2. "On *Anosia bolina*," a beautiful butterfly that has recently made its appearance in this district, by A. P. Buller; communicated by Sir W. Buller. (*Transactions*, p. 38.)

Mr. Hudson said this rare butterfly had now been found in Auckland, Nelson, and Collingwood.

3. "On the Shooting Stars in November, 1898," by Sir J. Hector.

Sir James Hector said the November shooting stars originated in the year 126, and were caused by a comet being drawn from its usual course by the attraction of Uranus, a stream of stars thus being formed about a million miles in width from side to side, about a hundred thousand miles in depth, 1,885,000,000 miles in length, and 4,400,000,000 miles in circumference. Through this immense ribbon of stars the earth passed once in every thirty-three years, and, as the stars were travelling the opposite way to the earth, and at a speed of about twenty-three miles per second, while the earth travelled at twenty-two miles per second, they passed at the rate of forty-five miles per second. In 1833 and 1866 there were magnificent displays of these shooting stars, but the appearance since the last display of what was thought to be the head of the comet gave promise of the shooting stars of next November being a more awe-inspiring sight than ever. The other day cablegrams from America announced that some of the shooting stars had been seen there. That was the advanced guard of next November's display. It took three days to go through the ribbon, but the intense portion only occupied six or seven hours in passing. Sir James could not see how we in New Zealand were to suffer from the shooting stars. We might see them, but they would pass at a tangent. Although they looked formidable, they were not to be regarded as a source of danger in any way. In the course of his remarks Sir James stated that about a hundred thousand meteors fell into our atmosphere nearly every week in the year, and they hardly ever reached the earth's surface. An occasional one did get down. There was one at the Museum here which fell at Masterton. It weighed only 9 lb., and consisted of aluminium, iron, nickel, and one or two of the basic ores. This was the only one as yet found in New Zealand. The resistance of the earth's atmosphere usually reduced them to dust before they reached the earth.

Sir James Hector exhibited a number of additions to the Museum, and made the following remarks on some of the specimens:—

The Olive.—The cultivation of the olive had not been attempted to any extent in this colony, but there appeared to be some inducement to undertake it. A specimen of the New Zealand olive, sent by the schoolmaster at the Upper Hutt, was produced, and evoked a short dissertation on olive-growing from Sir James Hector. If the olive proper was grafted on to the New Zealand olive, Sir James said, the trees would bear fruit in twelve months, or at the most two years, whereas the imported trees brought into the colony by Sir George Grey had taken from thirteen to seventeen years before they bore. Mr. Travers agreed with Sir James Hector, and thought the idea of grafting on to the local species a very good one.

Birds.—Among the birds exhibited were two cuckoos recently captured—one of them, in fact, was caught at Vogeltown. A peculiar feature about these specimens, Sir James Hector remarked, was the fact that both of them were gorged with young birds. It was well known, he said, that the cuckoo made use of the nests of other birds to deposit its eggs, but he did not think he had met a case before where the cuckoo had eaten the young occupants before making use of the nest.

The Slug.—Amateur gardeners who at this time of the year particularly bewailed the ravages of slugs would be surprised to learn that there was at least one species of slug which was a particular friend of the gardener. A specimen was exhibited which, to use the semi-jocular remark of Mr. Travers, was a "very useful beast indeed." It was a carnivorous slug, and fed on the blights which frequented tender plants, and which were very difficult to get rid of by other means without injuring the plants. Slugs of this sort would be a blessing to many sufferers from blight-pests.

Sir Walter Buller said he had listened with interest to Sir James Hector's account of the two specimens of kohoperoa on the table. Sir James Hector was wrong, however, in supposing that the predatory character of *Eudynamys taitensis* was a new discovery. Thirty years ago he had himself found in the stomach of one of these birds a small fledgling that had evidently been robbed from a nest. On another occasion he had surprised one of these cuckoos carrying off in its beak a tui's egg. He understood Sir James Hector to say that the bodies found in the stomachs of the two birds now on the table were those of the grey warbler—*Gerygone flaviventris*—nestlings with wing-feathers just sprouting. If so, this was very curious, because, as was well known, this little bird performed the duty of foster parent to both the koheperoa and the shining cuckoo, two species belonging to very different genera. The warbler built a pretty pensile nest, with the entrance near the top, protected by a kind of porch. It would seem in this case that the predatory cuckoo had devoured the rightful occupants before appropriating the nest and depositing its egg. His impression was that the nestling which the stomach of his bird contained was a very young tui. At any rate, he was sure it was the young of a native bird, for at that time the country had not become overrun as now with the introduced species for which we had to thank the mistaken zeal of our acclimatisation societies.

Annual Meeting: *14th March, 1899.*

Sir W. L. Buller, Vice-president, in the chair.

Abstract of Annual Report.

The Council regret having to report the loss by death of no less than five valued members—viz.: the late Thomas Kirk, W. M. Maskell, John Buchanan, C. Hulke, and Rev. W. Colenso.

The balance-sheet showed that the receipts for the year, including the balance carried forward from last year, amount to £194 6s. 5d., and the expenditure to £95 4s. 9d., leaving a balance in hand of £99 1s. 8d., to which has to be added the sum of £33 9s. 8d. lodged in the bank at interest as a Research Fund, making a total balance of £132 11s. 4d.

Election of Officers for 1899.—*President*—E. Tregear; *Vice-presidents*—G. V. Hudson, Sir James Hector; *Council*—R. L. Mestayer, H. B. Kirk, G. Denton, M. Chapman, E. F. Hawthorne, Sir W. Buller, B. M. Molineaux; *Secretary and Treasurer*—R. B. Gore; *Auditor*—T. King.

The Chairman drew attention to the loss the Society had sustained by the death of the late Rev. W. Colenso, and Sir James Hector moved, That a record be made in the minutes of the great services rendered by the deceased gentleman.

In doing so he said the deceased had been an intimate friend of his