ABSTRACT OF PROCEEDINGS, JULY 11th, 1904.

The monthly meeting of the Royal Society of Tasmania was held at the society's room on Monday evening. The Bishop of Tasmania, Dr. Mercer, occupied the chair, and among those present were Dr. T. M. Hocken, F.L.S., of New Zealand, Sir Adye Douglas, Mr. R. M. Johnston, I.S.O., Mr. Bernard Shaw, Mr. L. Rodway, and the hon. secretary (Mr. A. Morton). An apology for absence was received from His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor, Sir John Dodds, K.C.M.G.

The collection of Meissonier's artists' engravings left to the Art Gallery by the late Mr. C. J. Barclay, and some Japanese paintings and embroidery work brought from Japan by Mrs. Hocken were on view, and were greatly admired.

The Late Mr. C. J. Barclay.

The Chairman said that before proceeding with the business, he wished to refer to a late member of the Council of the Society, Mr. C. J. Barclay. Since the last meeting of the society that gentleman had passed away. Mr. Barclay had been, although he had not had the pleasure of knowing him especially in connection with this society, for many years connected with it. He was elected a Fellow of the society on the 10th of January, 1873, more than 30 years ago. He had always taken a keen interest in this institution, and he had bequeathed a large collection of Meissonier's artists' proof engravings. It was a most valuable gift; not only were they splendid engravings themselves, but the collection was one of the msot valuable gifts of art ever presented to their institution, and when placed in the gallery could not fail to be appreciated by the public. He was sure he spoke for all connected with the society when he expressed the profound regret at the loss they had sustained in the death of Mr. Barclay. (Hear, hear.)

New Member.

Rev. Herman Ritz, M.A., was elected a member of the society.

Social Equality.

Mr. R. M. Johnston further elucidated his paper read at last meeting on "Observations regarding some economic aspects of the Eisenach social equality problem." The discussion was further adjourned till next meeting of the society.

Japan: Its People and Industries.

Dr. Hocken delivered an interesting address on this subject. He said: Whilst entirely appreciating the compliment of being asked to make a few remarks on the Forestry Department of Japan, I feel that they are scarcely worthy to be placed before your Royal Society, inasmuch as the notes and references I made were packed away some time ago with other material, and forwarded to Dunedin. Your secretary, however, seems always to be on the alert, and seeking whom he may devour, and it was he who beguiled me into a predicament, from which I can only escape by your courtesy and forgiveness. Within the last three years I have twice visited Japan, and a word or two upon certain features of that interesting country may interest you, and will not be entirely astray from our subject. It is but a short fifty years ago since the American Commodore Perry knocked at the gates of Japan—I had almost said with cannon ball. To that time the country had been almost secluded from commerce with the nations, and, content in its pride of ancient feudalism and curious semi-civilisation, it stood aloof from them. But when, in unmistakable, nay, threatening, tones the outside world said that this old order must change, and that Japan, geographically situated as it was, must no longer impede trade and progress, what was the result? Just such as our recently gained knowledge of Japanese character would lead us to expect. Though there were two parties, there was no indifferentism, laisez faire. Whilst one party sprang to the position at once, and saw that the only hope of safety and advance lay in accepting Western methods, and entering upon their civilisation, the other, the old warrior party, the Daimios of the Shogunati, were incensed beyond measure at the impudent threats of the foreigner. And though the barrier was thus roughly broken down, and the Americans and then ourselves began to enter, all was violent strife amongst the people themselves. Cries of "traitor" were incessant, civil war raged, assassination and murder, from which many of our own people did not escape, were common, and it seemed indeed as though the blessings of civilisation were to be anything but blessed—rather a curse. And then those terrible commotions began to cease, as they generally do, and gradually from north to south the people began to accept the teachings of the barbarian in thorough earnest, and we may date this time about the last 25 or 30 years. Since then their progress has been nothing less than marvellous. Their constitution is similar to ours—representative government, with an Upper and a Lower House. Railways run through the land. The

steam services are amongst the finest in the world, notably the Nippon Yusen Kaisha, which trades fortnightly with London and some European ports, and monthly with Australia, or, rather, did until the present war. Numbers of their young men study at the various universities in Great Britain, America, and the Continent, and those of us who have had the pleasure of their acquaintance know what accomplished, well-bred men they are. In the capital of Tokio, which is one of the largest cities in the world, with a population of nearly 2,000,000, are now to be seen magnificent buildings, vieing with those of any capital whatsoever, dedicated to commerce, art, or government. This year the first electric tram service in the country has been introduced, and permeates Tokio in every direction. Of their courage and knowledge of the arts of war, I need not speak —the papers do that every day. And in this connection, one must refer to their humanity and their perfect system for the treatment of sick and wounded, equalling, if not surpassing, our own amongst the nations. Happy, I think, are we in having formed a compact or treaty with such a nation. Whatever be the immediate result of the present war, and I have little doubt as to that result, nor have the Japanese themselves, it bids fair to be in its ultimate results the most momentous perhaps that the world has ever seen, for it is the first trial of conclusions worthy of the name between the East and West. What must or may follow must give us pause. On several recent occasions I have heard the sentiment that if the Japanese were successful they would suffer from what is called with particular vulgarity, "swelled head," and would soon make an aggressive descent upon these colonies. I believe no such thing. They are a people of great modesty, and whatever pride they possess is one to which they are well entitled, and which they have thoroughly earned. Theirs are the arts of peace and progress, and not of aggression, and on those lines they desire to proceed unhindered and in quiet. If such danger is in store we must look for it from the adjoining Chinese, when they have cast off their inertia, and feel the strength of their numbers. Have we deserved well of the Japanese? Look at our recent attitude in Australia towards them, where they have been forbidden to put foot, and have been classed amongst the coloured races, as unworthy to mix with us, and as the "yellow peril." They feel such insults keenly, and properly so, too. Often, and with shame, have I heard their remarks on such treatment, and as constantly have rejoined that the lowest and most ignorant alone utter these sentiments, those who have no idea what true democracy is, but who follow its present debased imitation. But what astonished me more than all amidst this great nation was their educational system. Throughout the country State schools are dispersed, based largely on our own system; the standards are in use, and wherever practicable English is taught, so that very soon it will be difficult to find individuals who are unable to read at least English. In the bookshops may be found Japanese translations of the best writers in Latin, Greek, English, French, and German. Plato is side by side with Herbert Spencer. The Imperial University at Tokio is a marvel, and I spent portions of three or four days there. It compares well with any other University in the world, though but between 22 or 23 years old in its advanced state. It stands in about 250 acres of ground, which once formed the estate of the great Kaga Daimyo. The mansion and grounds have been, as far as possible, preserved in their entirety; the old quaint gardens, ponds, forest, and other amenities. Thus one can wander a distance in apparent privacy amidst natural beauty, until a cluster of handsome buildings in open space breaks the scene. This passed, the same condition again recurs — fresh beauty and other clusters. Thus are, in a measure, shut off from one another the various faculties or departments of law, medicine, engineering, mining, literature, etc. Special buildings are set apart for commerce, botany, zoology, geology, ethnology, bacteriology, seismology, and other ologies. The library is a magnificent building, with every facility for study, and numbers more than half a million volumes, amongst them being sets of our own Australasian scientific transactions. Yet the authors of these great deeds must not sully Australian soil! Oh, shame! You may notice that the only ology not in the list is theology, and this fact gives food for a curious speculation. The original Shinto religion, which was some years ago reinstated as what we may call the Established Church, was superseded 1,400 years ago by Buddhism, which was introduced from China by way of Korea. Since that time, with varying success, the two creeds have flourished side by side, and still have a strong hold on the people, though not so much on the more educated class. These, gathering the best from all nations with whom they come in contact, here draw a line, and many have adopted Agnoticism as their type of faith, or want of it. They are compounded not merely by the multiplicity of our sects, for these exist in as great numbers in Buddhism, but by the wide differences between Protestantism and Romanism, and by the still wider and

more fundamental differences between these two and Unitarianism, so that their judgment is in a state of suspense. Quite recently there has been a movement towards a modified form of Christianity, perhaps, on the grounds that this, from a scientific point of view, is the most evolved form of creed with which the world is acquainted. How singular if the unbiassed and philosophic-minded Japanese should turn his attention to theological disquisition! Without reference to my notes, I think that there are about and about 100 professors or lecturers. These are housed in the best-equipped class-rooms, laboratories, and specialised museums it has been my lot to see, and the best work is turned out. Many of the professors, to wit, in seismology and bacteriology, are world leaders in their science and in other departments their names and labours are perfectly well known to scientific men. The average yearly fee paid by students is — and here again I am a little forgetful—about £10, and provision is made in suitable cases for a free course. The industries of pisciculture, sericulture, fruitgrowing, and forestry are all here scientifically taught, and when competent such students are sent to various parts of the Empire, deriving their own livelihood and diffusing their knowledge amongst the workers. The forestry department is a very large and important one, yearly increasing its labours, and I had the pleasure of spending an afternoon with some of its officials. It is housed in a huge building in Tokio, three miles from the University, and devoted to the purposes of an industrial museum. Here are exhigited specimens of every kind of work in which the Japanese engage—pottery, leather, cloth, iron, and wood work, every kind of fine art, and so on. An advantage is that prices are usually attached, so that visitors and purchasers can select, order, and pay for for whatever they desire. The department gives its order to the tradesman, and is itself the guarantee of excellent work. The forestry is represnted by specimens of every wood, to which is attached the fullest description of its botanical character, suitability, strain, cultivation, and other particulars. Further afield great work is done in planting trees, and great care taken in cutting down and replacing them. The vegetable murder, of which we are so constantly guilty, in burning off whole acres of forest, is forbidden, and if discovered severely punished. Such should be the case here, despite the sophism that it is good for the country, and opens the way for agriculture. As in Japan and in Germany, such work as the removal of forest timber should be entrusted to the forest ranger, and beyond him should be forbidden under penalty. Many of the Japanese forest trees are of great value, and should, I think, from the similarity of the climate, do well here. The Cryptomeria, one of the pines, may be especially mentioned. It is of immense size, handsome appearance, valuable and lasting as a house and bridge timber. The Lamas camphora is another very valuable tree, and I know that there are many others, but am unable at this moment to name them. The large bamboos—Bambusa—are used in Japan for most numerous purposes, and are as useful to them as is the New Zealand flax with us. This is reckoned a tropical or sub-tropical plant, but I have constantly seen it in the most flourishing condition under circumstances of raw, damp, and cold. Of course, it is one of the functions of a forestry department to collect and diffuse all the information it can regarding the growth and suitability of plants for various purposes, and it is this function that the Japanese officers are so competent and anxious to discharge. I promised them to do my best to bring about intercommunication wherever I went, and one that would redound to the mutual advantage of the parties. It would also have the further effect—no small one — of promoting friendship between this, one of England's colonies and themselves. Already they view the English with trust and liking for their knowledge, virtues, and justice, and here is a slight opportunity of extending this feeling, and of effacing recent utterances. I feel sure this learned society will, in accord with its traditions, give every aid to so important and scientific a matter, and I shall formally address the Agricultural Society here to the same effect.

He concluded by paying a high tribute to the excellent arrangements and management of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery.

Mr. Rodway said he particularly appreciated Dr. Hocken's remarks on the forestry of Japan. Some of them had been trying for a long time to get a forestry department established in Tasmania, and they might get one before long. Any information such as that imparted by Dr. Hocken was therefore valuable to them, and the outcome of it might be that they would get valuable seeds from Japan.

At the request of Mr. Morton, Dr. Hocken agreed to forward from New Zealand particulars regarding the new forestry department in that colony, and the employment of prison labour in connection therewith. Mr. Morton explained that the reason he asked that question was that they had hopes of getting a forestry department in that colony, and the would help them very considerably if they could get prison labour to do the work.

The Meteorological Service.

Mr. H. C. Kingsmill, M.A., asked that his paper dealing with the proposed scheme of the Federal Meteorological Service should be placed in the hands of the council to be discussed at a future meeting of the society.

The paper will be printed, and circulated for the information of members of the society.

Votes of thanks were passed to the members who had read and submittad papers.