to my surprise it was quite unlike any animal I ever saw before, his length appeared to be about 4ft. or 4ft. 6 inches, colour black, with a remarkable round bull dog like head, and what surprised me at the time was, instead of his making for the land he made for deep water. I had only a single barrel gun or I could have shot him again, and I have regretted ever since I had not hit him with the gun, even though I had broken it. Upon my reporting the circumstances the following morning in Oatlands, the late Mr. Burbury and two other gentlemen, accompanied me to the lake. I feel certain I must have mortally wounded the animal, but our search proved unsuccessful, but we found large quantities of his hair some having been cut off with shot, and some when making his escape against the timber. Some of this hair we took with us, and showed it to a Mr. Dean (known as Dr. Dean) who was making a collection of Tasmanian birds and animals, and had at the time I believe a specimen of every known animal in the colony, and also a large bush experience, and his opinion was that it was from some unknown animal, and he then offered £20 for the animal from which the hair came. The hair was unlike that described by Mr. Keach, as

it was only about 2 inches long, quite black and glossy at the outside, but of lighter colour near the skin. Dr. Dean was most anxious to possess the hair, and stated his intention of making enquiries about the stranger, but he left Oatlands soon afterwards and I do not know what became of his collection. The animal I speak of must have had very short legs, as there was only 15 inches of water in the place where I saw him, and his back was not much above the water.

"I must apologise for sending this to you. I intended to send it to Mr. Gould, but do not know his address.

"I may remark that at the time I saw this animal I had never heard of anything of the kind having been seen, and but for the hair, I believe my friends were disposed to consider it the result of nervousness, but this hair was considered quite conclusive.

"Yours obediently,

"JOSEPH BARWICK.

"Morton Allport, Esq.,  
"Hobart Town."

Mr. M. ALLPORT read a very interesting paper by J. R. Scott, Esq., M.H.A., being an account of an exploratory tour from Port Esperance towards Adamson's Peak in March last. Mr. Scott on this occasion discovered a supposed new species of tree fern (*Alsophila*), specimens of which accompanied the paper.

The attention of members was directed to the object under the microscope on the table, the young of the brown trout, which had been hatched out ten days' previously in a tank in the Museum. The circulation of blood in the net work of vessels covering the umbilical vesicle was very clearly shewn.

(This object will be exhibited at the Museum during the present week, when visitors will have an opportunity of observing it.)

After a vote of thanks (on the motion of Mr. GIBLIN, seconded by Mr. STEPHENS) to the donors of presentations, a special vote was accorded to Mr. Scott and Mr. Barwick. The meeting then terminated.