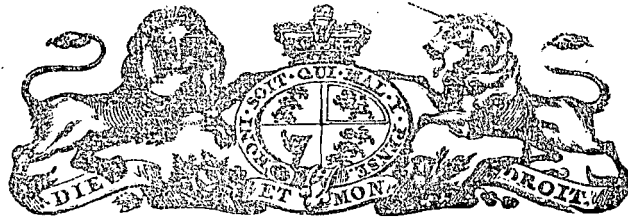


(No. 27.)



1883.

T A S M A N I A.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

ROYAL SOCIETY OF TASMANIA :

REPORT FOR 1882.

Laid upon the Table by Mr. Moore, and ordered by the Council to be printed,
July 24, 1883.



REPORT of the ROYAL SOCIETY of TASMANIA for the Year 1882.

THE Session of 1882 was opened on Monday, the 17th April, when two papers were read, viz., "On the Vegetation of King's Island," by Baron Ferd. Von Mueller, K.C.M.G., Government Botanist, Victoria; and a "Note on the first discovered representative of the genus *Pupa* in Tasmania," by R. M. Johnston, F.L.S. On the conclusion of the usual business of the meeting, a highly successful demonstration of the working of the Telephone, illustrated by numerous experiments and a large number of instruments, was given by Mr. R. Henry, the Superintendent of Telegraphs. The following papers were subsequently read at the various meetings during the year:—"Notes on the economic value of the aquatic plant *Typha latifolia*," by J. Barnard.—"On the state of the Surveys in Tasmania," by G. McIntyre, of Christchurch, New Zealand.—"On the remains of Trilobites from the Mersey River District, and on other Fossils from the conglomerate beds near Table Cape," by R. Etheridge, jun., F.G.S., &c.—"On a Fossil Cone, probably of a species of *Lepidostrobus*, from the auriferous sandstones of Campania," by R. M. Johnston, F.L.S.—"Notes on the Minimum Temperature in various parts of Hobart during July, 1882," by T. Stephens, M.A., F.G.S.—"General and Critical Observations on the Fishes of Tasmania, with a Classified Catalogue of all the known Species," by R. M. Johnston, F.L.S.—"Description of a new species of Fish (*Lophotes Guntheri*), caught near Emu Bay, Tasmania," by R. M. Johnston, F.L.S.—"Description of some new Marine Shells of Tasmania," by Lieut. C. E. Beddome, I.N.—"Notes on two species of rather rare Fish recently captured in the Derwent, viz., *Clinus despicillatus* and *Bovichthus variegatus*," by R. M. Johnston, F.L.S.—"Description of hitherto undescribed *Antechini* and *Muridae* inhabiting Tasmania," by Dr. Higgins and W. F. Petterd, C.M.Z.S.

As will be seen by the list appended, many valuable additions have been made to the Library by contributions from Government Departments and learned bodies in England, America, and elsewhere with which the Society exchanges publications. The much needed work of binding up the serials and other valuable publications is being proceeded with to the extent that the funds of the Society will allow.

The Queen's Domain Improvement Committee has continued its labours during the year, and is doing what it can, with the limited means placed at its disposal by the Government, to carry out the trust reposed in it. To one member of this Committee, Mr. F. Abbott, the Superintendent of the Society's Gardens, is due in a large degree the merits of the improvements already effected and in contemplation.

During the year nine Fellows and one Corresponding Member have been elected, and there have been two resignations, caused by removal from the Colony, and two deaths.

In recognition of the eminent services rendered to the Society by their numerous contributions, of high scientific value, to its Transactions, extending over a lengthened period, the Council has placed the names of Baron Von Mueller and the Rev. J. E. Tenison-Woods on the list of its Honorary Members.

Commander Shortt, R.N., having been appointed as Government Meteorological Observer the Hobart Observations were resumed in April, since when Monthly Abstracts have regularly been furnished to the Society and published in the reports of its meetings. The Rain Gauges presented by Sir J. H. Lefroy were handed over to Commander Shortt, and distributed by him to various Stations through the Colony, from which Monthly Tables, showing the rainfall at each, have

been received and duly brought under notice. It is to be regretted that proper arrangements have not been made for taking the Thermometric Observations. The arrangements for the daily interchange of Weather Telegrams between the several Australian Colonies have been in force since April last, and the recorded observations have doubtless proved of essential benefit to them all. The usual Monthly Tables from the Lighthouses have, as formerly, been received through the Marine Board.

COUNCIL.

A vacancy in the Council has occurred during the year, occasioned by the departure from the Colony of the Right Reverend Bishop Bromby, which has been filled up by the election of Dr. Perkins. The list of retiring Members has been posted in the Library for the last three days agreeably to Rule 33.

FINANCE.

The income from all sources was as follows:—Government grant in aid to Museum, £200; ditto to Gardens, £600; annual subscriptions, &c., £192 10s.; special donation from His Excellency Sir G. C. Strahan, the President, £5; from Marine Board, £20; sale of plants, &c. at Gardens, £93 8s. 10d.: giving a total of £1125 19s. 4d. The expenditure amounted to £1098 13s. 3d.; thus leaving a balance to credit in the Commercial Bank of £27 6s. 1d. To this must be added £30 12s. in the hands of the Superintendent of the Gardens for the weekly payment of men wages. The outstanding liabilities are estimated at £20, as shown in a note appended to the balance sheet.

GARDENS.

About the usual number of new plants have been introduced to the Gardens. Nearly one hundred species and varieties of Rhododendrons have been added to the collection, which is now one of, if not the most extensive in the colonies, including as it does many of the Himalayan species. Ten or twelve varieties of American vines have also been obtained during the year, principally from seed supplied by Baron F. Von Mueller. Some of these are suitable for wine-making, but they are more especially adapted for stocks on which to work the better class of European vines as the roots are said to be Phylloxera-proof. Plants of *Pinus australis* have been raised from seed supplied by the Director of the Botanic Gardens, Melbourne. This Pine, which is known as the "Georgia Pitch Pine," produces a very durable wood, and also yields a large quantity of pitch and turpentine.

About nine thousand plant-names have been printed on waterproof paper, the work being performed in the House of Correction. One-half of these have been mounted and placed in the Garden where required from the writing on the old labels having become obliterated. The preparation, mounting, and placing of these labels has occupied much of the Superintendent's time during the year, and has, in some instances, taken his attention from other matters. The legible naming of an extensive collection of plants is a matter of some moment, usually involving a vast amount of labour, and can only be done at great expense. It is entirely needed in the interests of the public who frequent the Gardens, and is to a great extent educational. In most establishments the time of one man is wholly required for the purpose, and, with the necessary material, entails the yearly expenditure of from £200 to £250. This will show that the matter is of more importance than is usually supposed, and one that can only be satisfactorily dealt with where the funds are adequate for the purpose.

Considerable difficulty has been experienced in keeping the Gardens in a presentable condition. The ordinary staff is quite inadequate to the work to be done, and the extra assistance, in the shape of labour afforded by the Government, has been very precarious, and may at any time be entirely stopped; at best the labour thus supplied has only been suited to the rougher operations, and hence those requiring taste or skill have, of necessity, been almost entirely neglected. This is to be regretted, as it is essential that in a public garden good taste and neatness should prevail above all things, but this is only possible where a sufficiency of suitable labour is available. It is very desirable that attention should be called to this matter, in the hope that it may lead to steps being taken for increasing the labour supply in future.

Three dozen garden-seats, capable of seating 144 persons, also obtained from the House of Correction, and upon favorable terms, have been placed in the grounds during the year. A drinking-fountain has also been erected.

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 during the year was 59,792,—being 7878 more than in 1881.

MUSEUM.

The work of labelling and cataloguing the collection of birds, referred to in last year's Report, has been continued by Mr. E. D. Swan, assisted by Mr. Fleetwood Wilson. Printed labels have been attached to several hundred specimens, many have been mounted on new stands, and the whole have been thoroughly cleaned and put in order. This department of the Museum has received a most liberal donation from the Trustees of the Australian Museum, Sydney, comprising no less than 108 specimens of Foreign and 121 of Australian birds, mounted on stands and named. To the Conchological collection Miss Lodder has contributed 73 species of marine shells from the North Coast of Tasmania, and Mr. E. D. Swan has added a large number of specimens collected by himself in Fiji. Many objects of interest have been presented during the year, particulars of which have been given in the monthly reports of the meetings. The want of additional cases still exists, but it is probable this will be remedied during the ensuing year, the sum of £100 having been voted by Parliament last session for the purpose. As will be seen by the statement of accounts, under the head of Repairs, considerable expense had to be incurred for painting the outsides of the window-sashes, doors, fencing, &c.—necessary work which could no longer be delayed. New blinds have also been provided and fitted to all the back windows of the Museum.

Advantage was taken of the opportunity afforded by Mr. Swan's visit to Sydney to forward a number of bird-skins, chiefly presented some years back by the late Mr. John Gould, for the purpose of being prepared and mounted. This work was admirably performed by Mr. Thorpe, the Taxidermist to the Australian Museum, and the specimens now greatly add to the attractiveness of our collection.

The number of visitors to the Museum during the year was—On Sundays, 10,776; on week-days, 10,873: total, 21,649,—being an increase of 6080 on that for 1881.

J. BARNARD, *Hon. Secretary.*
