

hill, until the highest part of the Domain be reached, thus enabling the citizens of Hobart and visitors from the colonies to view from their carriages the fine scenery of the valley of the Derwent. I may mention, along this proposed route the Duke of Edinburgh was taken in order that he might view the lovely panorama.

(9.) I should advise that a donation and presentation list, under the heading of "For improvements to Queen's Domain," be opened, to enable the citizens of Hobart and the public generally to help forward this national undertaking.

In conclusion, I hope that by the next monthly meeting of this Society the Domain Committee will have been formed, a sketch plan approved of, and all that are willing and able enlisted in this noble undertaking.

---

ON THE QUESTION OF ESTABLISHING IN THE  
ROYAL SOCIETY'S GARDENS A CLASS-GROUND,  
OR SYSTEMATIC ARRANGEMENT ILLUSTRATING  
THE CLASSIFICATION OF PLANTS ACCORDING  
TO THE NATURAL ORDERS.

BY THOMAS STEPHENS, M.A., F.G.S., V.P.

[*Read 8th August, 1881.*]

Some three years ago I brought under the consideration of the Council the question of setting apart a small portion of the Gardens, in a central position, for the cultivation of selected plants, illustrating the principal Natural Orders, and arranged according to their botanical classification. At that time we had the advantage of the presence and co-operation of the late Rev. W. W. Spicer, and the Council gladly accepted his offer to take the matter in hand, but after some preliminary inquiry it appeared that the planning and completion of the new entrance to the Gardens would occupy all the labour under Mr. Abbott's direction for a long time, and no further action was taken. Some other obstacles were pointed out by Mr. Abbott at the time, but I subsequently learned that these had reference to the question of forming a collection of the indigenous plants of Tasmania, which was not then contemplated by the Council.

In August of last year the subject was again mooted by Mr. Barnard in connection with other suggested improvements, but there was no definite plan before the Council, and nothing more was done until a few months ago, when I

received a letter from Dr. Agnew, giving an interesting account of a visit to the Botanic Gardens at Adelaide, and especially calling attention to a Class-ground, planned by Dr. Schomburgk, which he thought might be imitated, with necessary modifications, and on a more modest scale, in our own Gardens.

The following is Dr. Agnew's description, which he requested me to bring under the notice of the Council:—  
 "Round a centre, which may be a circular seat, &c., three zones or beds, each about 24ft. in width, are laid out. These zones are separated by narrow gravel walks, and each zone is subdivided into a great number of lesser beds, the proximal end of each being about 6ft. wide, the peripheral boundary or a segment of a larger circle being of course larger. Each of these little beds—6ft. by 24ft., more or less—is devoted to one Order in Botany, a bold label specifying the Order being displayed at the narrow proximal end. Possibly, square beds could be laid out more cheaply, but this plan, which is probably due to the mature experience of Dr. Schomburgk, is most convenient, as you can see so much in walking round the small central circle. No doubt, if required, Dr. Schomburgk would gladly give full particulars, and would also say if the whole was a success."

In reply to a request from the Council for further information, Dr. Schomburgk has kindly furnished a sketch plan, with a letter describing the general arrangement of the Class-grounds, which is hereto appended.

The question is now submitted for discussion by the Fellows of the Society. If they are of opinion that an attempt should be made to imitate, if only after a humble fashion, the example afforded by the Adelaide Gardens, not to mention innumerable other institutions of like character in other countries, the Council will no doubt do its best, with Mr. Abbott's advice and assistance, to give some practical effect to the scheme. It should be clearly understood that it is not proposed either to interfere in any way with the general plan of the Gardens, or to add to the cost of their annual maintenance. Only a small space is required, for in selecting plants care would be taken to choose only those which can be grown within narrow limits, and some Orders would not be represented at all. The work also could go on by slow degrees. The importance of encouraging the study of Botany by some practical teaching of this kind, a little of which will do more than a library of books, will be readily admitted; and a recognition of the fact that the Royal Society's Gardens are designed to afford some such educational facilities will certainly not lessen their claim to support at the cost of the State.

The following is the letter referred to :—

“I enclose a rough sketch of our Class-ground. A symmetrical figure has been chosen in order to afford an oversight over the whole.

“In the middle of the main walk a large basin with a fountain is built, which contains the aquatic plants of the Orders of the Nymphæaceæ, Vallisneriaceæ, Butomaceæ, Alismaceæ, &c.

“On both sides of this main walk extend the Monocotyledonous plants.

“The Class-ground represents 130 Orders by 750 Genera. Every Order is represented by from four to twelve Genera.

“The sequence of the Classes and Orders followed is that of the late Professor Adrien de Jussieu, son of Antoine-Laurent de Jussieu, the founder of the Natural Order of Plants.

“Every Order is divided from the other by a strip of green turf, bordered by narrow bricks, to prevent the spreading of the grass in the beds.

“Classes and Orders are written in conspicuous white letters on large square iron labels painted black; the names of the plants on smaller labels of the same colour. Only the sub-classes of the Dicotyledons are noted on the labels, viz., Polypetalæ, Monopetalæ, Monochlamydeæ, and Gymnospermeæ, &c., with an abbreviated explanation of the meaning of these names.

“It is almost an impossibility to lay out a system ground properly; it will and must be always deficient in completeness, especially in cooler climates. The representatives of a good many Orders being solely tropical plants, such Orders cannot be always represented. Another difficulty is also the selecting and grouping of the Genera of each Order, as some become large umbrageous trees, while others are only small shrubs, or perennials, and thus one will outgrow the other.

“I am sorry I have not one copy left of the plan of the Garden published in 1873.

“Hoping that this rough sketch will be of some use to you.

“T. SCHOMBURGK,

“Director.”

---