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1879.

T A S M A N I A.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

R O Y A L S O C I E T Y :

REPORT FOR 1878.

Laid upon the Table by Mr. Crowther, and ordered by the Council to be printed,
September 9, 1879.



REPORT of the ROYAL SOCIETY of TASMANIA for the Year 1878.

THE Session of 1878 was opened on the 12th March, with a paper entitled "Notes on the Platypus (*Ornithorhynchus anatinus*)," by Morton Allport, F.L.S., F.Z.S., &c., and the following papers were read at the meetings during the year:—"On some new Tasmanian Shells" (3rd series), by the Rev. J. E. Tenison Woods, F.L.S., F.G.S., &c. "On certain Tertiary and Post Tertiary Deposits on Flinders, Barren, Badger, and other Islands in Bass's Straits," by R. M. Johnston. "On the Distribution and Growth of Queensland Plants," by F. M. Bailey. "On Water Supply in Relation to Disease," by the Bishop of Tasmania. "Description of Specimens of Annelidæ, found in kelp, at Prosser's Bay," by Mrs. Meredith. "Notes on a visit to the Hot Springs near Southport, in 1877," by T. Stephens, M.A., F.G.S. "Notes on the Creeping Thistle (*Carduus arvensis*)," by F. Abbott, jun. "On some new Mollusca," by the Rev. J. E. Tenison Woods, F.L.S., F.G.S., &c. "On the Land Shells of Tasmania," by W. F. Petterd.

We are again indebted to Mr. F. Abbott and to Mr. W. E. Shoobridge for conducting Meteorological Observations at Hobart Town and New Norfolk. Returns from the lighthouses have been regularly received from the Marine Board. The "Simultaneous Observations" are still taken by Mr. Abbott, and regularly forwarded to the Meteorological Department of the United States.

Four Fellows, and the same number of Corresponding Members were admitted. One Fellow and one Corresponding Member have been lost by death, and there have been two resignations.

COUNCIL.

Two vacancies have occurred in the Council, one by the retirement of the Rev. W. W. Spicer, who has left the colony, the other by the death of Mr. Morton Allport. These have been filled by the election of Messrs. John Swan and Russell Young.

The list of Retiring Members has been posted in the Library for the last three days, in accordance with No. 33 of the Rules of the Society.

FINANCE.

The income from all the sources was as follows:—Government grant-in-aid to Museum £200; ditto to Gardens, £600; Subscriptions, £150; from Marine Board, £20; sale of Plants, &c., at Gardens, £98 17s. 2d.; this, with £30 12s. in the hands of the Superintendent of the Gardens, for weekly payment of men's wages, and arrears of subscriptions, £50, will give a total of £1149 9s. 2d. The expenditure and liabilities, as per balance sheet, amounted to £1212 1s. 5d., leaving a balance to debit of £62 12s. 3d. It must, however, be specially noted that this sum would have been reduced to a mere fraction had all the annual subscriptions been duly paid. It is but fair to add that the expenditure for the year, without considering previous liabilities, has been kept within the income, as the following figures will show:—Total income for 1878, £1068 17s. 2d.; expenditure, £1052 12s. 7d.; balance towards meeting liabilities, £16 4s. 7d.

GARDENS.

The new entrance, with suitable porter's lodge, has at last been completed. This work adds largely to the general appearance of the Gardens, and is found to be a very great convenience to the public. The estimated number of visitors, 58,784, is quite unprecedented, having more than doubled within the last eight years. The proof thus afforded of the increasing appreciation in which the Gardens are held is highly satisfactory.

The large amount of work in connection with the new entrance has for some time past absorbed all available labour, but now the Arboretum referred to in last year's report will at once be proceeded with, and when finished will, without doubt, form one of the most attractive features of the Gardens.

Many new plants have, as usual, been introduced, and a list of the donors is appended. Especial thanks are due to Sir J. D. Hooker, of the Royal Gardens, Kew; Baron Ferd. Von Müller, Melbourne; Jean N. Verschaffelt, Ghent, Belgium; the Department of Agriculture, Washington; and Mr. C. F. Creswell, Melbourne, for their liberal and valuable donations.

The usual gang of prison labour has been continued, and has rendered very great assistance in the formation of the new entrance, and in other rough work. Without this class of labour, indeed, it would be impossible, by means of the grant-in-aid alone, to maintain the Gardens in anything like a creditable condition, much less to undertake works of improvement or extension.

MUSEUM.

Upwards of 600 species of Tasmanian shells have been arranged and named by Mr. Legrand, who has also most liberally contributed many required species from his private collection. The Society is also indebted to Mr. W. F. Petterd for several new land species described by himself; to the Rev. H. D. Atkinson for a number of new marine species described by the Rev. J. E. Tenison Woods; and Mr. R. M. Johnston for new fresh water species described by himself. Many specimens are still required, which Mr. Legrand has very kindly promised to supply as soon as he can procure them. When all are arranged the Museum will have, as it ought to have, by far the most complete collection of Tasmanian shells extant. The general work necessary for the preservation of the collection, which requires considerable time and attention, has been steadily carried on. The contents of several of the large cases in the lower room have been entirely rearranged and labelled, in accordance with a plan suggested by the Rev. W. W. Spicer previous to his departure from the colony.

Mr. E. D. Swan has rendered valuable assistance in mounting and labelling our collection of eggs of Tasmanian birds, to which he has added many specimens from his private cabinet.

The Museum, as the Fellows are aware, has been kept open to the public for a few hours on Sunday afternoons. The success of the experiment has been quite as great as it was at its commencement towards the end of last year. Indeed for some months past the attendance on Sundays has been greater than the aggregate of that on all the other days of the week, and nothing could exceed the orderly conduct of the visitors.

The actual number of visitors on Sundays was 16,292; on week days 17,174; total 33,466; being an increase of 11,003 on last year.



JAMES BARNARD,
GOVERNMENT PRINTER, TASMANIA.