

(No. 26.)



1884.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

ROYAL SOCIETY OF TASMANIA :

REPORT FOR 1883.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by His Excellency's Command.



REPORT of the ROYAL SOCIETY of TASMANIA for the Year 1883.

DURING the Session of 1883 the following papers were read at the various monthly meetings :—
“On new Species of *Antechinus* and *Mus*,” by E. T. Higgins, M.R.C.S. Eng., and W. F. Petterd, C.M.Z.S.; “Notes on new Plants introduced into the Royal Society Gardens during 1882,” by Francis Abbott, Superintendent; “Description of a new cave-inhabiting Spider, together with Notes on Mammalian Remains from a recently discovered cave in the Chudleigh District,” by E. T. Higgins, M.R.C.S., and W. F. Petterd, C.M.Z.S.; Notice of additions to the list of Tasmanian Fishes, &c., by R. M. Johnston, F.L.S.; “Notes on Earthquake Shocks,” by Commander Shortt, R.N.; “Description of a new species of *Mus*, with a list of the terrestrial Animals of Tasmania,” by E. T. Higgins, M.R.C.S., and W. F. Petterd, C.M.Z.S.; “Some further additions to the list of the Fishes of Tasmania,” by R. M. Johnston, F.L.S.

In addition to the ordinary scientific periodicals, various donations and exchanges from many foreign scientific bodies, especially those from the United States of America, are constantly accumulating in the library; and it has now become indispensable that a complete catalogue of its valuable contents should be undertaken. A small amount has been expended upon binding the parts of scientific serials as they form into volumes, and also some of the more valuable works in the library, notably Gould’s *Birds* and *Mammals of Australia*. Were funds available, much more might be accomplished with advantage in this direction.

The Queen’s Domain Improvement Committee has made good progress in tree planting in various localities. The old Corporation quarry has been considerably improved by levelling and planting. All the necessary plants have been put in, and are doing well with very few exceptions.

Four new Fellows have been elected, whilst 15 have been lost through death and other causes. The total number of Fellows is now 99.

The usual Meteorological Observations have been regularly received from the Government Observer. There are now eight stations throughout the colony, furnished with first-class instruments, and two additional will soon be opened at King and Swan Islands. Weather telegrams are sent daily to the Melbourne Observatory, whence a forecast of the probable weather for the next 24 hours in Bass’ Straits, and on the Northern coast of Tasmania, is daily received and exhibited at the chief Telegraph offices.

COUNCIL.

No alteration in the Council has taken place during the year, nor have any new candidates been proposed under Rule 31. The provisions of Rule 32 have been duly observed.

FINANCE.

The increase for the year from all sources has been as follows:—Government grant in aid to Museum, £200; grant to Gardens, £600; annual subscriptions, &c., £177; from Marine Board, £20; sale of plants, &c. at Gardens, £103 19s. 10d.,—making, with balance from 1882, £1128 5s. 11d. The expenditure amounted to £1070 18s. 3d., leaving a balance to credit of £57 7s. 8d.

A special grant of £100 was made by Parliament for the purchase of additional cases for the Museum, rendered necessary by the increased accommodation required for specimens, of which sum £81 19s. 4d. has been spent, leaving a balance of £18 0s. 8d. available for the same object.

GARDENS.

Many valuable plants have been introduced during the past year, foremost amongst which may be mentioned a collection of ornamental deciduous trees from Messrs. Van Geert, of Ghent, Belgium, comprising maples, beeches, ashes, oaks, elms, and several others of equal merit; and from this source alone some 30 species of forest trees have been added to our collection. *Disa grandiflora*, a superb terrestrial orchid from the Cape Botanic Gardens, has been successfully introduced.

The supply of labour is still totally inadequate, in consequence chiefly of the extension of the grounds, with the vastly increased number of plants, the falling off of prison, and the greatly enhanced cost of free labour.

Many urgent representations in late years have been made to Government on the subject; and the Council, it is pleasant to report, have at last some reason to hope that further and much needed assistance may be granted during the current year.

The important work of labelling the plants, referred to in last year's Report, is still being carried on as rapidly as means will allow.

Thanks are again due to the donors of plants and seeds; also to captains and owners of vessels and others who have gratuitously assisted the Society in effecting exchanges.

The approximate number of visitors to the Gardens was 56,144.

MUSEUM.

It is with the deepest regret the Council have to record the death of the Curator, Mr. Thomas Roblin. For many years Mr. Roblin had been a most faithful, zealous, and efficient officer. His quiet, unassuming manner, his readiness to oblige, and his willingness on all occasions to afford to enquirers every information in his power, secured him the respect, esteem, and regard of every member with whom he came in contact. Much of his excellent handiwork will remain to bear enduring testimony to the admirable manner in which he discharged the various duties of his office. The Council have had a somewhat arduous task in selecting from candidates a fitting successor, but they have a well-grounded assurance that in conferring the appointment upon Mr. Alexander Morton, Curator's Assistant to the Sydney Museum, they have consulted the best interests of the Society by securing the services of an officer possessing an extensive knowledge of Natural History, with long and trained experience in everything connected with the practical work of a Museum.

Presentations during the year have been numerous, and of a varied and interesting character. By means of the extra grant already referred to, many alterations have been made which will secure a much more effective display for the specimens.

For re-labelling and arranging a great part of the Ornithological collection, the best thanks of the Society are due to Mr. E. D. Swan, who has devoted a very great amount of time and trouble to this much needed work. The Society is under additional obligation to Mr. Swan for the valuable services which he has rendered in various other directions during the past two months.

The number (approximate) of visitors to the Museum was:—On Sundays, 11,000; on week days, 13,000. Total, 24,000.

J. W. AGNEW, M.D., *Hon. Secretary.*

STATEMENT of the Funds of the ROYAL SOCIETY OF TASMANIA for the Year 1883.

Receipts.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	Expenditure.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Balance as per statement for 1882....	..	27 6 1	<i>Royal Society.</i>		
<i>Royal Society.</i>			Printing and Advertising.....	29 8 6	
Annual Subscriptions and arrears			Postage, Parcels, &c.....	3 12 9	
from former years.....	177 0 0		Collector's Commission	7 17 6	
From Marine Board for clerical			Messenger	0 5 0	
assistance	20 0 0		Clerical assistance for Meteorological		
		197 0 0	Tables	20 0 0	
<i>Museum.</i>			Library—Books and Stationery	41 9 1	
Grant in aid from Treasury.....	200 0 0		Ditto, Bookbinding.....	15 0 6	
Special grant for new cases	100 0 0		Furniture, &c.	5 12 0	
		300 0 0	Sundries	0 9 10	
<i>Botanic Gardens.</i>					123 15 2
Grant in aid from Treasury.....	600 0 0		<i>Museum.</i>		
Proceeds of sale of Plants, Fruit, &c.	103 19 10		Salary of Curator	125 0 0	
		703 19 10	Wages of Museum Attendant	52 0 0	
			Ditto, Sunday duty	12 15 0	
			Insurance	3 5 0	
			Purchase and preparation of speci-		
			mens	0 5 0	
			Water rate.....	5 13 4	
			Sweeping chimneys	2 3 0	
			Fuel and light	5 5 0	
			Sundry and petty cash.....	1 11 3	
			Ironmongery, brushware, &c.....	6 18 3	
			Freight and carriage of specimens ..	1 2 3	
			Repairs to buildings, fittings, &c. ..	114 0 4	
			Camphor, spirits of wine, &c.	3 19 3	
					333 17 8
			<i>Gardens.</i>		
			Salary of Superintendent.....	200 0 0	
			Wages of Labourers	302 0 6	
			Repair of tools, &c.	9 10 10	
			Freight and carriage of Plants.....	14 1 2	
			Stationery and stamps	5 2 10	
			Forage	4 7 9	
			Horse hire	10 14 0	
			Ironmongery, fittings, &c.	54 16 2	
			Timber and repair of buildings	37 15 10	
			Seeds	14 8 0	
			Sundries	26 17 8	
			Water rate	3 3 4	
			Flower-pots	12 17 0	
					695 15 1
					£1153 7 11
			Balance as per statement for 1882	27 6 1	
			Receipts	1200 19 10	
			Expenditure	1153 7 11
			Balance to credit as per pass-book....	..	74 18 0
		£1228 5 11		£1223 5 11	1228 5 11
			Audited and found correct.		
			FRANCIS BUTLER.		
			JOHN MACFARLANE.		
			28th January, 1884.		

STATEMENT of the MORTON ALLPORT Memorial Fund, 1883.

1883.	Dr.	£ s. d.	1883.	Cr.	£ s. d.
Jan. 1. To balance as per statement for 1882.....		30 12 10			
Nov. 5. Cash, A. G. Webster.....		13 0 6			
Interest, Savings Bank		2 4 8			
		£45 18 0	Dec. 31. By balance in Savings Bank to credit of		
			Fund		45 18 0
			Audited and found correct.		
			FRANCIS BUTLER,		
			JOHN MACFARLANE.		
			25 April, 1884.		