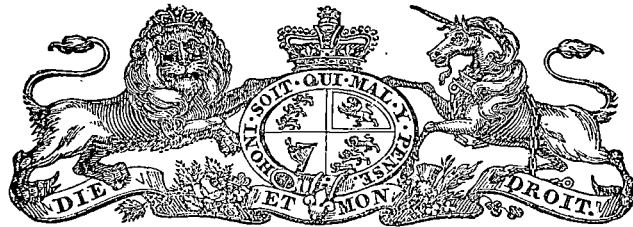


(No. 26.)



1881.

TASMANIA.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

ROYAL SOCIETY OF TASMANIA:

REPORT FOR 1880.

Laid upon the Table by Mr. Moore, and ordered by the Council to be printed,
July 19, 1881.



REPORT of the ROYAL SOCIETY of TASMANIA for the Year 1880.

THE Session of 1880 opened on the 13th April, on which occasion the following papers were read:—
“A description of twenty-two species of Algæ from the New Hebrides,” by Dr. W. O. Sonder, of Hamburg; “On some Australian Slugs,” by Prof. R. Tate, F.G.S., of Adelaide; “A contribution to our knowledge of the Unionidæ of the Launceston Tertiary Basin,” by R. Etheridge, jun., F.G.S.; and the under-mentioned communications were brought forward at the various subsequent meetings:—“Description of a new species of Helix, found in a calcareous sandstone deposit at Kent’s Group,” by R. M. Johnston, F.L.S.; “On some Tasmanian Plants,” by Baron Ferdinand Von Mueller, K.C.M.G.; “On Queensland Lichens,” by F. M. Bailey, F.L.S., and the Rev. J. E. Tenison-Woods, F.L.S., &c.; “On a collection of Fossil Fruits from the Black Lead, Gulgong, N. S. Wales,” by C. E. Barnard, M.D.; “On some introduced Plants of Australia,” by the Rev. J. E. Tenison-Woods, F.L.S., F.G.S.; “Oyster and other Fisheries,” by Captain Stanley, R.N.; “A description of two new species of fish caught in an estuary of the Derwent,” by R. M. Johnston, F.L.S.; “Introductory Notes to the Natural History of Tasmania,” by the Rev. J. E. Tenison-Woods, F.L.S.

It must be mentioned with extreme regret that the obituary for the year embraces the names of some of the oldest members: Archdeacon Davies was one of the founders of the Society, and always took the liveliest interest in its affairs; whilst the names of Sir J. M. Wilson, Mr. Charles Meredith, Mr. P. T. Smith, and Mr. Thomas Giblin indicate the loss the Society has sustained by their death.

The Council also regret to report that, owing to failing health, Mr. Abbott has been obliged to discontinue those meteorological observations which during the long period of thirty years he has conducted with so much credit to himself and advantage to the Society. It is expected, however, that arrangements will be made by which these observations will be resumed at no distant date, on a basis similar to that in the neighbouring colonies. The Society is indebted to Mr. W. E. Shoobridge for the results of his observations during the year; and the contributions from the light-houses and Mount Nelson have been received as usual. Two vacancies have occurred in the list of Vice-Presidents; the one by the absence from the colony of the Right Rev. Bishop Bromby, the other by the death of the Ven. Archdeacon Davies. His Excellency has been pleased to appoint His Honor Mr. Justice Dobson, and T. Stephens, Esq., M.A., F.G.S., to the offices.

COUNCIL.

Two vacancies in the Council, also caused by the absence of the Bishop and the death of Archdeacon Davies, have been filled up by the election of Mr. Justice Dobson and Mr. C. H. Grant. The list of retiring Members has been posted in the library for the last three days, agreeably to Rule No. 33.

FINANCE.

The income from all sources was as follows:—Government grant in aid to Museum, £200; to Gardens, £450; annual subscriptions, £145 10s.; special donations, £165 5s.; from Marine Board, £20; sale of plants, &c. at Gardens, £75 1s. 10d.; from Morton Allport Memorial Fund, £10 19s. This, with £30 12s. in the hands of the Superintendent of the Botanic Gardens for weekly payment of men’s wages, and arrears of subscriptions £40, will give a total of £1137 7s. 10d. The expenditure with liabilities, as per balance sheet, amounted to £1145 2s. 5d., leaving a balance to debit of £7 14s. 7d. It should be stated that, owing to the reduced amount for 1880 of the grant in aid to the Gardens, a deficiency of £25 on account of their working expenses was supplied by the Society. This advance, however, will be repaid during the year 1881, the grant having been restored to its former amount. It will be remembered that a fund collected to provide a memorial of the late Mr. Morton Allport was, in accordance with a resolution of the subscribers, invested for the purpose of procuring scientific works for the library. The first year’s interest on this sum, amounting to £10 19s., has been received, and placed in the Savings’ Bank for the purpose indicated.

GARDENS.

The past year has been one of great financial difficulty. The grant in aid, which for some years previously had been £600, was reduced to £450 for 1880. This loss of income, taking place after various increases had been made in wages and salaries, completely upset existing arrangements. It became necessary in consequence to discharge the only skilled assistant, and to make other reductions, the effects of which have been detrimental in the highest degree; and, notwithstanding all possible reductions, it has not been found practicable to keep the expenditure within the income, the result being that the gardens, as shown by the balance-sheet, are indebted to the Society to the amount of £25 17s.

The Arboretum has been completed, with the exception of laying down the ground in grass. This will be proceeded with in the proper season, and the effect at no distant date will be that this locality will be one of the most attractive in the gardens.

The old garden seats have been repaired and repainted, twelve new ones have been erected, and in order still further to consult the comfort and convenience of the public it is intended to supplement this number during the incoming year.

About 300 plants, many of which are of a very ornamental character, have been introduced. From the Royal Gardens, Kew, was received a box containing upwards of 100 varieties of willow cuttings; but, unfortunately, arriving in the heat of summer all efforts to retain vitality in them proved futile, and, with the exception of two varieties, all perished. From Messrs. H. Low & Co., London, was received a case of plants in excellent condition, consisting principally of ornamental variegated Coniferæ and a few choice herbaceous plants.

Thanks are due to the donors of plants and seeds, and specially to Sir J. D. Hooker, Director of the Royal Gardens, Kew; Baron Ferd. Von. Müller, Government Botanist, Melbourne; Messrs. H. Low & Co., London; W. R. Guilfoyle, Director Botanic Gardens, Melbourne; the Chamber of Agriculture, Washington, United States, &c. Thanks are also due to those captains of vessels who have furthered the interests of the gardens by the carriage of plant cases free of charge.

The gang of prison labour has been continued during the year, and has rendered material assistance in the rougher operations.

The estimated number of visitors for the year was 53,773.

MUSEUM.

Mr. E. D. Swan has again given much time and attention to the ornithological collection, and has completed naming a large number of specimens. He has also bestowed a considerable amount of labour on cleaning and remounting the entomological specimens which had previously been distributed about the Museum in various small cases. The insects have been placed in glazed drawers, by which means they are rendered more readily accessible for inspection, and much less liable to injury. The whole of the Tasmanian fossils have been removed to the table cases in the large upper room for convenience of re-arrangement and classification; but it has not yet been found possible to make much progress with this important work.

A few new species of land and freshwater shells have been added to the collection. As on former occasions, Mr. Legrand has given his assistance in arranging the conchological specimens, and by his voluntary attendance has afforded material aid in keeping order in the upper rooms during the hours the Museum has been open to the public on Sundays.

The number of visitors during the year was,—on Sundays, 10,201; on week days, 9730; total, 19,931.

J. BARNARD, *Hon. Secretary.*
