

OCTOBER, 1878.

The monthly evening meeting of the Society was held on Monday, October 7, T. Stephens, Esq., M.A., in the chair.

The HON. SECRETARY (Dr. Agnew) brought forward the usual monthly returns, viz. :—

1. Number of visitors to Museum during Sept.—On Sundays, 1,284 ; on week days, 1,050 ; total, 2,334.

[Attention was called to the remarkable fact that the attendance of the public during the Sundays of the past month was greater than that on all the week days during the same period. The present was the first occasion on which this had occurred since the opening of the Museum on Sundays, about ten months ago.]

2. Number of visitors to Botanic Gardens in Sept. Total, 5,726.
3. Time of leafing, etc., of a few standard plants in the Botanic Gardens during September.
4. Books and Periodicals received.
5. Presentations to Museum.

Meteorological Returns.

1. Hobart Town, from F. Abbott, Esq.—Table for September.
2. From the Marine Board.—Tables from Mount Nelson for August, South Bruny for September, Goose Island for July and August, and Swan Island for August.

The presentations to the Museum were as follows :—

1. From Mr. Wm. Barlow.—Specimen of Fossil Wood from the gravel pit, New Town Racecourse.
2. From James Scott, Esq., M.H.A.—A very fine specimen of silicified wood (part of trunk of a large tree just above the root) from Mount Morriston.
3. From Mr. Dawson.—Tin specimens from Waratah, No. 3 claim, Gould's Country.
4. From John Mitchell, Esq., M.H.A.—Specimens of Iron Ore from Pontypool, East Coast.
5. From Mr. W. R. Dyer.—Fossil Sharks Teeth from a Quarry at Ormond, Poverty Bay, New Zealand.
6. From Mrs. Watson.—A Calabash from Eastern Archipelago.
7. From Mrs. Watson, per J. Barnard, Esq.—A copy of the *General Evening Post* newspaper, September, 1773.
8. From Joseph Solomon, Esq.—A very large egg, weighing six ounces, laid by a Spanish fowl.
9. From Mr. P. Hill.—Two fossils (*Spirifers*) from the Mudstone, Castle Forbes Bay.

A specimen of double Epacris, from North West Bay, was exhibited by Archdeacon Davies, who had received it from Mr. H. Buckland. A similar specimen, from the same locality, had been formerly received by the Archdeacon from the Rev. H. D. Atkinson.

Mr. F. Abbott, Junr., exhibited two pretty Orchids, from the Botanic Gardens in full flower, viz., *Dendrobium nobile* from India, and *Leptotes bicolor* from Brazil.

A paper was read by the SECRETARY "On some new Mollusca," supplementary to a former one on the same subject, by the Rev. J. E. Tenison-Woods, F.G.S., F.R.G.S., etc.

A second paper by the same learned author, entitled "On some Tasmanian Fresh-water univalves," was also read. This was a long and valuable contribution, and, with the former paper, was ordered to be printed in the papers and proceedings of the Society.

The Chairman reminded the meeting that a communication had been presented about a year ago to the Society, by the Rev. W. W. Spicer

from Professor Owen, in which he expressed his great anxiety to be favored with specimens of the gravid uterus of the platypus. (*Ornithorhynchus anatinus*) in several consecutive stages of gestation. Specimens killed during the month of September, October, November, and December were much required in order to clear up several points which are still very obscure as to the gestation of this animal. A similar appeal had been made by the learned Professor, as long as thirty years ago, to Mr. Ronald Gunn and to Dr. Casey (then resident in Tasmania), but as yet without any response, and it was to be hoped that some country members of the Society would now kindly endeavour to meet Professor Owen's wishes, particularly as he had expressed a desire that, before he died, he should be enabled to carry out to completion the investigations he had formerly made and published on the subject. (Art. *Monotremata*, Cyclopædia of Anatomy and Physiology, 1841).

Some members having expressed their opinion that the question as to the animal being oviparous had long been settled in the negative, Mr. E. D. SWAN remarked that Professor McCoy, who would be recognised by all as an authority of the greatest weight, had recently written to the effect that he had received evidence of a most reliable character that the *Ornithorhynchus* was oviparous. It was, therefore, a point of the greatest physiological interest that this long-vexed question should be settled, and this could only be done by obtaining specimens under the circumstances referred to by the Chairman.

The meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the author of the papers read, and the donors of presentations.