

## OCTOBER, 1889.

The monthly meeting was held on Monday evening, October 15. There was a large attendance of Fellows and several lady visitors were present, including Lady Hamilton. His Excellency (Sir Robt. G. C. Hamilton, K.C.B.), President of the Society presided.

## NEW MEMBER.

Mr. Alex. Montgomery, M.A., Government Geologist and Inspector of Mines, was elected a Fellow of the Society.

## THE PRESIDENT AND "LYNX."

The PRESIDENT said: My attention has been drawn to a paragraph in last week's *Tasmanian Mail* in a column headed, "Echoes" by "Lynx," in which an amusing account is given of an error I am supposed to have fallen into in describing some of the young salmon hatched from the ova brought over by Sir Thomas Brady, as "markedly bull headed." I am supposed to have seen them, as I think the writer sometimes sees things, through a distorted medium. (Laughter.) Now, I am sorry to spoil so good a story. The fish I examined were not looked at through a glass, and there is now here, in the Museum, one of these fish which is "markedly bull headed." I do not have the acquaintance of "Lynx," or I may have that pleasure without knowing it, but if he will call here, or if he is here now, he can take the fish out of the bottle and look at it for himself, and I am sure he will agree with my description of it. But a more interesting point arises as to these fish. It almost seems as if some of the characteristics of these young salmon vary with their size, or the season of the year, and whereas a short time ago certainly half the fish had spots on their dorsal fin and a coloured tip to their adipose fin, the Curator the other day could only find one possessing these characteristics, and that a small one. This is a matter which might also be brought under Sir Thomas Brady's notice when the specimens are sent to him. (Applause.)

Mr. R. M. JOHNSTON felt glad that His Excellency had noted these peculiar characteristics, because Tasmania was the first to demonstrate to the world the possibility of safely transporting fish over a great distance. They had many things to consider in connection with the acclimatisation of the fish, and it was a matter of great importance that the results of their observations should be communicated to the experts in the Old Country.

## EARLY SETTLEMENT OF TASMANIA.

Mr. J. B. WALKER read a very interesting paper entitled "The settlement under Collins in 1803-4: The failure at Port Phillip." The paper was a continuation of the very complete and graphically historic account of the foundation of the colony which he has compiled from official papers, reports, etc., obtained at the instance of the Tasmanian Government, by Mr. James Bonwick, in London. Former papers prepared by Mr. Walker dealt with the early visits of French and English navigators to the colony, and in this one he gave an account of the voyage of Lieut. Collins when under instructions to found a colony at Port Phillip, and the failure to do so. The paper was attentively listened to, and upon concluding the writer was heartily applauded.

Mr. A. J. TAYLOR favoured Mr. Walker's suggestion because he had no doubt these documents would be more highly prized. He was in hopes that before long they would have an opportunity of securing for the Public Library a large number of works relating to the early history of the colony.

## THE AUSTRALIAN CURLEW.

Mr. MORTON, acting for Colonel Legge, read a note embodying a comparison of the Australian Curlew with its near Asiatic ally, and its more distantly related representative in Europe and Western Asia. The curlews of the old world, like other members of the Wader family (*Charadriidae*), resemble one another in plumage. Unlike the American curlews, which have a distinguishing characteristic in the buff tinting of the under wing and axillaries, the old world species differ chiefly in the character of the markings of the breast. A marked characteristic, however, of the Australian bird is its length of bill. As regards our Curlew (*N. Cyanopus*) on arriving in Tasmania in September, some specimens have the buff tinge of the breeding season still remaining on the breast and flanks, and accompanying this is a rufescent hue on the longer upper tail coverts and central tail feathers. Although the Australian Curlew is a migratory species, breeding in northern climates in summer and "wintering" here in our summer, many seem to remain throughout the year with us. It migrates north as far as Hakodadi, in Japan, and east as far as New Zealand. The Eastern curlew ranges across the continent to China, southward to China, and down the East coast of South Africa. The range of the European Curlew is throughout Europe, taking in the Orkney, Faroe, and Shetland Isles, and extends down the coast of Africa to Damara Land. It would therefore appear to take in the west coast, while the Asiatic, or "Eastern" Curlew monopolises the east coast and the extreme south in its wanderings.

## ASTRONOMICAL PAPERS,

Mr. A. B. Biggs, of Launceston, forwarded two papers, which were taken as read. One was entitled "Observations of comet of July and August, 1889, taken at Launceston, Tasmania," and "Recent measurements of  $\alpha$  Centauri."

## SILVER ORE.

Mr. A. J. TAYLOR exhibited a specimen of the silver ore struck at the 100ft. level in the Silver Queen mine at Mount Zeehan.

## PALÆOZOIC FOSSILS.

Mr. JOHNSTON tabled a paper, which he said formed a sequel to a paper he had read some time ago dealing with additions to the list of upper palæozoic fossils. The paper, at the author's request, was taken as read.

## FUTURE SUBJECTS.

Mr. JOHNSTON reminded those present that some time ago the President had suggested that the Society should deal with a wider range of subjects. He had brought down a paper, "Root Matters in Social and Economic Problems," and if thought desirable it might be printed and circulated amongst the Fellows in time for discussion at the next meeting.

The PRESIDENT stated that the Council would be pleased to consider the suggestion.

## VOTES OF THANKS.

The PRESIDENT, in moving a vote of thanks to the authors of the papers, referred in flattering terms to the one read by Mr. Walker. It was well that they should now perfect the early history of the colony for they were nearer to the old times than those who had to follow, and it was a work which the Society should take in hand, as it was to a Society of this sort that anyone would come for accurate records of their early history.

The vote was accorded by acclamation, and the meeting terminated.