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1869.

TASMANIA.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

ROYAL SOCIETY.

REPORT FOR 1868.

Laid upon the Table by Mr. Wilson, and ordered by the Council to be printed,
August 24, 1869.



REPORT of the ROYAL SOCIETY of TASMANIA for the Year 1868.

THE Session of 1868 was opened on the 24th March, by a paper from Dr. (now Baron) F. Von Müeller, Ph.D., F.L.S., &c., on the Phytography of Tasmania, which deserves especial notice for its intrinsic value, and from the fact that it was the only one received from our corresponding members. The following papers were also read at the monthly meetings:—"Some continued observations on the variable Star η Argus and the surrounding Nebulae," by F. Abbott, Esq., F.R.A.S.; "Observations on Desmidiaceae, with list of species found in Tasmania," by E. D. Harrop, Esq.; "Remarks on Mr. Krefft's notes on the Fauna of Tasmania," by M. Allport, Esq., F.L.S., F.Z.S.; "On the cultivation of Esparto Grass for the manufacture of paper, and the establishment of a paper mill in Tasmania," by J. Barnard, Esq.; "Spectrum Analysis and its application to science," by F. Abbott, Esq., F.R.A.S.; "On a specimen of Chrome Iron Ore from the west coast of Tasmania, with an analysis," by W. Knight, jun., Esq.; "Reasons for introducing the Perch into Tasmania," by M. Allport, Esq., F.L.S., F.Z.S.

The Microscopical Soirée, which was held in April, was as much appreciated as usual by the numerous visitors who were present.

The Meteorological Abstracts of the Observations furnished from the various stations in and round the Island, for the last two years, are in course of compilation, and will, we expect, be published before the close of the current half-year.

Our papers and proceedings for the past Session have been forwarded to various scientific societies and individuals in England, America, the neighbouring Colonies, and elsewhere.

COUNCIL.

No vacancy has occurred during the year. The required list according to rule XXXII., as amended at the last Annual General Meeting, has been exhibited in the Library for the last fortnight.

FINANCE.

It is with extreme regret that the Council have to request the special attention of the Fellows to the course taken last year in reference to the grant-in-aid. This has been so inimical to the interests of the Society that it would appear to have been partly done through inadvertence, as no saving to the revenue of the Colony was effected by it.

Since the year 1853 the Museum has always received from Government £200 per annum. But now, when the expenses have greatly increased, through the steadily increasing number of specimens, and when we consequently feel the greatest difficulty in keeping within our income, an entire quarter of the grant has been withdrawn and added to the amount voted for the Gardens.

Our total income (viz., Government grant £150 to Museum, £450 to Gardens, subscriptions £123, and sale of plants £86 1s. 7d.) has been £809 1s. 7d., with which £30 12s. 0d. in the hands of the Superintendent of the Gardens for payment of current expenses, £19 10s. 0d. arrears of subscriptions received since 31st December, and about £30 still due, will give a total of £889 3s. 7d. The total expenditure and liabilities amount to £953 2s. 8d., leaving to our debit a balance of £63 19s. 1d.

As to the liabilities referred to, it may be mentioned that they are mainly due to a claim of £59 5s. 2d. from Messrs. Orger and Meryon, of London, on an account due some years ago, but which had been lost sight of from the fact of that firm having retired from business. A part of the claim has been paid off during the year.

GARDENS.

Three hundred new plants have been added to our collection during the year, several of which are of great interest ; on the other hand, it is to be regretted that owing to the unusually protracted drought, and an insufficient supply of water, many have died during the last few months. All the annuals have suffered severely, very few of the spring-sown having germinated, and such as did so, were dried up before flowering.

The beautiful white water lily (*Nymphæa alba*) has become established in the reservoir, where it has produced upwards of a dozen of its pretty blossoms during the season. *Nuphar lutea* also flourishes in the same situation, and will, doubtless, blossom next season.

During the past year two acres of ground, a portion of which is intended for the extension of the Pinetum, have been trenched, and many new and interesting pines are ready for planting as soon as the ground is sufficiently prepared for their reception.

The approximate number of visitors during the year was 20,624. As, however, the bye-law requiring visitors to sign their names has been relaxed, the entrance door is now left open, and so many persons enter unobserved, that the actual number probably exceeds that given.

MUSEUM.

Considerable progress has been made in labelling and arranging the various collections during the year. Mr. Gould has presented several additional specimens procured during the geological survey of the Island, and has also devoted considerable time to the general arrangement of the Geological Department.

The whole of the Tasmanian birds, &c., have been removed from the general Museum, and re-arranged in the large rooms upstairs, which had been fitted up for the purpose as mentioned in last report. This room will be entirely devoted to the exhibition of Tasmanian specimens, and the arrangement will, it is hoped, be completed during the year. Skeletons of many indigenous animals have been prepared, and are now ready for articulating. A large skeleton of the blackfish (*Orca* sp.) has been prepared, articulated, and mounted by the Curator, Mr. Roblin, and is a great acquisition to the Museum.

A few additions have been made to the Conchological collection, for which we are indebted to the liberality of Mr. Legrand.

Exchanges have been made with the Museum of the South Australian Institute (Adelaide), and further transactions of a similar character, advantageous to both Societies, will no doubt be continued.

The number of visitors has been 6836.
