

APRIL, 1876.

The monthly evening meeting of the Society was held on Tuesday, 11th April, His Excellency F. A. Weld, Esq., C.M.G. in the chair.

The following were among the Fellows present; viz. :—Sir Francis Smith, Chief Justice; His Honor Mr. Justice Dobson, Sir J. M. Wilson, Rev. W. W. Spicer, Messrs. H. Weld-Blundell, E. S. Hall, J. K. Lewis, H. Bilton, Justin McC. Browne, J. Barnard, M. Seal, H. J. Buckland, A. G. Webster, W. V. Morris, F. Abbott, jun., H. Scott, J. M. Clarke, C. H. Grant, C. Dowdell, F. T. Salier, H. J. Lucas, J. Swan, M. Allport, and Dr. Agnew, hon. sec.

The Secretary brought under notice the following returns for past month :

1. Number of Visitors to Museum, 1,300.
2. Ditto to Gardens, 4,053.
3. Seeds received at Gardens.
4. Time of leafing, flowering, and fruiting of a few standard plants in Botanic Gardens during the month.
5. Books and Periodicals received.
6. Presentations to Museum.

Meteorological Tables :—

1. Hobart Town, from F. Abbott, Esq.—Table and Summary for March.
2. Port Arthur, from Dr. Coverdale—Ditto.
3. Mount Nelson, from the Marine Board—Ditto.
4. Goose Island, from ditto—Ditto Feb.
5. New Norfolk, from W. E. Shoobridge, Esq.—Ditto March.

The Presentations to the Museum were as follows :—

1. From Mr. J. S. Scholes.—A collection of coins (34 copper and 2 silver). Specimen of "Chrome," from New Zealand. Egg-shaped boulder of "Blue Stone" from the Werribbee Creek, Sunbury, Victoria.
2. From J. K. Lewis, Esq.—A fine specimen of the Caspian Tern (*Sylochelidon caspia*), shot at Frederick Henry Bay, Feb., 1876.
3. From Mr. J. Bonney.—Part of skeleton of a Turtle, from Queensland.
4. From Mr. Gillon.—A specimen of opal from Cornelian Bay Cemetery.
5. From Mr. Harrison Cades, Brown's River.—A specimen of the Owlet Nightjar (*Egotheles novae hollandiae*). Sp. 33, Gould's Handbook of Australian Birds.
6. From Mr. G. Rice.—A Freshwater Crayfish (*Astacus* sp.) from McRobie's Gully.
7. From A. Simson, Esq.—Specimen of *Antechinus swainsonii*. Two Native Rats (*Mus fuscipes?* and *Mus* sp.)
8. From Mr. Young.—A living specimen of the so-called "Sea Hare" (*Aplysia tasmanica*. Tennison Woods).
9. From H. M. Hull, Esq.—Skull of Native Tiger (*Thylacinus cynocephalus*).
10. From Mr. W. E. Hall.—Specimen of the long-eared Bat of the Colony (*Nyctophilus unicolor*).

Presentations to Library :—

1. From Rev. W. W. Spicer, M.A.—Copy of "A Handy Book to the Collection of Algae, Diatoms, Fungi, Mosses," etc. Translated from the German, and edited by the donor.
2. From Miss Fergusson, Tinderbox Bay.—A copy of the Bible, printed in the Irish language.
3. From the Trustees of the British Museum. Catalogue of Marine Polyzoa, part 3 (*Cyclostomata*.)
4. From Zoological Society, London.—Proceedings of the Society, 1874, part 4; 1875, parts, 1, 2, and 3. List of Vertebrate Animals in the Society's Gardens, suppt. 1872 to 1874.

5. From Geological Society, London.—Quarterly Journal of Society, Vol. 30, Nos. 119 and 120 ; Vol. 31, Nos. 121 to 124. List of Society, Nov. 1875.
6. From Royal Geographical Society.—Journal of Society, Vol. 14 (1874). Bd. Proceedings of ditto, Vol. 19, Nos. 1 to 7 (1875).
7. From Royal Asiatic Society.—Journal of Society, Vol. 7, part 2 ; and report for 1875.
8. From Linnean Society.—Journal of Society, Vol. 14, Nos. 78 to 80, *Botany* ; Vol. 12, No. 59, *Zoology*.
9. From the Hon. the Colonial Secretary.—A copy of the Geological Map of Australia and Tasmania, published by the Government of Victoria, mounted and varnished.

In the absence of the author a paper entitled "Notes on a new Genus of Nudibranchiata," by the Rev. J. E. Tenison Woods, was brought before the meeting by the Secretary. (In reference to its name "*Allportia*" the author remarks : "This new genus I propose to dedicate to Mr. Morton Allport, as a slight mark of appreciation of his great services to science and acclimatisation in Tasmania.")

Some introductory remarks on "Contributions to the Phytography of Tasmania, Part 4," by Baron von Mueller ; also, an introduction to "Notes on a new species of *Vaccinium* from Samoa," by the same author, were read.

The Secretary then read a communication from Mr. Calder on the language of the Aborigines of Tasmania, having previously remarked that, although Mr. Calder unfortunately was not a member, the paper was one which he was sure would be of interest to the meeting. The paper gave a list of ninety-six native words published in the *Courier* of the 3rd November, 1828, and referred to another published by Dr. Milligan in the Society's proceedings (Vol. 3, p. 239) containing 882 words. In addition to these, however, a third list of 2000 native words compiled by Mr. George Augustus Robinson (the principal captor of the native tribes) was mentioned. This important list had disappeared, and it was suggested that inquiry should be made concerning it. The author also thought that many other native words might still be rescued from oblivion, and instanced several persons from whom information on the subject might be obtained.

After reading the paper the Secretary remarked he then held in hand a third list of 332 words, and 72 names of men and women, of the existence of which Mr. Calder was evidently not aware. It was compiled by the late Rev. J. Norman de Sorell, and was very carefully made out, every word being properly accentuated, and was also interspersed with remarks on the manners and customs of the Aborigines. It was intended to print a compilation of all our known aboriginal words, and a copy would certainly be forwarded to the great philologist of the day—Max Müller.

HIS EXCELLENCY thought this was a matter well worthy of the attention of the Society. The Government of New Zealand considered the preservation of the native language so important that a grant of public money had been given for the purpose when he was Premier ; and again when Governor of Western Australia, money had been granted by that Government for a similar purpose.

HIS EXCELLENCY delivered an inaugural address. Conversational discussion ensued on several points referred to in the President's very valuable and suggestive address. In reference to the suggestion as to certain works which might be advantageously carried out in the Public Gardens, the SECRETARY remarked that nothing but want of funds prevented them from being undertaken. For the work of the gardens only three men were available, together with a gang supplied by Government, which, however, was steadily becoming so small and inefficient as to be almost worthless. The wages paid to the men were only

at the rate of four shillings per day, and in consequence a petition from them for an increase had recently been received by the Council and forwarded to the proper quarter for the consideration of the Governor-in-Council. To afford a fair increase of pay, and procure a small increase of labour, in view of the probable collapse of that supplied by Government, an annual grant of £700 was the very lowest at which the Gardens could be worked. Formerly the gardens had far more than the present grant when they were only one-half the size they now are, and when only a tithe of the present number of plants were in cultivation. A grant of £700 per annum would only give one man to every four acres, whereas a man to an acre was the proper proportion in Botanical Gardens. The Gardens in Melbourne, certainly twice the size of ours, were worked at a cost of six thousand five hundred pounds annually, whilst ours had only a grant of £400 annually, with the small extra supply of inefficient labour already mentioned.

General conversation took place as to the destruction of the Fern Trees on Mount Wellington, referred to in the Presidential Address. It was admitted that the destruction of these beautiful ornaments of the mountain gorges was carried on in the most wanton and barbarous manner. To afford a display for a single evening, instead of only taking the fronds, entire trunks, the growth of many years, were ruthlessly cut down, and thus by degrees whole valleys had been robbed of their beauty, and turned into unsightly wastes. A great public injury was in fact being done, as the mountain was fast losing one of its greatest attractions. At the same time so much of the ground has passed into private hands, it was difficult, if not impossible for any legislation to check the evil, though it was perhaps possible to abate it to some extent by having public taste and feeling aroused in opposition to it. It was finally resolved that a communication should be addressed to the Corporation pointing out the mischief which was being done, and suggesting that measures might be taken for preventing further destruction in localities over which the City Council exercised any right.

HIS EXCELLENCY remarked that the Minister of Lands and Works was most anxious for the preservation of all the natural beauties of the mountain, and, he was certain, would be glad to do everything in his power to assist in the matter.

MR. ABBOTT informed the meeting that the Cork Oaks, mentioned in the address, had arrived safely at the Gardens. A considerable number of Himalayan Rhododendrons, from the Royal Gardens, Kew, had also been received at the same time in excellent order.

Mr. Justice DOBSON read an interesting paper on the "Codlin Moth"—*Carpocapsa pomonella*.

The usual vote of thanks having been accorded to the donors of presentations, and authors of contributions, Sir J. M. WILSON proposed a special vote to the President, for his interesting and very suggestive inaugural address.

MR. M. ALLPORT seconded the vote, and referred particularly to that portion of His Excellency's address which related to the value of accurate observations on the habits of our various indigenous animals, now rapidly becoming extinct. Mr. Allport remarked that an additional reason for such observations was to be found in the fact that our fauna in a great measure consisted of forms which have passed away in Europe, and, therefore, the minute history of such fauna would, when compared with geological discoveries, throw great light on the condition of European countries during the tertiary period.

The vote having been carried by acclamation, was duly acknowledged by His Excellency, when the proceedings terminated.