

ROYAL SOCIETY, TASMANIA.

APRIL, 1879.

A monthly meeting of the Society, the first of the session, was held on Tuesday, the 8th April. James Barnard, Esq., in the chair.

Mr. Morton John Cecil Allport was elected a Fellow, and William Tompson Bednall, Esq., of Adelaide, South Australia, a Corresponding Member of the Society.

The Hon. Secretary, Dr. AGNEW, brought under notice the following returns, viz. :—

1. Number of visitors to Museum during January—On Sundays, 1332 ; week days, 1473. Total, 2805. February—On Sundays, 1036 ; week days, 1056. Total, 2092. March—On Sundays, 1066 ; week days, 918. Total, 1984.
2. Number of visitors to Gardens—January, 4743 ; February, 4932 ; March, 5371.
3. Plants sent from Gardens—To Mons. A. Verschaffelt, Ghent, Belgium, six tree ferns.
4. Seeds received at Gardens—From the Botanic Gardens, Saharanpur, India, 60 packets seeds. From Russell Young, Esq., seeds of *Cedrus deodar*. From the Chamber of Agriculture, Washington, U.S. America, 60 packets of seeds.
5. Books and periodicals received since the beginning of the year.
6. Presentations to Museum.

Meteorological Returns :—

1. Hobart Town—From F. Abbott, Esq., tables for January, February, and March.
2. Swan Island—Tables for January and February. Kent's Group—Do. for January. Goose Island—Do. for January and February. And Mount Nelson, for January, February, and March. From the Marine Board.
3. From Mr. Roblin :—"Tables of results of meteorological observations taken at Hobart Town and the various coast stations during the year 1878," compiled from the monthly tables furnished by Mr. Abbott, and the Hobart Town Marine Board.
4. Sydney, from the Government Observatory, printed table for July, August, and September, 1877.
5. From Government Observatory, Melbourne, ditto for September and October, 1878.

The presentations to the Museum were as follows :—

1. From Mr. S. J. Baynton :—Cases of *Teredo* and *Terebella* from the mud flats, North West Bay.
2. From Mrs. Martin, Kangaroo Point :—A fossil *Pecten* (locality uncertain).
3. From Mr. Smith :—Specimens of silicified wood, spiriferous mudstone and pebbles coated with a deposit of copper, from Southport.
4. From J. A. Moore, Esq., New Norfolk :—A Stone Axe from New Zealand, a large Club from Fiji, Boomerang and Waddie from Billabong, N. S. Wales ; two Boomerangs, a Shield, and two "Grave Stones," from Paroo, N. S. Wales ; three Stone Axes from ditto.
5. From Mr. George A. Power, Ross :—Sample of Water and Mineral Deposit from the Ngawha Hot Springs, Ohaewai, New Zealand.

6. From Mr. S. H. Wintle :—Fossils from the west bank of the Tamar at Rosevear ; Specimens of Auriferous Quartz from the “ Little Wonder ” claim, Brandy Creek (with a note).
7. From Mr. Burdon :—Three samples of a paper-like substance from the surface of the Hobart Town main reservoir. [A similar substance was found in large quantities on the surface of the Cascades reservoir in 1877. [Vide proceedings of the Society for 1877, pp. 8 and 58, *Conferva bombycina*.]
8. From H. S. Lewes, Esq. :—A Native Spear from the Lower Murray District, Victoria.
9. From Mr. T. W. Allen, Auckland :—A Broom cut from the solid wood, by a “ King ” native, New Zealand.
10. From G. Whitcombe, Esq. :—4 Silver, 17 Copper Coins, and 6 Medals ; two Woodpeckers (*Picus viridis*) mounted.
11. From Mrs. Lodder, River Don :—425 Specimens of Tasmanian Butterflies and Moths. [Special attention was directed to this very beautiful and valuable presentation, for which the Society is indebted to the liberality of the collector, Mrs. Lodder.]
12. From Mr. Bett :—Specimen of a Species of Sting Ray, caught off South Arm.
13. From Mr. W. Cole :—Silicious Cast of Fossil Shell (*Spirifer*), showing spiracles, from the Peppermint Tier, Oatlands.
14. From Mrs. Stokell :—Skin of a Thoroughbred Bull-dog, imported from England by the late Dr. George Stokell, prepared and mounted.
15. From Mr. M. McNamara :—Two Diamond Snakes (*Hoplocephalus superbis*) from McRobie’s Gully, near Hobart Town.
16. From the Rev. George Brown :—*a.* Geological Specimens from Hicks Island. *b.* Band and Coloured Flax Dress, from New Ireland. *c.* Specimens of Shell Money from Duke of York Island. *d.* 55 Specimens of Butterflies from New Ireland, &c. *e.* Two Skull Masks used by the natives of New Britain in their dances. *f.* A Chalk Figure from New Ireland.

The following note to the Secretary, from Mr. Brown, accompanied this presentation :—

“ Port Hunter,
“ Duke of York Group,
“ December 24, 1878.

“ I have just shipped, per John Wesley, a case to your address, containing a small addition to the Museum, viz. :—1. A few geological specimens from Hicks’ Island, New Britain. This island was thrown up by a submarine volcano. I landed on the island and picked up the specimens before it was a week old, so they had not much exposure to the weather. 2. A band and coloured flax dress from New Ireland. 3. Specimens of money from Duke of York Island. 4. Box of butterflies. 5. A chalk figure from New Island. 6. Two skull-masks, used for dancing, from New Britain. These are not very pretty, but they are interesting. Some time ago, as you have no doubt heard, the natives very much wished to get hold of a few of our heads to embellish in the same way, and I believe they actually did use the head of one of my teachers for that purpose. That fancy has, however, been taken out of their minds, and for the future they will stick to their own native material. I see that some of our very good people are very much shocked indeed that we did not allow ourselves to be killed in detail rather than defend our lives from a lot of cannibals. They must just think and say what they please, but time will show that our action saved the Mission, and the lives of every teacher and trader in the group, and that it was really the most kind and merciful way of dealing with the natives themselves. The captain of H.M.S. Sandfly fully justifies us, and last

week the captain of the German ship of war *Ariadne* sent me a very flattering letter of thanks for what we had done.

“Yours sincerely,
“GEO. BROWN.”

In reference to presentation No. 6, the following note from Mr. Wintle was read:—“When in Hobart Town recently, I left with Mr. Roblin a few fossils, etc., and promised him that I would write a letter respecting them.

“The specimens in question I found on the west bank of the river Tamar, at Rostreavor, at low water mark. They had been washed out of a tertiary clay deposit by river action, and were associated with numerous fossil fresh water mussels (*Unio*). The small slab of indurated clay, it will be seen, is of much palæontological interest on account of its presenting on one side an impression of the tongue-fern (*Glossopteris*), a cryptogamic fossil, which is typical of the Australian carboniferous period, while on the reverse side appears an external cast of a bivalve shell, which I am unable to identify, but which I cannot regard as an *Unio*. In all probability it is that of a marine shell. Accompanying it is an internal cast of what appears to be the same species of testacea.

“The apparently fossil pods, or seed vessels, are entitled to some attention as being associated with the former. I may mention that I submitted them to my friend and colleague, Mr. R. M. Johnston, while I was in Launceston, who like myself could not determine the supposed seed vessels, nor the shells, and confessed they were new to him. I would observe that the interest attached to these fossils is due to the fact that they afford unquestionable evidence of a very great change having taken place in the geology of the northern part of the island—at least since the Mesozoic Tertiary period. About that time a very extensive freshwater lake existed, not only in the northern part of Tasmania, but also stretching far south, and even, of which there is very strong evidence, extending to Victoria. As a consequence, the river Tamar could not have had existence at that time, nor indeed the river Derwent, nor Bass’ Straits, assuming the hypothesis to be correct, which I feel assured there are few geologists who have studied the Tasmanian Tertiaries will doubt. This great change to existing geological conditions was, doubtless, effected by the extensive eruption of basalt during the Pliocene epoch of which such abundant evidence abounds.

“I seize this opportunity of expressing my deep sympathy with the Society in the loss it has sustained by the death of its most able, esteemed, and energetic member, the late Morton Allport, Esq. It is now that his usefulness is missed in a case like the present, to assist in determining fossil remains.”

The following donations to the Library may be specially noted:—

1. From Dr. Milligan, F.L.S.—Jardine’s *Memoirs of Hugh Strickland*, 1 vol.; *Bewick’s British Birds* (1821), 2 vols.; *Bewick’s British Quadrupeds* (1811), 1 vol.; Dr. J. Barnard Davis’ “*Thesaurus Craniorum*” and Supplement, 2 vols.; Reprint of the Annual Summaries of *The Times* newspaper, for a quarter of a century; sundry books and pamphlets on Prisons and Prison Discipline, etc.
2. From the Board of Inquiry, on the Diseases of Live Stock and Plants Queensland, “*A Monograph of the Grasses of Queensland*,” by F. M. Bailey, F.L.S.

From America, per the Smithsonian Institution, Washington:—

1. From War Department, U.S., “*Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion*,” part 2; Report of Reconnaissance, Montana Territory, 1 vol.
2. From the Department of Agriculture, 9 pamphlets.
3. From the Hydrographic Office, U.S., “*The Coasts of Chili, Bolivia, and Peru*.” Catalogue of Charts. Tide tables, Pacific and Atlantic Coasts.

4. From U. S. Government, Bulletin of United States National Museum (1875-1877). Mississippi River, Report on Physics and Hydraulics of, etc.
5. From the Engineer Department, United States Army, "Descriptive Geology of the 40th parallel." Vol. 2, Palæontology of ditto, by F. B. Meek. Ornithology of ditto, by R. Ridgway. Microscopical Petrography, by F. Zirkel.
6. From F. V. Hayden, United States Geologist, Report of Geological Survey of the Territories, Vols. 7 and 9. "Palæontology," by F. B. Meek; Vol. II, "North American Rodentia," by Cones and Allen, 1877. Cretaceous and Tertiary Plants, Illustrations of, 1 Vol. Fur Bearing Animals; a Monograph of the North American Mustelidæ, by Elliott Cones. Annual report of Survey for 1875. Bulletin of ditto, Vol. 2 (nine parts). Indians, the Hidatsa, Ethnography, and Philology of 1877, etc., etc. [Many of these books, and those included in presentation No. 5, are thick 4to. vols., profusely illustrated.]
7. Geological Age of the World, by J. M. Toner, from the Author. Public Health, Questions on, by the same. Also publications from the following learned bodies, viz. :—The Smithsonian Institution; the American Association for the Advancement of Science; the American Philosophical Society; the Essex Institute; the American Academy of Arts and Sciences; the Boston Society of Natural History, etc., etc.

The following papers were read :—

1. "On the identification of the First Secondary Fossil found in Australia," by R. Etheridge, jun., F.G.S. (of the Department of Geology, British Museum), a corresponding member of the Society.
2. Description of Three new Tasmanian Helices, by Lieut. C. E. Beddome, I.N.
3. Note on the discovery of the habitat of *Amnicola* (*Ampullaria*?) *Tasmanica*, Tenison-Woods. With a description of a New Species of Helix. By R. M. Johnston.
4. Note on the discovery of *Spondylostrobus Smithii*, and other fossil fruits, in the "deep lead" drift at Brandy Creek, Tasmania. By the same.
5. Third contribution to the Natural History of the Tertiary Marine Beds at Table Cape, with a description of 30 new species of Mollusca. By the same.

Mr. JUSTIN McC. BROWNE proposed a vote of thanks to the authors of the various papers just read, and to the donors of presentations. As to the presentations particular reference was made to the books given by Dr. Milligan as evidencing the warm interest which, as its former Secretary, he still took in the affairs of the Society. Bewick's British Birds and Quadrapeds were especially noticed. The very large and valuable donation to the Library from our most liberal contributor—America—was also specially mentioned.

Being seconded by Mr. STEPHENS, the motion was carried unanimously when the proceedings terminated.