

NOTES ON THE PUBLICATIONS OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF TASMANIA.

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I. THE PUBLICATIONS OF THE TASMANIAN SOCIETY.

It appears that the first scientific society in Tasmania was started in 1838 under the auspices of Sir John Franklin. The name of this society is, however, somewhat uncertain. In the introductory remarks to the first volume of its transactions it was called "The Philosophical Society of Tasmania." but it does not appear that this name found favour, because subsequently the name "Tasmanian Society" was adopted. The object of this society was the study of natural science, in particular that of Tasmania. Under the title, "Tasmanian Journal of Natural Science, Agriculture and Statistics," etc., this society published three volumes of transactions, viz., Vol. I. (1842), Vol. II. (1846), Vol. III. (1849).

In the meantime two societies, having more or less the same object in view, were started, viz., on the 14th of October, 1843, the Botanical and Horticultural Society of Van Diemen's Land, and on the 12th of September, 1844, "The Royal Society of Van Diemen's Land." It looks somewhat strange that in so small a community as Hobart was at the beginning of the forties, there should be room for three scientific societies; but notwithstanding this it is certain that between 1843 and 1849 there existed in Hobart three scientific societies, viz., (1) The Tasmanian Society (1838); (2) The Botanical and Horticultural Society of Van Diemen's Land (1843); The Royal Society of Van Diemen's Land (1844). As it might have been expected, there was no room for three societies working practically on the same lines. The Botanical and Horticultural Society never issued any publications, and the Royal Society only published annual reports for the years 1845 to 1849. Apparently towards the end of

1849, or early in 1850, the three societies amalgamated, or, to be more correct, the "Tasmanian Society" and the Botanical and Horticultural Society were absorbed by the Royal Society of Van Diemen's Land. Though the Royal Society did not issue any Journal till May, 1849, its year of birth was in 1844, and it is therefore in its sixty-sixth year.

2. PUBLICATIONS OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF VAN DIEMEN'S LAND.

Though the older society went under the name of "Tasmanian" Society, and its publication was called the "Tasmanian" Journal, this name did not survive, probably because the official name of the island was Van Diemen's Land.

During the first four years of its existence the Royal Society published annual reports only (1845 to 1848 inclusive), and during these years the *Tasmanian Journal*, though issued by a sister society, was practically the publication of the Royal Society.

Towards the end of 1848, or early in 1849, the Council of the Royal Society decided to publish a periodical journal under the title, "Papers and Proceedings of the Royal Society of Van Diemen's Land." The first part of the first volume was issued in May, 1849; therefore, the last volume of the *Tasmanian Journal*, and the first part of the first volume of the *Papers and Proceedings of the Royal Society of Van Diemen's Land* were published in the same year, the latter apparently succeeding the former.

The next volume of the "Papers and Proceedings" was issued as Part II. of Volume I. in January, 1850, and from now a yearly volume was published up to 1855 inclusive. Unfortunately a very bad plan was adopted in numbering the publications. The journal issued was an annual publication, but the volumes were not. Three annual parts, published in three succeeding years, formed one volume. This led subsequently to a great confusion, which became worse, because no separate title pages or table of contents were issued for the volume. With the exception of Part I. of Vol. I., the table of contents were

printed on the back cover, and in binding the volume it is therefore imperative that the covers should be preserved.

The Royal Society of Van Diemen's Land during the eleven years of its existence has issued the following publications:—

- (a) Annual Report, 1845 to 1855 (11 numbers).
- (b) Papers and Proceedings, 1849 to 1855 (7 annual volumes), viz.:—Vol. I., part 1, May, 1849; part 2, January, 1850; part 3, January, 1851; Vol. II., part 1, January, 1852; part 2, January, 1853; part 3, January, 1854; Vol. III., part 1, 1855.

It appears that the Annual Report was not intended to form a portion of the society's scientific publications, because it was issued separately; the Papers and Proceedings of the Royal Society of Van Diemen's Land are therefore complete without the Annual Report, while this is not the case with some later publications.

3. PUBLICATIONS OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF TASMANIA.

By Act of Parliament in 1856 "Van Diemen's Land" was henceforth to be known as "Tasmania," and as the new name automatically replaced the old one wherever it occurred, the Royal Society of "Van Diemen's Land" became the Royal Society of "Tasmania."

This change apparently upset the arrangements for the publications of the Papers and Proceedings, and though in their Annual Report for 1856 the Council state "that Part 2 of Volume III. of the Papers and Proceedings is now in the Press, and will appear as speedily as possible," it was not issued till three years later, in 1859. It was then published under the title, "Papers and Proceedings of the Royal Society of Tasmania, Vol. III., Part II., 1859."

The inconvenience of the original arrangement of issuing three-yearly volumes instead of annual ones becomes now obvious, because the above title is unquestionably a misnomer. The Royal Society of "Tasmania," whose year of birth is 1856, had only published Annual

Reports for the years 1856 to 1859, but it had not issued a journal during these years. It is therefore not correct to call the first journal issued by the Royal Society of Tasmania "Part 2 of Vol. III." The first part of this Vol. III. bears the title "Papers and Proceedings of the Royal Society of Van Diemen's Land," and we therefore see that Vol. III. consists of two parts—Part 1 (1855), Part 2 (1859)—bearing two different titles. The intention was apparently to conclude Vol. III. of the Papers and Proceedings of the Royal Society of Van Diemen's Land, but as in the meantime this word had been replaced by "Tasmania," there was no other way out of it except to call Part 2 of Vol. III. Papers and Proceedings of the Royal Society of "Tasmania." From a bibliographical point of view this is very misleading, and nobody who is not well acquainted with all the circumstances surrounding the publication of this Vol. III. would understand its quaint composition.

The publication of this volume for 1859 seems to have exhausted the energies of the Royal Society, because no journal, but only Annual Reports, were issued for three years, viz., 1860, 1861, 1862.

In 1863 the first volume of a new periodical publication, called "Monthly Notices of the Papers and Proceedings of the Royal Society of Tasmania," appeared, and continued to be published under this title till 1875. The volume for 1863 is somewhat of a curiosity, because its first and second "monthly notice" contain papers that were read in 1860 and 1862 respectively. In 1863 a number, paged separately, was issued every month, but the first three numbers do not bear the name of the month, which is to be found on the April to December numbers only. If the covers of these numbers are removed, the volume contains twelve pages 1, twelve pages 2, and so on.

In order to avoid this obvious inconvenience, the volume for 1864 was consecutively paged. Separately from the "Monthly Notices" the Annual Report was issued as a special pamphlet till 1868.

In 1868 the Annual Report was issued, together with the Papers and Proceedings, the volume showing consecutive paging throughout. This lasted till 1875 inclusive, but in the meantime the Monthly Notices were

issued in a different form. Instead of being published every month they appeared every three months, the quarters being March, April, May—June, July, August—September, October, November—no Monthly Notices being issued for December, January, February. This practice was started in 1870; the exact year is not quite known; it may have even commenced in 1869, or even 1868, but this is not quite certain, and it continued till 1875, when a slip appended to the September, October, November number informed the Fellows that in future the Proceedings would be issued in a yearly volume, complete, with index, etc., instead of quarterly as hitherto. The year 1875 closes therefore the first period of the publication issued by the Royal Society of Tasmania since its change of name. Its publications are:—

1856, 1857, 1859—Annual Reports only; no Papers and Proceedings.

1859—Papers and Proceedings of the Royal Society of Tasmania, forming Part 2 of Vol. III. of the Papers and Proceedings of the Royal Society of Van Diemen's Land.

1860, 1861, 1862—Annual Reports only; no Papers and Proceedings.

1863 to 1875 inclusive—Monthly Notices of the Papers and Proceedings of the Royal Society of Tasmania.

1863—Separate paging of each number; issued monthly.

1864-1869—Consecutive paging; issued monthly.

1870-1875—Consecutive paging; issued quarterly.

The Annual Reports were issued separately from 1863 to 1866; from 1867 to 1874 it was included with the Papers and Proceedings and consecutively paged; in 1875 it was again separately paged.

The second period begins with the year 1876, when the old practice of the Tasmanian Society and the Royal Society of Van Diemen's Land, to issue annual volumes only, was resumed. These appeared under the title—

“Papers and Proceedings and Report of the Royal Society of Tasmania.”

Though the title indicated that the Journal was to include the Annual Report, the latter was paged and published separately from the Papers and Proceedings. The new title was in use for six, or, if we include 1875, for seven years only, being perhaps too cumbersome; the words "and Report" were omitted in 1882, and the publication now became—

"Papers and Proceedings of the Royal Society of
Tasmania,"

a title which has been retained ever since. Strictly speaking the title ought to be "Papers and Proceedings of the Royal Society of Tasmania, New Series," because we have seen that as far back as 1859 a volume was published under this title.

From 1882 to 1885 the Annual Report was bound with the Papers and Proceedings, though paged separately; from 1886 to 1889 inclusive it was published separately, and not issued together with the Papers and Proceedings; in 1890 and 1891 it was again issued with the Papers and Proceedings; while in 1892 it was again published separately. No Annual Reports were issued for the years 1893 to 1907 inclusive; but since 1908 the practice of publishing an Annual Report, bound with the Papers and Proceedings, though separately paged, has again been taken up.

Since 1894 and up to 1908 the publication of the Papers and Proceedings became somewhat erratic. Instead of annual volumes, one volume only was issued for the years 1894-95, 1898-99, 1900-01, 1903-05, 1906-07. The total number of volumes published by the Royal Society since 1863 up to 1909 inclusive is therefore 42, instead of 47, viz.:—

1876-1881—Papers and Proceedings and Report of the Royal Society of Tasmania (Annual Report paged separately).

1882-1909—Papers and Proceedings of the Royal Society of Tasmania.

Annual Report, 1882-85, bound with Papers and Proceedings, but paged separately.

Annual Report, 1886-89, issued separately.

Annual Report, 1890-91, bound with Papers and Proceedings, but paged separately.

Annual Report, 1892, issued separately.

No Annual Report for 1893-1907.

Annual Report, 1908-09, bound with Papers and Proceedings, but paged separately.

The above researches have proved that the publications of the Royal Society and its predecessors have undergone various changes, and that it is by no means easy to follow them. A complete set should contain:—

A.—Journal and Papers and Proceedings.

I. Tasmanian Society.

Tasmanian Journal, 3 vol., 1842, 1846, 1849.

II. Royal Society of Van Diemen's Land.

Papers and Proceedings, 7 vol., 1849-1855.

III. Royal Society of Tasmania.

(a) Papers and Proceedings, Part 2, Vol. III., 1 vol., 1859.

(b) Monthly Notices of Papers and Proceedings, 13 vol., 1863-1875.

(c) Papers and Proceedings and Report, 6 vol., 1876-1881.

(d) Papers and Proceedings, 23 vol., 1882-1909.

B.—Annual Reports.

I. Tasmanian Society, nil.

II. Royal Society of Van Diemen's Land, 11 numbers, 1845-1855.

III. Royal Society of Tasmania, 39 numbers, 1856-1909.

The grand total of the publications since 1842 is therefore
Journal, Papers and Proceedings . . 53 volumes

Annual Reports 50 numbers

extending over a period of 68 years from 1842 to 1909. The volumes may not have been very bulky, but they contain an enormous amount of scientific research, and they are an everlasting memorial to those enthusiasts who

diligently worked in those years when communication with the scientific centres of the world was not as easy as it is nowadays. In 1912 we will be able to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the first scientific Journal published in Tasmania—in fact, if I am not very much mistaken, of the first scientific Journal published in Australia, and two years later the Royal Society of Tasmania will look back on 70 years of scientific work.