

WELLINGTON PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

FIRST MEETING: 15th June, 1887.

Sir James Hector in the chair.

New Members.—Mr. James Clark Gavin, and Count F. de Jouffroy d'Abbas.

The CHAIRMAN, in opening the business, remarked that the chief and, indeed, the only business which he had to perform was to introduce to them the President-elect, Dr. Hutchinson. In vacating the chair he had to thank the Society for the invariable kindness and consideration he had received from the members, and he had merely to express the hope and belief that the same kind consideration would be accorded to the President-elect.

DR. HUTCHINSON then assumed the chair, and read his inaugural address.

ABSTRACT.

Having congratulated the late President on the recent mark of esteem which he had received at the hands of his Sovereign, the speaker remarked that one of the greatest difficulties the colonists had to face was the general delicacy and want of resisting power in the rising generation, as was displayed in the very general premature decay of the teeth, and by nerve disease, and kindred disorders, which were caused by the crowding into towns, and the consequent evil effect of this overcrowding. He argued that if a healthy, vigorous race of colonists were to succeed the present generation, it could only be effected by a race of "country dwellers," in whom a surplus vitality might be stored "till it would be ready to burst forth upon the world." The inevitable tendency of society was to congregate in towns, and hence a want of vitality in the rising generation. He considered that, so far as the Universities were concerned, it would be far better to make these more teaching than merely examining bodies. He ventured to propose that the present system of primary and secondary education should be handed over to the New Zealand University, which should be made the one teaching body of the Colony, the machinery of the Education Department and of all the other public schools being transferred to it and placed under its charge. The President, at considerable length, dwelt upon the advantages of inculcating in the youth of the Colony a correct idea of the anatomical structure of the human frame, as being the best means of conducing to their own health, and then a healthy race would follow them. A purely secular education—"one that did not directly or indirectly lead the thoughts of the youth above material and mental needs"—he was not in favour of. The speaker remarked that the aim of his address had been to draw a rapid sketch of his ideal, toward which it should be the aim of the colonists to attain.

Exhibits.—The Director exhibited and described the following specimens recently collected by members of the Geological staff:—

(1.) A large block of sandstone from Te Paretie Creek, Mohaka River, covered with a large and beautiful form of the genus *Flabellum*, probably a new species from the higher beds of Lower Miocene formation. A number of other fossils occur in the same block, among which is *Aturia ziczac*. These were collected by Mr. McKay.

(2.) A remarkable fossil shell from lower green-sand formation in the East Cape District (Awanui Series), collected by Mr. McKay, probably belonging to the genus *Margaritana*, allied to the freshwater pearl-shell of Britain. The characters of this fossil were described, and the relation of the beds from which it was obtained showed that this fossil would be of considerable value in assisting the recognition in the field of the horizon in the Lower Cretaceous rocks that yield bituminous shale and petroleum oil.

(3.) Specimens of a large fossil stalked Cirripede, recently collected by Mr. Park, at Motatapu Island, Auckland. A careful restoration will have to be made before definitely determining this fossil, but it will probably be found to belong to the genus *Scalpellum*, and is distinguished provisionally under the name of *S. aucklandicum*. In size, this fossil Cirripede greatly exceeds any previously known, in *S. magnum* the capitulum being only $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length, while in the Auckland specimen it is at least 8 inches. These fossils occur in a breccia, marking the old shore line of the upper part of the Waitemata Series, similar to the Cape Rodney beds. The associated fossils are *Corals*, *Brachiopods*, and *Echinoderms*. Among the latter are two specimens having plates of a *Cidaris* of enormous size.

SECOND MEETING: 6th July, 1887.

Dr. Hutchinson, President, in the chair.

New Member.—Mr. T. Trimble.

Papers.—1. "On the Dodders and Broom-Rapes naturalized in New Zealand," by Thomas Kirk, F.L.S. (*Transactions*, p. 182.)

2. "On the Occurrence of the Masked Plover in New Zealand," by T. W. Kirk. (*Transactions*, p. 33.)

3. "Ornithological Notes," by T. W. Kirk. (*Transactions*, p. 29.)

4. "On *Anthosoma smithii*," by T. W. Kirk. (*Transactions*, p. 31.)

THIRD MEETING: 10th August, 1887.

Dr. Hutchinson, President, in the chair.

New Member.—Mr. C. H. Pierard.

Papers.—1. "On Ancient Alphabets in Polynesia," by E. Tregear. (*Transactions*, p. 353.)

2. "Notes on Forestry," by J. S. Prendeville.