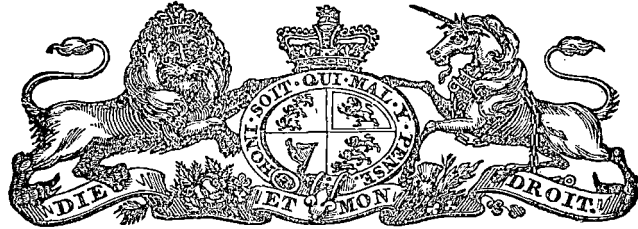


(No. 20.)



1877.

SESSION II.

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TASMANIA.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

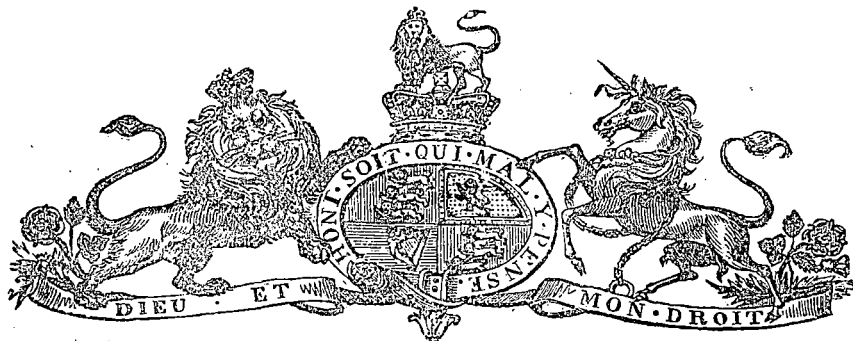
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ROYAL SOCIETY.

REPORT FOR 1876.

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Laid upon the Table by the Colonial Secretary, and ordered by the House to be printed, April 24, 1877.



## REPORT of the ROYAL SOCIETY OF TASMANIA for the Year 1876.

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THE Session of 1876 was opened on the 14th March, but, owing to his absence from town, the inaugural address by His Excellency, as President, was not delivered until the subsequent meeting in April. The attendance of Fellows throughout the Session has been larger probably than in any previous year, and papers of both local and general interest have been brought forward. Amongst these may be mentioned :—“An opening Address,” by His Excellency Frederick A. Weld, Esq., C.M.G. “Notes on a new species of Nudibranchiata,” by the Rev. J. E. Tenison Woods, F.G.S., F.R.G.S., &c. “Contributions to the Phytography of Tasmania,” part 4, by Baron F. von Mueller, C.M.G., M.D., F.R.S., &c. “On the Codlin Moth,” (*Carpocapsa pomonella*), by His Honor Mr. Justice Dobson. “On some Tasmanian Patellidæ,” by the Rev. J. E. Tenison Woods; “History of Australian Geology,” by the same. “Notes on the Tertiary Marine Deposits of Tasmania,” by Mr. R. M. Johnston. “Notes on the Fossils referred to in the foregoing paper,” by the Rev. J. E. Tenison Woods. “On a new species of *Ampullaria*,” by the same. “Reminiscences of a Visit to the Volcanoes of Hawaii,” by His Excellency F. A. Weld, Esq. “On a new reversed *Helix* (*Helix Weldii*), from the North West Coast of Tasmania,” by the Rev. J. E. Tenison Woods. “On the effects of wounds inflicted on the human subject by the spur of the Platypus,” by the Rev. W. W. Spicer, M.A., F.R.M.S. “Synonymy of, and remarks upon, Tasmanian and other shells, with their Geographical distribution,” by John Brazier, C.M.Z.S.

In reference to one prominent point in His Excellency's address—the conservation of a portion of Mount Wellington—it may be mentioned that owing to the exertion in Parliament of one of our Fellows, Mr. Russell Young, this great boon has been permanently secured to the public. Those papers which have not yet been published are now in the printer's hands and will appear in the transactions of the year. We have to regret the absence from the Colony of one of our most valued contributors, the Rev. J. E. Tenison Woods, but we hope to receive some communications from him during the ensuing year.

In addition to the papers previously noticed, communications on the following subjects have been read and brought under discussion, viz. :—“Soundings taken by H.M.S. *Challenger* between Australia and New Zealand,” from Mr. Audley Coote. “On the roaring heard in the neighbourhood of the Western Mountains,” from Rev. E. P. Adams. “On the high temperature experienced in some silver mines in America,” from Mr. A. Coote. “Notes on Mr. A. T. Newton's microscopical examination of Tasmanite, the so-called Dysodile of the Mersey,” from T. Stephens, Esq., F.G.S. “On the Language of the Aborigines of Tasmania,” from Mr. Calder. “Notes on *Eucalyptus globulus*, showing the improbability of spurious seed being supplied from Tasmania,” from F. Abbott, jun. “The geological age of the more recent basalts on the south side of Tasmania,” from M. Allport, Esq., F.L.S., F.Z.S. “The destruction of trees and shrubs on Mount Wellington.” “On the shaft lately sunk for coal at Spring Bay,” &c.

We have, as usual, to thank Baron von Mueller for learned and elaborate papers.

Many valuable additions, as will be seen by the printed list, have been made to the library. As on former occasions, our most liberal contributor has been the American Government, to whom accordingly our warmest acknowledgments are due.

The usual meteorological observations have been regularly carried on by Mr. Abbott and Mr. W. E. Shoobridge; and the monthly returns from the various lighthouses have been regularly received. In addition to these duties, Mr. Abbott has kindly undertaken to carry out the simultaneous daily meteorological observations which are now being made throughout almost all the scientific world. These special observations were commenced some months ago at the request of the United States Meteorological Department, to which we transmit them regularly twice in each month. Meteorological abstracts for the quinquennial period 1870 to 1875 for Hobart Town have been carefully compiled with much labour by Mr. Roblin, and amalgamated with the existing 30 years' series. Mr. Roblin has also made abstracts, for the same period, of the returns from the lighthouses and other coast stations. All these are now in the hands of the Government Printer.

Our thanks are due to the Tasmanian Steam Navigation Company, Messrs. W. Crosby & Co., Macfarlane Bros., and Belbin & Dowdell for the transmission of various parcels to England and the neighbouring colonies. Thanks are also due to Messrs. Walch & Sons for the gratuitous distribution of the Society's publications to members residing in the country.

During the year fifteen Fellows and four corresponding members have been elected; and there have been three resignations and six deaths.

#### COUNCIL.

No vacancy has occurred during the year. The list of retiring members has been posted in the library for the last three days, in accordance with No. 32 of the amended rules of the Society.

#### FINANCE.

The income from all sources was as follows:—Government Grant—in aid to the Museum, £200; ditto, Gardens, £400; subscriptions, £188; from Marine Board, £20; sale of plants, &c. at Gardens, £78 2s. 1d.; this, with £30 12s. 0d. in the hands of the Superintendent of the Gardens for the payment of wages, arrears of subscriptions, £30, and £3 in the hands of the Collector, will give a total of £949 14s. 1d. The expenditure and liabilities as per balance sheet amounted to £993 14s. 1d., leaving a balance to debit of £43 10s.

It will be noticed that the outlay for printing, &c.—£79 19s. 9d.—has been very large, but none of this expenditure could be omitted, as we have been fortunate in the value of the papers contributed during the year, and the publication of such must always be regarded as a matter of necessity, being the great means whereby we are enabled to keep up friendly relations with learned bodies in various parts of the world.

The subscriptions generally have been more promptly forwarded than usual: we regret to say, however, that some members are still in arrears, although the usual notices have been duly forwarded to them.

#### GARDENS.

It is to be regretted that the new entrance has not yet been completed. The groundwork has been for some time past in as forward a state as desirable, and but little remains to be done except the erection of suitable gates. For them the public are entirely dependent on the action of Parliament, and until provision is made for the necessary cost this much needed entrance must remain in its present unfinished and discreditable condition.

The ordinary garden expenditure for the past year has exceeded the receipts by upwards of £40. Moreover, many pressing repairs for tools, implements, and buildings, which have involved increased and necessary outlay, have been postponed for want of funds, and for the same reason a very fair petition from the labourers for a slight increase in their pay (four shillings per diem) could not be complied with. It is only by the most rigid economy, accompanied by considerable difficulty, that the Gardens have been kept in a fair state of order for some years past. All such institutions are necessarily progressive, but unfortunately no provision for progress has been made in the present case, for while as far back as 1843 the annual sum of £400 was granted to the Society for the management of the Gardens, no addition to this amount is now allowed, although the area of cultivated ground has been very largely increased, immense additions have been made, and are still being made to the collection of plants, and labour and provisions are two-thirds higher in value. This amount, although supplemented by the unskilled labour of a small gang of prisoners, is totally inadequate to the present requirements of the place, and ridiculously small in comparison with the sum voted for Public Gardens in the neighbouring colonies. For the year 1876-7 the sums voted in Victoria were,—Botanical Gardens, £7220; Domain and Government House Grounds, £3550. New South Wales, Botanical Gardens, £4469; Hyde Park and Domain, £3513. South Australia;

Botanical Gardens, £6700. Queensland Botanical Gardens, £2485. Under such adverse circumstances it must be painfully evident that it is no longer possible, unless more assistance is rendered by Government, to keep the Gardens in a condition calculated to reflect any credit either on their immediate management or on the colony at large.

The plants introduced during the year have been greater in number and of more intrinsic value than for some years past. About 500 have been added to the collection. From the Royal Gardens, Kew, a case containing Himalayan Rhododendrons was received in good condition; and from Messrs. A. Verschaffelt and A. Van Geert, cases containing Himalayan and hybrid Rhododendrons, pictorial trees, deciduous Magnolias, Lilies, and numerous other plants have been received.

The number of visitors to the Gardens is estimated at 48,004, being an increase of nearly 10,000 over that of last year.

#### MUSEUM.

Six new show cases for shells, &c. have been constructed, and as Mr. Legrand has commenced the arrangement of the Tasmanian specimens, we hope in a very short time to have all the collection properly displayed. Mr. R. C. Gunn, in the early part of the year presented, in a most liberal spirit, the entire of his immense herbarium to the Museum. As the collection had become much disarranged, and as many of the plants and much of the paper were quite destroyed, it was found necessary to re-name and re-paper the whole. This formidable task was most kindly undertaken by the Rev. W. W. Spicer and J. R. Scott, Esq., whose services in this matter it is difficult to over-rate, and who are therefore well entitled to the best thanks of the Society. Their task will still probably require several months for completion.

Among the donations deserving special mention may be enumerated a collection of type specimens of new shells from Long Bay, presented by the Rev. H. D. Atkinson; a large collection of named shells from Mr. J. Brazier, of Sydney; several clubs and spears from New Britain and New Ireland; the gift of the Rev. G. Brown, of Sydney; a large number of type specimens of Tasmanian shells from Mr. W. Legrand; a collection of Table Cape tertiary fossils from Mr. R. M. Johnston; and a valuable named and classified collection of Algæ from Orford, Prossers' Bay, prepared and presented by Mrs. Charles Meredith.

Although the most rigid economy has been exerted, and much which ought to have been done left undone, the grant-in-aid has been exceeded by £27 17s. With a large and continually increasing collection, it is clear that some addition to the insufficient Government grant has become a necessity.

The number of visitors to the Museum was 18,726, being an increase of 3711 over that of 1875.

