

OCTOBER, 1898.

A meeting of the Royal Society was held in the Art Gallery at the Museum on Monday, October 18, 1898. Mr. R. M. Johnston presided, and there was a moderate attendance. Messrs. R. J. Rogers and G. E. Bernard were elected members of the Society.

The CHAIRMAN announced that it had been thought desirable for steps to be taken to receive the members of the Antarctic expedition which would soon call at Hobart on the way to its field of exploration. In accordance with that feeling arrangements were being made to welcome the explorers.

A report was presented by a sub-committee that had been appointed to consider the question of establishing a geographical and historical section in connection with the Society. A number of rules had been agreed upon, which would be presented at a future meeting.

BOTANICAL NOTES.

Mr. L. RODWAY read a paper relating to botany. He said that such papers, as a rule, were more satisfactory when taken as read. Botany in Tasmania was not followed by such a large number of workers as enabled it to be thrashed out as well as it had been treated in older countries. Students of botany experienced a great deal of difficulty in their studies owing to the complicated character of the gums of Tasmania. He did not think that any person in Tasmania knew the whole of the varieties of gum trees in the colony, and was certain that no one in the world was familiar with all the gums of Australia. A description was then given of the different kinds of eucalyptus trees which grow throughout Tasmania.

THE MUTTON BIRD INDUSTRY.

The Bishop of Tasmania, the Right Rev. H. H. MONTGOMERY, D.D., read a paper dealing with the protection of the mutton bird industry. He said that each succeeding year made it more necessary that the question of protecting the birds should

be faced, if it was desired that the mutton bird industry should be preserved. Six or seven years ago the industry was not regulated at all. The Government of that time acted wisely, and certain islands were now preserved as rookeries. Mutton birds paid better than cattle, and required but little attention. The question now arose, was there need for further regulation? All agreed in saying that the inhabitants of the islands were increasing, and one, if not more, of the rookeries was becoming overcrowded. Had not the time come, then, to preserve Chapel Island? If that fact were established details could be arranged by the Government, and if action was taken at once fewer difficulties would be met than if delayed. During the present year the birds had been particularly abundant, and not so much harm had taken place. Something must be done in the interests of the industry, and persons forced to go to Babel Island. At present the system of working one island out and neglecting another was absurd. Chapel Island was conveniently situated, and everyone wished his neighbour to go to the more distant rookeries. Would it not be wise to require a license to be taken out for birding on Chapel Island? This would afford a measure of protection. He longed for the day when eggging would be stopped and steps taken to spread the industry. The demand for mutton birds was increasing, and he made no apology for referring to the necessity of something being done to foster the industry. The matter was one that required careful consideration.

A general discussion took place on the papers read, and a vote of thanks accorded those who had compiled them.

WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY.

A paper on "Wireless Telegraphy" was to have been read by Mr. Self, but was unavoidably held over.

This concluded the business of the meeting.