

OTAGO INSTITUTE.

SEVENTH MEETING. August 9, 1870.

His Honor Mr. Justice Chapman, President, in the chair.

The following new members were elected :—A. A. Barnet, John Mitchell, A. W. Smith, H. J. Walter, Basil Sievwright, and D'Arcy Haggitt.

1. "On Periodic Vertical Oscillations of the Earth's Atmosphere, and the connexion existing between the Fluctuations of Pressure as indicated by the barometer and the changes of the weather," by H. Skey. (See *Transactions*.)

The paper was illustrated by diagrams and experiments.

2. "On a (supposed) New Species of Bittern, from the Lake District," by A. C. Purdie.

(ABSTRACT.)

This bird was killed at the head of the Wakatipu Lake, above Queenstown, and forwarded to the Museum by Mr. J. S. Worthington. It is not described by Mr. Buller in his Essay "On the Ornithology of New Zealand," which forms part of the *Transactions of the New Zealand Institute*, Vol. i.; but a similar bird is referred to in a paper read by Mr. Buller last year, before the Wellington Philosophical Society, as having been received at the Canterbury Museum.

This bird is provisionally named the New Zealand Little Bittern (*Ardeola Novæ Zelandiæ*), and the following is a description of it:—Height $12\frac{1}{2}$ in.; length from point of bill to tip of tail $14\frac{3}{4}$ in.; from tip of bill to gape $2\frac{3}{4}$ in.; wing from flexus 6 in. Tibia is feathered to $\frac{3}{8}$ in. of tarsus joint; mid toe $2\frac{3}{4}$ in., serrated as in common bittern; primary quills of wings and tail bluish black above, shading into slate colour below; wing coverts buff; scapulars, back, and centre ribs, dark brown, shading into rufous down each web; margins light buff; flexure joint tipped with a rufous or rust-coloured spot; top of head bluish black; back of neck rusty brown; front of neck or throat reddish brown