

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

I.—THE MALE GALAPAGOS TORTOISE (*Testudo nigrita*) FORMERLY AT GLADESVILLE, SYDNEY.

Through the courtesy of the Council of the Zoological Society of New South Wales, I was permitted to make extracts from the old Minute Books of the Society in connection with facts relating to the acclimatisation of certain animals and birds. By this means I am able to fill a gap in Mr. E. R. Waite's history¹ of the Male Gladesville Tortoise.

Mr. Waite records the arrival of the Tortoise in Sydney from Tonga, apparently in 1866, and recounts its presentation to Mr. Alexander MacDonald by King George of Tonga. "From 1866 to the end of 1896 the tortoise lived in Sydney, and at the latter date was removed to England."

Now a newspaper cutting attached to the minutes of the Society of the 3rd October, 1884, record the following facts:—

"The reception yesterday at the grounds of an enormous land tortoise, supposed to be one of the largest, if not the largest in the world. It is sent by Mr. Alexander MacDonald, of Potts Point, a member of the firm of MacDonald, Smith & Co., of Hunter Street, to whom it was presented 20 years ago by King George of Tonga, when its age was estimated, in Tonga, at upwards of 200 years. It weighs 5 cwt., 2 qrs., 26 lbs., length from nose to tail 6 feet, 2 inches; girth 8 feet, 3 inches. There has been a larger specimen of tortoise known, one weighing 870 lbs.; but that is now enshrined among the other stuffed natural wonders in the British Museum" (Minutes, 3rd October, 1884).

On the 16th January, 1885, the Secretary reported the Tortoise removal by Mr. MacDonald, on 7th January, either back to Potts Point or to Gladesville.

It will be noted that the measurements given above and those afforded both by Dr. J. C. Cox² and Mr. Waite are precisely the same.

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¹ Waite—Rec. Aus. Mus., iii., 5, 1899, p. 95.

² Cox—Proc. Linn. Soc. N.S. Wales, viii., 4, p. 532.