OCTOBER, 1877.

The monthly evening meeting of the Society was held on Monday, October 15, James Barnard, Esq., in the chair.

Mr. Dagobert Lewald, who had been previously nominated by the Council, was balloted for and declared duly elected as a Fellow of the Society.

The hon. Secretary (Dr. Agnew) brought under notice the usual returns for the past month, viz. :—

1. Number of visitors to Museum, 1,556.
2. Ditto to gardens, 4,918.
3. Plants and seeds received at and sent from gardens.
4. Time of leafing, flowering and fruiting of a few standard plants in the Botanic Gardens during September.
5. Books and Periodicals received.
6. Presentations to Museum and Library.

Meteorological Returns.

1. Hobart Town, from F. Abbott, Esq., table for September.
2. New Norfolk, from W. E. Shoobridge, Esq., abstract ditto.
3. Tamar Heads, from R. Henry, Esq., tables for August and September.
4. From the Marine Board, tables from Mount Nelson, for September ; South Bruni, for August and September; Goose Island, for June, July, and August; Swan Island, for ditto ; and Kent's Group, for May, June, July, and August.
5. Melbourne, from R. J. L. Ellery, Esq., printed records of the results of Observations from January to May, inclusive.
6. Windsor, New South Wales, from J. Tebbutt, Esq.—Results of observations taken during 1871-72-73-74-75-76.

The presentations to the Museum and Library were as follows :—

1. From Mr. J. Withrington—A bow and seventeen poisoned arrows from Fiji.
2. From Miss E. Yeoland—A very large and beautiful specimen of a species of Coral from Long Bay, D'Entrecasteaux Channel.
3. From Mr. C. Allport—30 eggs of Tasmanian birds.
4. From W. E. Shoobridge, Esq.—Two specimens of the Porcupine Ant-eater *(Echidna setosa).*
5. From Mrs. Gibbons, Kingston—One ditto.
6. From Mr. R. R. Rex—Rock specimens, copper ore, etc., from N.W. Coast of Australia.

[As to presentation No. 1, the SECRETARY remarked, recent investigations had thrown great doubts on the belief that these arrows carried poison. The late occurrence, after arrow wounds, of the symptoms, and the identity of these with tetanus, indicated that the fatal results were entirely due to the circumstance that the wounds were necessarily of that dangerous class called "punctured," where nerves were severely injured and irritated, rather than fairly divided. In many of these cases, too, the nervous system of the patient was no doubt in a depressed condition from the dread of poison, which would still further favour the occurrence of the tetanic affection.]

Mr. JUSTIN BROWNE (on behalf of Mr. Justice Dobson) exhibited a remarkably fine specimen of the great Mexican thistle, "Grande fleur rouge" (*Carduus sp.*), and read a short notice in reference to it. In its native habitat this splendid flower is found at an elevation of 12,000 feet, and till recentlywas supposed to have become almost extinct. Mr. Browne further observed, in the course of a few days he would place in the Museum for inspection a sample of the new fabric made by the Chinese, consisting of a mixture of Australian wool with their own cotton. The introduction of wool into China was likely to open a

splendid market for our staple produce, experience having proved that wool, when readily procurable, always to a great extent superseded cotton for clothing purposes.

Presentations of Books from America received through the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, October 2, 1877 :—

1. From Professor Henry—Smithsonian Report for 1875 ; Smithsonian Contributions to Knowledge, Vols. 20, 21.
2. From Dr. F. V. Hayden, United States Geologist—Geological Survey of the Territories, Vol. 9 ; "Invertebrate Palæontology," by F. B. Meek, Vol. 10 ; "Monograph of the Geometrid Moths," by A. S. Packard ; "Geological and Geographical Survey of Colorado, 1874," by Dr. F. V. Hayden ; "Bulletin of U. S. Geological and Geographical Survey of the Territories," Vol. 2, Nos. 2, 3, 4.
3. From the Boston Society of Natural History—Proceedings of the Society, Vol. 18, parts 1 to 4 ; Occasional Papers, No. 2, 1875 ; "The Spiders of the United States," by N. M. Hentz, M.D. ; Memoirs of the Society, Vol. 2, part 4, Nos. 2, 3, 4.
4. From the Davenport Academy of Natural Sciences, Iowa—Proceedings of the Academy, Vol. 1., 1867-1876.
5. From the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Detroit—Proceedings of twenty-fourth meeting of the Association, 1875.
6. From A. Agassiz, Esq., Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard College, Cambridge—Bulletin of Museum, Vol. 3, Nos. 11 to 16 ; Memoirs of Museum, Vol. 2, No. 9 ; "On Some Insect Deformities," by Dr. Herman A. Hagen, Vol. 4, No. 10 ; "The American Bisons, living and extinct," by J. A. Allen ; Annual Report of Curator for 1875.
7. From the American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia—Proceedings, Vol. 15, No. 96, Vol. 16, Nos. 97 and 98, 1876.
8. From the National Exhibition Commission, Rio Janeiro—"Brazillian Biographical Annual," by Joaquin Manoel de Macedo, Vols, 1, 2, 3.
9. From the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences—Transactions, Vol. 3, part 1.
10. From the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Boston—Proceedings, Vol. 3, 1875-6.
11. From the Essex Institute, Salem—Bulletin of the Institute, Vol. 7, 1875.
12. From the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences—Bulletin, Vol. 3, No. 3.
13. From the Cincinnati Observatory—Catalogue of New Double Stars, 1876.
14. From the Chief Signal Officer, Washington—Daily Bulletins (Meteorological), February to November, 1873, 11 vols. (Duplicate of July).
15. From the Superintendent, United States Coast Survey—Five Volumes of Surveys, 1869 to 1873.

Colonial publications received :—

1. From the Royal Society of N.S. Wales—Journal and Proceedings of the Society, Vol. 10, 1876 ; Report for 1877 ; Annual Report of Department of Mines, N.S. Wales, 1876.
2. From John Tebbutt, Esq. — "Results of Meteorological Observations made at the Private Observatory, Windsor, N.S. Wales," during the years 1871, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.
3. From Baron von Müeller—"Select plants eligible for industrial culture in Victoria," pp. 293.

The SECRETARY read a letter from the Rev. H. D. Atkinson, enclosing a diagram of a strange fish caught at Circular Head. [The sketch having been shown to Dr. James Hector, F.R.S., of New Zealand, that gentleman recognised the subject of it as the "Hair Tail," *Trachypterus altivelis*, an ocean fish rarely found near land.]

The following communication, addressed to the Hon. Secretary, in reference to the so-called Brown's River Black potato, from Mr. F. Cotton, of Kelvedon, was read:—"My attention has been directed to an article in the *Tasmanian Mail* of September 1, on a potato called 'Brown's River Black,' but the right name of which is 'Kelvedon Purple.' Some historical account of the origin of the potato is given, and the *modus operandi* (an act of piracy) by which this new variety had its fair name so fraudulently altered to that of 'Brown's River Black.' The person to whom the colony (and the world) is indebted for the potato in question is rather obscurely hinted at, but as he is still living, and a member of the Royal Society of Tasmania, it is only proper and just that he should be introduced to the Fellows and his fair fame vindicated; also, that they should be acquainted with the means through which this valuable root was generated.

"In or about the year 1832 Captain Burney brought his vessel (the Henry) to Oyster Bay, to ship oil from the fishery of the late George Meredith, and wattle bark from the estates of Sherborne and Kelvedon. On that occasion he presented us with a bag of Brown's River potatoes called 'Rough Whites.' These were planted carefully, and when they flowered Dr. Story innoculated a few of the most promising with the flowers of the 'Irish Apple,' which was at that time the choicest potato in the colony. These impregnated apples when ripe were gathered and spread out to dry, and in the spring sown in a bed of fine mould. The produce of these seed apples was, the next season, planted in rows, and in the autumn dug up and sorted. Out of an almost endless number of varieties, four kinds were selected as worthy of further trial. The experience of the third year's planting was that but one of the four varieties was superior to the sorts then cultivated, and it was named by Dr. Story the '*Kelvedon Purple.*' To Dr. Story then belongs the sole merit of giving to the world this valuable tuber, and the fact ought to be chronicled and the true name of the potato restored.

"This potato is somewhat of an oval shape, with a skin inclined to purple, but inside of a pure white; and it has this excellence that not only is it a good boiler and of superior taste, but its skin is almost free from indentations at the eyes so that there is no waste in paring. The haulm is of a pleasing green colour, and does not bear many apples. The produce per acre varies with the soil. I have heard of from fourteen to sixteen tons per acre, and of six potatoes filling an American bucket. The potato comes in early, and keeps good as long as the once famous 'Irish Apple,' now I believe extinct. I have heard of twenty-two tons per acre being grown at the Chain of Lagoons, East Coast, but am not informed as to the kind of potato. A brief account of the raising of the 'Kelvedon Purple' was sent to the late Dr. Ross about the year 1836, and by him published in the *Courier*. I have seen the 'Kelvedon Purple' growing in South Australia, and have no doubt that it found its way to California more than 20 years ago. I am disposed to believe that its excellence is not surpassed by any potato hitherto brought into use. We have obtained some of the choicest varieties, including one of the most prized in America, and have not met with one to compare with the Kelvedon Purple."

A valuable paper by the Rev. J. E. Tenison-Woods, F.G.S.,

F.R.G.S., etc., "On Tasmanian Siphonaria, including a new species," was read.

The Rev. W. W. Spicer, M.A., F.R.M.S., read a most interesting paper on "Insect Parasites." After the paper Mr. Spicer remarked that through the kindness of Admiral Barnard a request had been issued to all our lighthouse keepers for specimens of plants in their respective neighbourhoods. Mr. Spong, of King's Island, had alone replied hitherto, and had forwarded 47 species, but of these none were new. He might be allowed to take that opportunity of mentioning he had recently placed in the hands of Messrs. Walch for publication a manuscript containing a full description of every known plant in Tasmania. He thought the book, which would be moderate in price, would prove a ready and trustworthy guide for the local botanist, and he hoped moreover it would also tend, in many instances at least, to popularise the science of botany generally. (Applause.)

The usual vote of thanks to the authors of papers and donors of presentations concluded the proceedings.