



JAMES BARNARD, ESQ.,
Vice President.

OPENING MEETING, MAY, 1897 SESSION.

The first monthly meeting of the 1897 session of the above Society was held in the Tasmanian Art Gallery on Tuesday evening, May 4, under the chairmanship of Vice-president Sir Lambert Dobson, C.J., F.L.S. There was a very large attendance, including many ladies.

THE LATE MR. JAMES BARNARD.

The CHAIRMAN said before the business of the meeting was entered upon a duty devolved upon him. When he last presided at a meeting of this Society, which was at its annual meeting some few weeks ago, amongst other apologies was one from their old and much-respected member, Mr. James Barnard. At the present meeting they knew that the hand of death had taken Mr. Barnard from them, and he knew that none present would feel that he was trespassing upon their time if he ventured to utter a few words with reference to one who was the oldest living member of the Royal Society. Mr. Barnard had died at the ripe old age of 89, after a useful and well-spent life. Nature had dealt with him kindly. He had maintained to the last his mental faculties, and as far as his physical faculties were concerned, those present were accustomed till within a few days of his death to the familiar face and the friendly hand. Whilst they could scarcely express regret at the demise of one who was taken away before the decay of his mental and physical powers had reduced him to the helplessness of second childhood, it was meet that they should pay a tribute to his memory, more especially as a member of that Society. Mr. Barnard became a member of the old Tasmanian Society in 1841, and in 1843, when Her Majesty was pleased to constitute the present Society by charter, he became one of the Council, and in 1878 became a vice-president. During all that time he had worked faithfully, diligently, and assiduously for the Society, and they might say, so far as the Society was concerned, he died in harness; and in his death he had not forgotten them, for amongst other bequests contained in his will was one of £100 for the Royal Society, to be invested, and the interest thereof applied to the purchase of scientific works. He was not a man who mixed in the turmoil of public life. He led a quiet and unassuming existence, and by an uprightness and integrity of character had won the respect and esteem of his fellow-citizens, and his brother members of the Royal Society were now desirous of uniting to record the high esteem in which they held him for the long and faithful services he had rendered to the Society. *Requiescat in pace.*

A photograph of the deceased member, draped in crape and surmounted with a wreath of flowers, occupied a prominent place on the right of the chairman.

APOLOGIES.

The SECRETARY (Mr. Alex. Morton) read apologies for non-attendance from His Excellency the Governor and from Sir James Agnew, the latter of whom was too indisposed to attend.

NEW MEMBERS.

Dr. V. F. Brotherus and Dr. Viklor Brotherus were elected corresponding members of the Society, and Mrs. Jamleson, Messrs. H. V. Bayly and Samuel Percy Crisp, Fellows of the Society.

ADDRESS TO THE QUEEN.

The CHAIRMAN announced that the Society had decided to send an address of congratulation to Her Majesty the Queen on the occasion of the celebration of Her Majesty's Record Reign. He read the address as follows:—"To Her Most Gracious Majesty—Victoria, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and Empress of India: May it please your Majesty,—We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Fellows of the Royal Society of Tasmania, had the privilege to offer our congratulations on the completion of the fiftieth year of your Majesty's reign, and we have now, on the termination of its sixtieth year, the honour of again tendering our warmest and most respectful congratulations on so memorable an event. We are thankful that your Majesty's reign has been the most prolonged of all in English history, feeling that under its benign influences all the moral and material interests of the community have been most beneficially affected, while it is gratifying to observe that the marvellous expansion of the Empire during the same period clearly points to a still more illustrious future. And while thus recognising the splendour of your Majesty's reign, we are deeply impressed by the beneficence, wisdom, devotion to duty, and the practical sympathy with suffering and distress by which it has always been characterised, we pray that the future may be as the past, and that your reign may be prolonged for the good of your Majesty's faithful and devoted subjects. On behalf of the Fellows (Signed) GORMANSTON, President." It was written on vellum and beautifully illuminated by Mr. Albert Reid, and mounted on a rich dark blue scroll of Morocco leather.

THE HARE SYSTEM.

Professor W. Jethro-Brown, M.A., LL.D., read a paper on "The Application of the Hare System in Tasmania."

In a clear, well-thought-out composition, Mr. BROWN dealt with the merits of the Hare system, the modifications adopted in this colony, and the extent to which those modifications might be regarded as improving the system of Mr. Hare. The paper was warmly applauded, and discussion postponed to a future meeting.

A paper entitled—"Observations on the working result of the Hare system of election in Tasmania, with diagrams," was read by Mr. R. M. Johnston, F.L.S. This paper was divided into eight sections, the introductory part being devoted to describing what the chief merit of the Hare system really is. Mr. Johnston showed that many people unwisely restrict their attention to such minor matters as the element of chance in the preference of transfers. In his opinion the foundation stone of the Hare system is the constitution of its electorate. The preference and peculiar forms of voting of the system are no doubt important as valuable accessories. The main feature of the Hare electorate or electoral division is that it shall be sufficiently large and untrammelled, so as to permit the units of any representative party or body of opinion to unite together if numerous enough to command a quota. This provision also involves the breaking down of all arbitrary and unreasonable subdivisions, which, as in the ward system of cities, have, hitherto prevented the otherwise wasted surplus of aggregate majorities or minorities in one division from joining forces with their respective parties similarly restricted in a neighbouring arbitrary subdivision, and so unjustly prevented the real equality of representation, that is, the representation of minorities and majorities in proportion to their numbers. Then he went on to show that Hare's method of preference helped the elector as a sort of special Providence in preventing the waste of valuable votes by automatically distributing the surplus

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strength of a party fairly and properly. The only persons who might oppose the Hare system, in Mr. Johnston's opinion, were those who wished to gain or maintain more than was their just rights, and those who were selfishly indifferent to their rights. In conclusion, Mr. Johnston gave detailed answers to all the more important questions usually raised, such as the relative values of the various preference votes. The paper was illustrated by tables and some excellent diagrams.

Discussion was postponed.

A NEW ROCK.

The SECRETARY read a paper—"On the Occurrence of Limurite in Tasmania," by Messrs. W. H. Twelvetrees and W. F. Petterd. This was an interesting geological and mineralogical paper, which showed that the peculiar and interesting rock known as limurite occurred in considerable quantity at North-East Dundas, on the property held under mineral lease by the Colebrook Prospecting Association. A careful and minute description of the rock was given, including details of micro-examination of its constituents, and the paper was illustrated with photo-micro plates of sections of the rock. A representative specimen of the rock is on exhibition at the Museum.

The SECRETARY referred to the excellent work being done by Messrs. Twelvetrees and Petterd in the microscopical study of Tasmanian rocks, and characterised it as a most important branch of scientific work.

NARROW GAUGE RAILWAYS.

Mr. F. BACK, General Manager of Railways, read a paper on The Mount Dundas Narrow Gauge Railway.

The paper was listened to with close attention. It was illustrated with lantern slides of a number of exquisite photographic views of the new railway, and of the West Coast generally, taken quite recently by Mr. J. W. Beattie, which gave the spectator a good idea of the kind of country the line traversed.

A vote of thanks to the chairman concluded the proceedings.