Royal Society of Tasmania.

ABSTRACT OF PROCEEDINGS.

The Session of 1910 was commenced by the holding of a conversazione on the evening of March 31, under the presidency of His Excellency Sir Harry Barron, K.C.M.G., C.V.O. Among the visitors present were Lady Barron, Rear-Admiral Ijichi, and the other leading officers of the Japanese fleet visiting Hobart.

The proceedings were opened by an address from His Excellency the President. In the course of his remarks Sir Harry Barron said that for some years past it had been customary for the President to deliver a lengthy address at the first meeting of the Session for the transaction of ordinary business, but a recent alteration of the Rules had made it practicable for him to speak to those present in a less formal manner on the objects and work of the Society. A satisfactory increase in membership of the Royal Society had been made during the year, considering that the community was a comparatively small one. The Society had been founded through the agency of Sir John Franklin 70 years ago, and had steadily progressed ever since. Many very interesting papers on scientific subjects had been read during the year, one especially which dealt with the life and manners of the Tasmanian aborigines, being of great interest and value in a country like Tasmania, which had very little history. He might call attention to the provision in their Rules for the establishment of Sections for the purpose of encouraging the study of particular branches of science. It appeared that the Section of Medical Science was the only one now in operation. It was certainly desirable that Members should take up the work in which they were interested in this special manner, and better results would be thus obtained. His Excellency also referred to the necessity of research work being done in regard to the minerals and the soil generally, and also the necessity of re-afforestation, which was a matter of great importance. No doubt this was a new country, but it would be easy to predict what would happen if they did not take some steps to save the trees.

Lantern slides illustrating the geology and natural history of Tasmania were exhibited, and descriptions given by Dr. Noetling, Mr. T. Stephens, Mr. R. M. Johnston, Mr. A. L. Butler, and Mr. J. W. Beattie. Mr T. T. Flynn exhibited and explained some slides illustrating infusorial animalcules.

A number of objects of scientific interest were on view during the evening. Dr. E. J. Ireland showed some photographs of Samoan scenery; Mr. T. Stephens exhibited a fine specimen

of Eozoon Canadense from the Lower Laurentian rocks of Canada; Dr. Webster, microscopic biological sections; Dr. Noetling, bathymetrical plans of Hobart harbour; Mr. T. T. Flynn, several microscopes and microtomes at work on biological material; Mr. R. Hall, microscope and mounted diatoms; Mr. H. M. Nicholls, microscope with mounted specimens of epizoa; Mr. A. L. Butler, eggs of the Australian black swan.

APRIL 11, 1910.

The Monthly General Meeting of the Society was held at the Museum on Monday evening, April 11, 1910.

His Excellency Sir Harry Barron, K.C.M.G., C.V.O., President, in the chair.

At the suggestion of the President, the Fellows present agreed to join him in sending a message of deep condolence to Sir John Dodds on the recent death of Lady Dodds.

APPOINTMENT OF VICE-PRESIDENTS.

The President notified his appointment of Messrs. T. Stephens, M.A., F.G.S., and R. M. Johnston, F.L.S., I.S.O., as Vice-Presidents of the Society for the current year.

ELECTION OF FELLOWS.

Messrs. Arthur S. Arundel, J. W. Beattie, W. H. Clemes, George A. Gurney, Harold Norman, and Rev. F. T. Morgan-Payler, were elected Fellows of the Society.

HONORARY MEMBERS.

On the recommendation of the Council, Professor T. W. E. David, C.M.G., B.A., F.R.S., and Professor Baldwin Spencer, C.M.G., M.A., F.R.S., were elected Honorary Members, Mr. T. Stephens and Mr. R. M. Johnston remarking that it was an honour to the Society to have associated with it two men who for many years had been such prominent promoters of scientific research, and who recently had distinguished themselves, the one by heroic service in connection with Antarctic exploration, and the other by his work among the aborigines of Central Australia.

NOTES AND EXHIBITS.

Major Foster exhibited some pictures and figure stones worked by the aborigines of Tasmania, and illustrating some of their practices and habits.

THE FOLLOWING PAPERS WERE SUBMITTED OR READ:—

1. Notes on the Publications of the Royal Society of Tasmania. By Fritz Noetling, M.A., Ph.D., etc.

2. The Antiquity of Man in Tasmania. By Fritz Noetling, M.A., Ph.D., etc.

The author notes the absence of the usual conformity in the evolution of the human race elsewhere, modern civilisation fol-

lowing immediately on the most typical archaeolithic stage that is known to us. The presence of the aborigines in the island necessarily, he thinks, implies former continuous land between Tasmania and Australia, though such connection is proved to have existed by evidence of a totally different nature. The theories of previous writers are discussed, and the conformation and submarine topography of Bass Strait are described in detail, with suggestions as to the various stages assumed at different periods by the connection of Tasmania with the mainland of Australia. The paper is illustrated by plates showing in elaborate detail the author's researches and conclusions respecting the submarine physiography of Bass Strait and the records of glaciation.

Mr. Ritz wished to know what evidence there was that the Tasmanian aboriginal came from anywhere at all. The language of these aboriginal races was so simple that he was led to consider the autochthonous origin of the aborigines.

Mr. R. M. Johnston complimented Dr. Noetling on his paper and the contour maps accompanying it. He agreed that Victoria and Tasmania must have been connected by land at one time. The close relationship of Victorian flora and fauna and that of Northern Tasmania in the tertiary period showed it. Undoubtedly Tasmania and Victoria had been repeatedly connected and disconnected. He believed that the Tasmanian aboriginals came from the north before the sea intervened, and subsequently the sea cut them off from the mainland, and so the ancient race of the mainland was preserved undisturbed, whilst on the mainland itself, subsequent mixtures with intruding and more aggressive races produced a higher race of blacks in Victoria.

Mr. A. J. Taylor said the Tasmanian aboriginals were very different in type of skull from those of the mainland, and had curly hair, whilst the Victorian blacks had straight hair.

Mr. T. Stephens said that the fact that Tasmania at one time formed a part of what is now the continent of Australia was an established fact, and it was highly improbable that the ancestors of the aborigines of Tasmania had any means of crossing the sea when what is now Bass Strait intervened. The period that has elapsed since their first arrival is, of course, a matter of speculation. The Tasmanian type is closely allied to that of the Papuan, and the original representatives of this race were probably gradually driven southward by the Malayan intruders until they turned at bay among the mountains of what is now Tasmania, and held their own among all comers.

3. On Certain Types of Stones used by the Aborigines. By H. Stuart Dove, F.L.S.

The paper contains a description of a number of worked stones collected by the author on the North-West Coast, and comprising two types of the so-called "hammer stones," the material of which they are composed being diabase.

MAY, 1910.

The General Monthly Meeting was not held this month, on account of the lamented death of His Majesty King Edward VII., Patron of the Society.

JUNE 13, 1910.

The General Monthly Meeting of the Society was held at the Museum on Monday evening, June 13, 1910.

Mr. R. M. Johnston, F.L.S., I.S.O., a Vice-President, in the chair.

ELECTION OF FELLOWS.

Messrs. J. S. Purdy, M.D., C.M., D.P.H., F.R.G.S., A. Kirk, D. Salier, H. Holt, and Thos. J. Steele were elected Fellows, and Mr. A. M. Lea an Associate of the Society.

NOTES AND EXHIBITS.

Mr. A. O. Green submitted notes taken at Bellerive at the time of the recent eclipse of the sun, of which the following is an abstract:—

"At 3 p.m. the whole sky was overcast with small soft clouds coming from the N.N.E., though the sky was somewhat lighter in the N. and in S.W. and S. By 3.50 p.m. it grew perceptibly darker, the dusk increasing, the temperature falling, birds silently flying into trees. A newspaper could be read with ease at 4.7 p.m. From 4.14 to 4.20 p.m. it was too dark to write, and all the while the clouds showed a bluish tinge. At 4.18 p.m. it was possible to read again, and the clouds were slightly tinted orange. At 4.29 p.m. the yellow-tails and white-eyes were chattering in bushes, and at 4.40 p.m. the yellow-tails were singing. A steady rain commenced at 4.40 p.m., lasting till 8.30 p.m., when the sky cleared in the N.W. At 3 p.m. the thermometer showed 59.8deg.; at the time of the first contact (3.10 p.m.), 58.9deg.; the temperature gradually fell till 4.10 p.m., when 53.3deg. was recorded. The totality lasted from 4h. 14min. 12sec. to 4h. 17min. 6sec., and at 4.15 p.m. the thermometer showed 53deg. The minimum was reached at 4.40 p.m., when 52deg. was recorded, and then there was a slight rise, the thermometer remaining at 52.1deg. from 4.45 to 4.55 p.m., while the last observation at 5 p.m. showed 52deg. again."

The Chairman exhibited a specimen of the mackerel of South-Eastern Australia (Scomber antarcticus). It was first described as a new species by Castelnau, who was one of the earliest observers of Victorian fishes. The present specimen came from Cape Raoul. Fish of this species often entered the Derwent in vast shoals, but he had never procured a specimen for 33 years. The fish was a very beautiful one, and an excellent one for the table. It was almost identical with the English mackerel.

THE FOLLOWING PAPER WAS READ:—

Comparison of the Tasmanian Tronatta with the Archaeolithic Implements of Europe. By Fritz Noetling, M.A., Ph.D., etc.

The author notes that this comparison gives they key to the understanding of the state of civilisation of the people of archaeolithic times. The character and manufacture of the tronattas is described, and it is noted that they were tools only, and never used as weapons. Conclusions are drawn from a study of their customs and habits as to the state of primitive man in Europe. The archaeolithic implements of Europe belonging to different periods are described at considerable length, and suggestions made as to the period when man, the ancestor of the aborigines, first occupied Tasmania. The paper was illustrated by the exhibition of a large number of specimens of archaeolithic implements from Europe, and some of the higher type, together with the primitive specimens from Tasmania.

Mr. W. E. Shoobridge said that the New Norfolk district was inhabited in former times by one of the largest tribes in Tasmania, the Big River tribe, and residents there now recognised two types of archaeolithic implements, one flat, and the other more rounded on the side. Old residents said that the flat ones were used for scraping spears. One specimen had been found which had a distinct handle or neck, which might have been used for fastening it on to wood. He had never seen any specimen chipped on both sides, and he had never seen anything resembling a spear amongst the implements which were found in his district.

Mr. T. Stephens said that great credit was due to Dr. Noetling for his researches in this complicated and interesting subject. He would suggest hat the complete isolation of the Tasmanian aborigines might account for the absence of progress and development. The intrusion of more civilised types from the north would have stimulated progress, but the Tasmanians were completely cut off from such influences. He regretted that so little was known about the habits of the Tasmanian natives before they came in close contact with Europeans.

The Chairman said that the Members of the Society had never before had such an opportunity of comparing the implements of the native Tasmanians with those of other primitive races. He agreed with Mr. Stephens that the probable reason the Tasmanians remained in such a backward condition was their complete isolation.

JULY 12, 1910.

The Monthly General Meeting of the Society was held at the Museum on Monday evening, July 12, 1910.

Mr. T. Stephens, M.A., F.G.S., in the chair.

ELECTION OF FELLOWS.

Mr. James Pillinger was elected a Fellow of the Society.

NOTES AND EXHIBITS.

Mr. Hall laid on the table a paper comprising a comprehensive and detailed description of the Moa bones in the Tasmanian Museum, which had been drawn up by Mr. H. H. Scott, a Fellow of the Society, for presentation to the Museum. The Chairman said that it was a curious coincidence that the only two gigantic three-toed birds of the family Struthonidæ—the Moa of New Zealand and the Dodo of Mauritius—both of them historically recent—had become extinct. Professor Owen saw at The Hague a picture painted soon after the Dutch acquired the island of Mauritius in which was a figure of the Dodo, evidently drawn from life. The Moa is supposed to have become extinct soon after the occupation of New Zealand by the Maoris.

Mr. Henry Holt exhibited specimens of internal parasites of domestic animals, including the Ascaris of the pig, the liver-fluke (Distoma hepatica) of the sheep, and specimens of Haematopinus from the pig and calf.

THE FOLLOWING PAPER WAS READ :—

The Food of the Tasmanian Aborigines. By Fritz Noetling, M.A., Ph.D., etc.

The paper refers to the evidence of other authorities, including Ling Roth and the authors quoted by him,, dealing generally with the question of animal and vegetable food. The author then proceeds to discuss the evidence of the vocabulary, describing in great detail the animals with which the aborigines were familiar and used for food, and passing on to their vegetable diet. He notes the great deficiency of carbo-hydrates in their food, and concludes that the excessive protein diet must have made them liable to disease, and probably accounted for the sluggishness of their brains.

Mr. Hall said that though the Pecten or common scallop was supposed not to be eaten by the aborigines, its shell had been found by Mr. May in their shell heaps.

Mr. A. O. Green said that he did not think the large fungus known as the native bread was ever eaten by the natives.

The Chairman said that in his early days in Tasmania he was often told by old settlers that the aborigines used to seek the Mylitta, or " native bread," for food, and pointed out the peculiar signs near the trunk of a dead tree which indicated its presence underground. When frequenting a rocky sea coast in the winter months they subsisted largely on the Haliotis. The debris in a cave at Rocky Cape which he had excavated to the depth of several feet consisted almost entirely of the remains of Haliotis shells. Dr. Noetling's researches in the question of the food of the aborigines had gone far beyond those of any previous writer on the subject.

AUGUST 8, 1910.

The Monthly General Meeting of the Society was held at the Museum on the evening of August 8, 1910.

Mr. T. Stephens, M.A., F.G.S., in the chair.

THE PETTERD COLLECTION OF MINERALS.

Dr. Noetling said that the collection of minerals which had been left to the Royal Society by the late Mr. W. F. Petterd, of Launceston, was a very valuable one, and would form one of the most important additions to the Museum that could be imagined. It would be of the greatest educational value, and if the Council of the Royal Society had not accepted the bequest, they would not have then been doing their duty either to the Members of the Society or to the public. The bequest should be accepted by the Society, even if they had to make some sacrifices to do so. The collection had been valued by the best experts at £1,212, and the probate duty upon it amounted to £121 4s. He would move:—"That this General Meeting of the Royal Society approves of the expenditure for the payment of probate duty, amounting to £121 4s., upon the mineral collection bequeathed to the Society by the late Mr. W. F. Petterd, of Launceston."

Mr. R. M. Johnston seconded the motion. The Council really had no choice but to act as they did, or take the risk of losing this valuable collection. Mr. Petterd was a native of Hobart, and no doubt was grateful to the Society for the aid that it had given him in his natural history and mineralogical studies in his early days, and therefore wished to secure his collection of minerals to Hobart as an acknowledgment. It was the best memorial he could have, that of good work well done.

Mr. L. Giblin said that on behalf of the Members of the Society he would like to ask for a little information as to how the finances of the Society stood; how it was proposed to meet the debt that had been incurred; and if it could be met without endangering the Society's journal. He also wished to know what further expense would be involved in the housing of the collection, and if there was room for it to be properly displayed? There was a valuable botanical collection—Gunn's collection—which had been languishing for many years in the cellars of the Museum for want of ability to display it, and he was wondering whether the Petterd collection was liable to be overtaken by the same fate.

The Chairman said that he believed that the payment of the probate duty on the collection would leave a slight debit balance. The Council were positively assured by those who were acting for the late Mr. Petterd's family that if this bequest was not accepted by the Royal Society it would go into the general estate, and could not be dealt with or administered until the youngest child came of age, which would be a good many years hence.

Dr. Noetling said that the Council had had to confer with the trustees of the Museum before the collection could be placed there, and the trustees had agreed that they would accept and

suitably house the collection. There is ample room in the Museum, and plenty of cases which are now filled up with what may be called rubbish. If the rubbish is put in the cellars the cases can be used for the exhibition of the Petterd collection. After paying for the printing of the Society's journal and current expenses it was expected that they would be £25 on the wrong side. He could assure the meeting that the Journal would not suffer.

Dr. Butler supported the motion, which was declared carried.

Dr. Butler moved:—"That the question of exhibiting the Petterd collection be considered at the next meeting of the Society, and that the Council be requested to bring up a report to that meeting as to the approximate cost."

Dr. Sprott seconded the motion.

The Chairman said that the first motion carried only committed the Society to the payment of the probate duty. Any further proposed expenditure would have to be brought before a meeting of the Society, and discussed and decided there.

The motion was carried.

SECRETARYSHIP OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY.

Mr. A. D. Watchorn, on behalf of the Council, said that a question had arisen as to the custody of a document in the possession of the Society, and it had become necessary for the Society to allow itself to be sued to enable the question of its ownership to be decided. The Society, according to the Act, could only be sued through its Secretary. As the office at present was non-existent, it was necessary to appoint a Secretary, and he moved that Mr. Bernard Shaw be appointed to that position, the office to be honorary.

Mr. E. L. Piesse seconded the motion, which was carried.

NOTES AND EXHIBITS.

Mr. L. Rodway exhibited a specimen of a plant not hitherto described from Tasmania. It grew on the Western Tiers, and had been identified by Professor Ewart, of Melbourne, as a new species of flax, and named by him Linum aloida. It differed in the structure of the flower from the common species of Linum.

Mr. Rodway also exhibited specimens of the wood of Eucalyptus Gunnii, which, in the Uxbridge district, where it reached a height of 300ft., was known as the yellow gum. It was a very valuable timber, and was locally used for mauls, on account of its toughness. The specimen of timber would be presented to the Museum for exhibition.

THE FOLLOWING PAPERS WERE READ.

1. Additions to the Catalogue of the Marine Shells of Tasmania. By W. L. May.

The paper furnishes a list of some 50 species of marine shells not hitherto recorded in Tasmania, some of which are probably new species, which were dredged by the author near Freycinet Peninsula in March, 1910, from depths up to 80

fathoms. He notes that in addition to these there were several known Tasmanian shells which have not previously been recorded south of Bass Strait, and remarks on the additional evidence obtained of the wide distribution of species on the Australian continental shelf, several species being taken which have recently been described from deep-water dredgings off both Sydney and Adelaide.

2. The Distribution of Australian Land Birds. By Robert Hall.

The paper represents the views of the author as to the origin, migration, and distribution of the birds of Australia and Tasmania. He is of opinion that almost the whole of the present bird fauna had their source of expansion from the Papuan subregion. The paper is illustrated by a small map and diagrams.

SEPTEMBER 19, 1910.

A Special Meeting and the Ordinary Monthly Meeting of the Society were held at the Museum on the evening of September 19, 1910, having been postponed from the 12th instant out of respect for the memory of the late Mr. Bernard Shaw, Chairman of the Council.

SPECIAL MEETING.

The Special Meeting of the Council had been convened by the Council at the request of Mr. E. L. Piesse for the consideration of certain proposed alterations in the Rules.

Mr. T. Stephens, M.A., F.G., a Vice-President, in the chair.

Mr. E. L. Piesse moved that the following be inserted after Rule 42:—1. "42a. At any General Meeting the Royal Society may authorise, on such conditions as may be arranged by the Royal Society or the Council, the affiliation with the Royal Society of any Society whose objects include any of the objects of the Royal Society." "42b. Any Society affiliated with the Royal Society may be allowed to hold its meetings in any room occupied by the Royal Society, on such terms and conditions as may be arranged by the Council." 2. That the following words be added as a sub-paragraph at the end of paragraph 44: —"Any other business that may arise."

In moving the amendment to Rule 42, Mr. Piesse said that the Rules of the Society provided for the formation of Sections, but there was no provision for connecting with them any body of persons interested in science who did not belong to the Society. It seemed to him that they should have a more elastic provision, so that they could associate other societies with them in their work. In large centres it was possible that kindred societies might work independently, but that was not possible in Hobart. They should be able to associate more closely with other societies. The occasion for making the proposal was known to all, as for some time the Field Naturalists' Club had been allowed to use the rooms of the Society, and under this arrangement much good had been done. The Council, however, recently discovered that they were infringing the Act by granting the privilege, and therefore it had been

withdrawn. They regretted this very much, and he desired to find means to enable the club to continue to use the room. That was the main object of the motion, and he hoped to see it carried.

Mr. Giblin seconded the motion, and pointed out that it was not obligatory, but it gave the Society power to take certain action at a general meeting. He thought no harm could result from the innovation, but a considerable amount of good might be done.

Mr. A. L. Butler said he felt if the Society granted the Field Naturalists the privilege of affiliation it would be conferring a benefit on them, and would be forming a recruiting ground for the ranks of the Society in the future. Since the club had met in the Society's rooms they had derived a lot of benefit, and certainly no harm had accrued to the older body. It was very handy to the club to meet in rooms adjacent to the Museum, because it was essential that they should have the benefit of a collection of specimens in their work.

Mr. L. Rodway said he could not agree with the motion. He was a member of the Field Naturalists' Club, and he did not know that they were clamouring for affiliation. The Royal Society was an old institution, and they had run satisfactorily up to the present, and they should consider whether it was advisable to make the change at such a late hour in their life. The change might seriously interfere with the working of the Society, because, at an annual meeting, it might affect the voting very considerably. Hobart was growing, and keeping the societies separate would cause a good deal of healthy rivalry. It would be a great mistake for the Society to absorb into its ranks any other society that was working along the same lines, because it would be likely to hamper the work of the organisation, and cripple it generally.

Dr. Noetling endorsed Mr. Rodway's remarks, and said he was against the motion, because of the unlimited powers which it conveyed.

Dr. Butler said that there seemed to be an idea that the Society might be caught napping, and a catch vote secured on some vital point. That could be provided for by adding a few words at the end of the amendment, providing that notice of affiliation should be given at a meeting held some time previously. One thing that seemed to be overlooked was the great lack of interest taken in the monthly meetings of the Society during the last twelve months. The meetings were not well attended, and a great want of enthusiasm was displayed. In fact, it seemed that the Society was putting up a struggle against death.

Dr. Noetling: No.

Dr. Butler: Yes. Many times there were only a few members present, and they often had difficulty in getting a quorum. The proposal would tend to popularise their meetings, and he hoped to see it carried.

Mr. Piesse said he would accept the suggestion made by Dr. Butler, and would add a clause to his amendment, providing for a month's notice being given of any proposed affiliation.

The Chairman said that if he stood alone he would have to oppose the motion. A revision of the Rules was now being made, and the proposition would have to be referred to the Committee who had the work in hand, so that it would have to come up again for consideration when the general revision was discussed. The scope of the motion where it mentioned the affiliation of "any" society was altogether too wide.

The motion was put and lost. Including proxies, the ayes numbered 16 and the noes 27 votes.

Mr. Piesse said he would withdraw the new Rule 42b, but would ask the meeting to vote on the amendment to paragraph 44. The object of the amendment was to allow questions to be asked or subjects to be discussed of which notice had not been given. At a previous meeting of the Society a question had been asked, but it was ruled out of order, and he wanted to safeguard the procedure in the future.

Mr. L. Giblin seconded the motion. He held that the present condition of affairs was absurd, and was never contemplated by the framers of any rules.

Mr. R. M. Johnston said that there would be great danger in passing the motion. If it was passed it was possible for all sorts of matters to be introduced which were altogether foreign to the proceedings of the Society. Recently politics had been touched upon in their ranks, and some of them were not of the best form. It would be a bad thing if they were to split up the Society into interests, and lead to the introduction of parties. The object of the Society was to encourage original work, and the publication of papers written by Members. He considered that the passing of the motion would cause rivalries to spring up, and would defeat the objects of the organisation.

The Chairman said he would ask the mover of the motion if he wished to convert the Society into an ordinary debating society? That would be the result of the motion, for all sorts of subjects would be sprung upon them for discussion without notice. It appeared to him that the object aimed at could be sufficiently attained under the present Rules. He sympathised with the object of the motion, but would have to vote against it in its present form.

The motion was lost. Including proxies, the ayes numbered 10 and the noes 31 votes.

This concluded the business of the Special Meeting.

The Monthly General Meeting of the Society was then held.

Mr. T. Stephens, M.A., F.G.S., in the chair.

THE PETTERD COLLECTION.

A communication was received from the Council enclosing a letter from the Trustees of the Tasmanian Museum offering

to take charge of the Petterd collection of minerals provided it was placed in their charge on loan for 999 years.

Dr. Butler expressed pleasure at the fact that finality was at last being reached in the matter. Had any delay occurred there was a possibility that the collection would have been lost to Hobart and to the State. It was a matter for regret that the collection was not bequeathed to the Museum, as all difficulty would thus have been got over at once.

Mr. R. M. Johnston moved that the collection bequeathed to the Royal Society of Tasmania be lodged in the Museum in accordance with the terms of the Museum trustees' letter.

The motion was seconded by Mr. G. Brettingham Moore, and carried.

APPOINTMENT OF DELEGATE.

Nominations were received for the position of delegate of the Society to the Annual Meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, to be held in Sydney shortly. As the result of a ballot Mr. W. H. Twelvetrees, Government Geologist, was elected as the Society's delegate.

THE NORMAN VOCABULARY.

The manuscript recently discovered among the papers of the Society containing the vocabulary compiled by the Rev. James Norman, of Sorell, from his intercourse with the aborigines of Southern and Eastern Tasmania, was ordered to be printed.

THE LATE MR. BERNARD SHAW.

The Chairman referred to the loss that the Society had sustained by the death of Mr. Bernard Shaw, who was Chairman of the Council for the last two years, and had rendered valuable services to the Society. The deceased gentleman had won the love and respect of all the Members. The Trustees of the Museum had decided to place on record some memorial of Mr. Shaw, and it had been suggested that the Society and the Trustees should send a joint message of sympathy to Mrs. Shaw.

The suggestion was unanimously adopted.

OCTOBER 10, 1910.

The Monthly General Meeting of the Society was held at the Museum on the evening of October 10, 1910.

Mr. T. Stephens, M.A., F.G.S., a Vice-President, in the chair.

SECRETARY OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY.

Dr. Fritz Noetling was appointed Secretary of the Society, for the purposes of Section V. of the Royal Society Act, 18 Vict., No. 4, in the place of the late Mr. Bernard Shaw.

NOTES AND EXHIBITS.

The Chairman exhibited specimens of the Tasmanite shale from the Mersey district. The volatile part of the shale was of purely vegetable origin, and derived from the spore cases of ancient club mosses, which were embedded in clay or sand. These shales formed part of the Mersey coal measure series, but their exact relationship to the Mersey coal seams was not quite clear.

Mr. Lea exhibited a specimen of a legless lizard of the genus Lialis, which looked remarkably like a snake, and two geckos, which he obtained in New South Wales.

Mr. R. Hall, Curator of the Museum, exhibited a specimen of the wombat, from Flinders Island. It was one of four specimens which were in Museums. Though originally found in all the islands of Bass Straits, it was now exterminated everywhere except on Flinders Island. It was a smaller species than of the mainland.

THE FOLLOWING PAPERS WERE READ.

1. Notes on the Norman Vocabulary. By Hermann B. Ritz, M.A.

The author remarks that this document is of great value, as containing what is probably the only vocabulary now extant in the original manuscript, and a number of incidental notes written by the same hand, these notes being very interesting in themselves, and specially so because they do not seem to have been incorporated in any of the published accounts of the customs of the aborigines of Tasmania.

Dr. Noetling said that the paper upon which the manuscript was written was hand-made, and bore the name of the manufacturer, and the date 1827. The information given by the Rev. Jas. Norman was very interesting, but parts of it should be taken wth some criticism.

The Chairman said that the Rev. Jas. Norman arrived in Tasmania in 1827, and had been appointed to the charge of Sorell in 1832. He remembered Mr. Norman himself, having met him on the occasion of his first visit to Sorell, in 1864.

Mr. W. E. Shoobridge said that he remembered the Rev. Jas. Norman, and knew that he took a great interest in the natives and their customs. Anything that he wrote on the subject would have been written from his own observations.

2. Notes on Eucalyptus Risdoni. By L. Rodway.

Mr. Rodway describes in detail the differences between that species and Eucalyptus amygdalina, the ordinary peppermint gum. The diameter of the fruit was the safest test as to the two species, but in E. risdoni there was a bluish bloom on the leaves, which was absent in E. amygdalina. In E. risdoni, however, there was an excessive variability, produced by varying surrounding conditions.

The Chairman said that Eucalyptus risdoni was almost invariably found growing on soils derived from the mudstone formation, an upper member of the marine permo-carboniferous series, and the geological character of hills at a considerable distance might often be recognised by the bluish tint of the foliage of the trees growing on them. The relations of trees and plants to the soils on which they grew was one of the most interesting studies in botany.

3. Notes on the Genus Lissotes, with Descriptions of New Species. By Arthur M. Lea, F.E.S., Government Entomologist.

This paper is illustrated by plates, and was made interesting by the exhibition of a fine collection of specimens.

4. Skin Diseases treated by Blood Vaccine. By E. W. J. Ireland, M.B., C.M.

The author says that the paper was intended to emphasise a possibility long recognised by the medical profession that skin diseases might originate in internal conditions, and that they might be successfully treated by the administration of vaccines prepared from cultures of each particular patient's blood.

Dr. Purdy said that he was inclined to think that the results which Dr. Ireland had claimed were largely due to psychical causes. In recent experiments tried in England remarkable results had been obtained by the subcutaneous injection of sterilised water, and it was no doubt due to the influence of the patient's mind over his body, and the influence of the physician over the patient's mind. If Dr. Ireland's results were borne out by further investigation, he had undoubtedly made a discovery, which would place him on a level with such men as Pasteur and Koch, but if the same results were produced by simple injections of water it would show that the phenomena were simply psychical. He gave instances of the remarkable results produced by suggestion.

Mr. A. J. Taylor said there was no doubt that suggestion formed the main feature in the Christian science treatment.

5. Weighing the Earth. By A. E. Blackman.

In the absence of the author, Dr. Noetling read this paper by Mr. A. E. Blackman, of Franklin, on the methods used in estimating the weight of the earth.

NOVEMBER 21, 1910.

A Special Meeting and a Monthly General Meeting were held at the Museum on Monday evening, November 21, 1910.

His Excellency Sir Harry Barron, K.C.M.G., C.V.O., President, in the chair.

The meeting had been convened by the Council on receipt of a requisition signed by five Fellows for the consideration of the following proposals:—"That the recent appointment of an

Honorary Secretary of the Royal Society be reconsidered after the lapse of one year, in the hope that meanwhile the Act of Parliament relating to the Royal Society may be repealed or amended, so that such an office as that of Honorary Secretary may become unnecessary in future, and that it be an instruction to the Council that they endeavour to bring about the necessary repeal or amendment."

Mr. S. Clemes, speaking on behalf of the requisitionists, submitted the motion to the consideration of the meeting. The present state of affairs needed some amendment in the direction proposed, because it was so cumbrous.

Mr. Clemes, junr., seconded the motion.

Mr. T. Stephens said that the Act of 1854 was practically a dead letter, having been superseded by the Act which made provision for the endowment of the Botanic Gardens and Tasmanian Museum, which originally were under the control of the Royal Society, but were surrendered by the Society to the State in 1885 in the interest of the public. The mistake made in not repealing the Act of 1854 when the Museum and Gardens Act was passed was now evident, when it had become necessary for the Society to allow itself to be sued in regard to the legality of the custody of a certain document, and the Society, so long as the Act of 1854 remained in force, had to be represented by a "Secretary" appointed under its provisions. The term "Honorary Secretary" should not have been used in connection with the matter, for the question of salary had nothing to do with it.

The President said that he had not had time to look into the Act, but there seemed to be some confusion about the titles of "Secretary" and "Honorary Secretary." It was desirable to clear up the exact position, and he would suggest that a small committee might be appointed to go into the question and report to a later meeting. It would be better to clear up the position.

Mr. Clemes said that that was what he hoped would be the outcome of the motion. He would be glad to move in the direction indicated by His Excellency.

On the motion being put it was carried without opposition.

The Monthly General Meeting of the Society then followed.

CORRESPONDENCE.

The Council forwarded a letter from Mr. Alfred Pedder, suggesting that portraits of the late King Edward VII. and the late Mr. Bernard Shaw should be obtained, and hung in the Royal Society's room.

Mr. T. Stephens said that the matter would not be lost sight of by the Council as soon as there were any funds available for the purpose.

NOTES AND EXHIBITS.

Mr. T. Stephens exhibited (1) portions of a joist and flooring board showing "dry rot," the species of which had not been determined. The underside of the board showed the delicate branching form of the mycelium of the fungus spreading from the rotted joist. The peculiarity of the case was its occurrence in the floor of a room not more than ten years old. The cause of it was the absence of the usual provision for ventilation by means of air-bricks. (2). A sample of the soil in which the bones of a gigantic extinct animal, not yet positively identified, were embedded in the Mowbray swamp, not far from Smithton, about three feet below the surface. The bones were neither decayed nor fossilised, and it would be interesting to ascertain by analysis whether there was any specially preservative element, such as that of European peat mosses, in the soil of the Mowbray swamp. (3). A somewhat rare fern found by Mr. Edward Stephens near the River Arthur, and identified by Mr. Rodway as a species of Aspidium.

Mr. T. T. Flynn exhibited three species of tunicates—Salpa, Appendicularis, and Pyrosoma—which had been obtained in dredging trips undertaken by the Field Naturalists' Club, and stated that they had not previously been recorded for Tasmania.

THE FOLLOWING PAPER WAS READ.

New Marine Mollusca. By W. L. May.

The author remarks, speaking of the Marginellas, that recent dredgings in our deeper waters, from 40 to 100 fathoms, have brought to light a great number of new forms, some of which are very distinct species, whilst others vary so greatly in both form and size as to make them exceedingly puzzling, and that the object of the present paper is to attempt to bring some order out of chaos. In the second part of the paper 14 new species are described, and it is illustrated by plates.