## Political.

THE further progress report from the Select Com-mittee on the Administration of the Land Law contains the evidence of Mr. Fitzgerald, who stated that he had been head of the Roads Branch since 1868, and gave information as to the manner in which roads are applied for and set apart for the convenience of the public. The evidence of this gentleman was given with considerable ability, and it would have been more edifying, no doubt, if the chairman had at the outset put to him a general question, and given him an opportunity of stating the general practice of the department in regard to applications for and the proclamation of public roads. As it is, there is a looseness about the examination of a kind which is too often characteristic of inquiries conducted by select committees,

The substance of the evidence given by Mr. Fitzgerald is that the Government proclaim roads sometimes at the request of the Works Department, and sometimes on the suggestion of dis-trict surveyors, but generally under petition from the public resident in the locality. The Govern-ment have also reserved roads in anticipation of settlement as a matter of public policy. After giving this evidence he was asked, "Then how is it that after population has settled, fencing put up, and improvements made, Government have been asked so proclaim roads over so many improved properties? There is a sublime sim-plicity about this question. It might be ex-cusable in a "new clum" totally unacquainted with the previous history and the existing land policy of the country; but it could hardly be necessary for the information of members of the Assembly who know the scattering process which has been encouraged during the last twelve years, and who ought also to be aware that land without roads must be as unprofitable as manufactories without a market. Witness replies :—" There are several reasons why it is necessary; one is, that in many cases the land is not cleared at the time the road is selected, and that a shorter and better way is discovered after the occupation of it. Another cause is the demand for a road in a direction it was not anticipated it would be required. The opening of a new gold-field would require a more direct and better road than would be necessary for mere occupation." These reasons are obvious and sufficient. As the Government has abandoned all interence in relation to the direction of settlement it must be guided by circumstances in regard to the proclamation of roads. It is important that the internal communication should be as complete the internal communication should be as complete as possible, having regard to the advantages to be obtained and the means at our disposal; but it is unreasonable to expect that the action of the Government in this matter will be so enlightened as to render any deviation unnecessary in the future. Formerly the policy was to reserve roads in anticipation of settlement, now the usual course is for roads to follow settlement; and it is sometimes found that the best routes were not originally selected. When the selection has been unfortunate, not only the selection has been unfortunate, not only is there a loss to the public and to the revenue consequent on the greater difficulty of travelling and the greater cost of maintenance, but the vested interaction difficulty of the cost of maintenance of the cost of maintenance. and the greater cost of maintenance, out the vested interests which arise render any deviation difficult of accomplishment. Thus there are instances where lines of communication run parallel at short distances from each other, and the settlers have two tracks badly kept, when, if the money were not so divided, they might have one good

main road.

There are, no doubt, many instances where Government has had to pay heavily by way of compensation for land, because it had failed to anticipate settlement—just in the same way that it has had to pay dearly for land resumed for rail-way purposes. But circumstances of this kind are not confined to Government transactions. How many private individuals have, during the last twenty years, sold for a song land which they could not now repurchase for a thousand pounds per acre? The Government has encouraged the people to take up land wherever fancy may lead per acre. The Government has encouraged the people to take up land wherever fancy may lead them, without regard to roads or schools, or any other of the conveniences of civilized life, and it is following up its policy with an army of surveyors and roadmakers and schoolmasters. If sometimes large sums have to be paid for land which has been almost given away, to open a road to a rising settlement, the expense must be borne as part of a very expensive policy, which was started with the intention of cutting up the country into small farms, and which bids fair to result in the acquisition by individuals of enormous private extractors.

mous private estates.

According to the evidence, "there are in the office a great number of cases in which transit is almost a legal right, and transit is almost almost a legal right, and transit is almost almost a legal right, and transit is almost the beauty the reads are not proalmost a legal right, and transit is almost impossible because the roads are not proclaimed on account of the expense of fencing." Already many old farms have no access to them. This inconvenience will no doubt be remedied in a great degree by the bill which was passed last session to authorise the erection of public gates across certain roads. Under its provisions, roads may be opened without incurring the expense of fencing on either side. In answer to questions relating to this subject, Mr. Fitzgerald said that when a road was proclaimed through enclosed ground it was the practice of the department to grant fencing, excepting where there was an undoubted right of usor. He does not remember a case in which it has been pleaded that the fencing has been prior to the right of usor, but he adds, that there are very few cases in which fencing has been refused. The Public Gates Act will, in some cases, greatly reduce the expenditure consequent on the opening of the roads; it should, in some cases, lead to the opening of roads which otherwise would probably not be opened for years; and the use of gates across a road at certain points will be often more agreeable than fences to travellers, insumuch as they will not cut off access to the water.

It is satisfactory to find that the subject of roads has not been lost sight of by the committee, although the evidence taken will not tend much to the enlightenment of the public. The following specimen is worth embalming:—Speaking

to the enlightenment of the public. The fol-lowing specimen is worth embalming:—Speaking of the rights of the public in connection with reserved roads, the Chairman asks, "What right have they?" The reply is: "The same as in the

case of a proclaimed road." "Would the public have the right to knock down a fence and pass over them?" "Yes." "And not be liable to legal consequences?" "Quite so." Whatever this last reply may mean, we should advise our readers not to be precipitate in knocking down fences under the impression that they will not be liable to legal consequences. to legal consequences.

# Natural History.

BY GRRAND KREPPT,

#### Remarks on New Creations.

Many persons believe that all living things on this earth were created just as we find them at the present day, and that after the first general act of the Almighty special creations ceased. It is more probable, however, that the meaning of Scripture is somewhat different from the general interpretation to which we have been accustomed, and though we do not know whether life began with "protoplasms" or "Gregarine," or with the germs carried hither on meteoric stones. meteoric stones, as suggested by some philosophers, so much is certain, it was "from small beginnings like Rome of eld" that this earth, and what is on it was de-Rome of eld" that this earth, and what is on it was developed. Nature must have her time, will have her time, and had her time, or geological records go for nought. The Great Power who alone creates, in the proper sense of the word, differs considerably from man, for with all his efforts he has not yet been able to produce a single distinct species. Let me try and give a few examples:—We have pigeon, rabbit, and poultry fanciers in Sydney, and we often admire the splendid specimens of "careful selection" at our annual shows. We decorate them, and award medals to the spirited breeders, but then our efforts come to an end. As long as we mind our domestic friends, and watch them as we do our children, so long will they continue to improve, but when this care ceases, and they select for themselves, then the points produced by artificial selection are lost. This has, of course, been discussed long ago, and is now tolerably well proved. discussed long ago, and is now tolerably well proved.
"Breeds deteriorate" is the expression, because we do
not know better; but the animals simply obey the laws not know better; but the animals simply obey the laws of nature, and return to the parent stock from which our artificial and unnatural system caused them to diverge for a time. Let me illustrate my meaning still more. Suppose you have a valuable "pouter" or a "fan-tail," or any other fine and proud domestic bird, and suppose this "lady or gentleman pigeon" joins the pariahs who nestle in the nooks and corners and stop up the gutters of the Museum in Collegestreet, and you will soon find that in spite of all their fine airs, the progeny of the pouters in course of time street, and you will soon find that in spite of all their fine airs, the progeny of the pouters in course of time goes back to the rock pigeon breed, just as a half civilised black man drops all his finery the moment he rejoins his tribe. I have known an aborigine, a smart fellow, well disciplined, and clean, strut about with a glorious uniform of blue and gold in the morn-ing, and seen the same man with nothing but a shirt-on (very short and very dirty), join a corroberrent

smart fellow, well disciplined, and clean, strut about with a glorious uniform of blue and gold in the morning, and seen the same man with nothing but a shirt on (very short and very dirty), join in a corroberry at night. When tired he stretched himself near his little fire, thanking the power in whom he behaved that he was a "noble savage," and had no need to work like "a white man or a bullock." We have similar examples in the more intelligent New Zealanders, and a friend of mine, an old colonist, who had married a chief's daughter, assured me that his wife would often take it into her head to drop chigion labe crinoline, and return to blankets and "her own cance," fishing for days together in rain and storm, and living on the fish so caught, though a handlomally furnished home was at her command.

Take the most intelligent of human beings, small him adrift, and prevent him from keeping time, and he will soon cease to know whether it is Sunday or Monday. Every man who has been "on the wallaby" in this country, or who has lived for some period with our black nomadic race, must know that from civilization back to the life of a savage is but a step. As soon as the last bit of soap is gone civilization ceases, dirt becomes a matter of indifference, and when the salt too is run out the primitive charcoal fire is preferred to the fryingpan, chiefly because ashes season the meat thus roasted as well. Some people think that all savages are fond of salt, but black Australians are not, still they imbibe a modicum of it through their primitive mode of cooking, and in another way by eating the saline "pigface," not our favourite dish of civilization, but the plant called Mysembreanthemum aquilaterals (with my compliments to the botanists, and a request to study brevity in future). What else is our passion for the pursuit of wild animals than a remnant of our once savage life—how eager and how cruel are boys, who are supposed to be nearer to some savage ancestor than educated and grown up men. How soon does the excitement to be nearer to some savage ancestor than educated and grown up men. How soon does the excitement of the chase, if too much indulged in, lead to savage habits, chase, if too much indulged in, lead to savage habits, and how easy is it, by neglecting to apply that most powerful lever of modern society, education, to send a people back to barbarism and cruelty. There are some men who kill and destroy whatever comes within the reach of their gun, though in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred they do not know what to do with the poor creatures whom they deprive of the grandest gift of the Creator—life.

Not to pursue the subject farther, it comes to this, we cannot keep our artificial breeding up, and all our varieties, when left alone, return to the primitive state. I mentioned the pizeons who build on the Museum.

I mentioned the pigeons who build on the Museum, and they differ in nothing from the original rock pigeon of Europe—the supposed primeval stock of all pigeon of Europe—the supposed primeval stock of all the domestic breeds. Dogs furnish another proof of reversion. Dingoes are pleritful near Sydney, on the North Shore at least, and the scarcity of the black wallaby is great in consequence. These dingoes had at one time almost disappeared, and my belief is that their ranks are constantly recruited from the many domestic curs which abound in country districts. According to our best authorities the dogs have sprung from wolves, and the dingo is nothing else than a kind of wolf. It is by no means impossible that, after a comparatively short period, a pair of common dogs run wild re-assume the savage aspect and the erect ears of wolf or dingo; they also forget barking, just as a dingo will learn to bark in captivity.

captivity.

I think it must be clear to most people, that man cannot create life, and it must be also clear to careful observers that creation in the true sense of the word continues under our very eyes, though we may fail to see or understand it. New mammals and birds which continues under our very eyes, though we may fail to see or understand it. New mammals and birds which come more particularly under our notice, suddenly appear we do not know how; we never noticed them before, though we are perhaps old residents in a district where they are first observed; naturalists assure us that such animals are "new" because they differ more or less from certain well-known forms. Have they suddenly been created in the vulgar sense, or are they the result of nature's own quick or patient steps? Take for example the new satin bird of Queensland, named in honour of the late Mr. Rawnsley. This bird was shot in a garden near Brisbane, I believe, and has bright orange wings. Most people who know satin-birds will remember that they are dark blue, and without other markings. Is not such a bird a new being, and is it not a proof of the power of the Almighty, or of the nature under His control, and proof also of the continuity of creation? Mr. Masters has shot several birds

lately near Homebush belonging to species which he once noticed in South Australia; others obtained near the same place appear quite new to science, and could not well have escaped the obserobtained near the same place appear quite new to science, and could not well have escaped the observation of so keen a sportaman for years. Besides there are several parrots in our collection which are not figured by Mr. Gould or others; they may be called varieties, but they came from well explored districts, and have a general resemblance to certain species common in those places. They are in my opinion new creations. There is a native bear in the north, somewhere about Rockhampton, which totally differs from the common native bear of the south, in the shape of the skull, and resembles that "bone of contention," the ancient Zygoamaturus, now better known by the wrong name of Nototherium. This native bear was probably overlooked, and has perhaps co-existed with the common native bear. A snake turned up of late, which naturalists will consider a new species or a new creation. It certainly differs most remarkably from the species of snakes which I had the pleasure of catching, till there are but few left on this side of the city at least. Is this snake a new creation? Another example. of snakes which I had the pleasure of catching, till there are but few left on this side of the city at least. Is this snake a new creation? Another example. Having looked for all sorts of reptiles in our neighbourhood for years, I was fond enough to believe that nothing had escaped my eye, and yet a new and most remarkable frog was lately found near Ryde, discovered by Mr. Herbert Blaxland. Is it a new creation, or was it simply overlooked by previous observers? The frog is still slive, and I am inclined to believe that it is allied to, or identical with, a frog which the late Rev. G. E. Turner once caught in the same district and presented to the Museum, but which he was unable to identify again when I drew his attention to it. At all events here is a very large, very ugly, and highly interesting form added to a fauna which was considered to be well known.

With the lower or lers, such as insects, shella, &c., new forms are more frequent, and some are found almost every day by good observers. They may be varieties only, but when varieties are plentiful and permanent, they must be classed as species. It is incomprehensible that man with all his cunning cannot produce by selection a kind of animal which, when left alone will cease to go back to the original stock. On the other hand, the power which controls the universe causes species to vary without man's interference, and become permanent, and thereby gives man a good deal of trouble when he tries to classify

left alone will cease to go back to the original stock. On the other hand, the power which controls the universe causes species to vary without man's interference, and become permanent, and thereby gives man a good deal of trouble when he tries to classify such new productions. We have examples enough of the quickness with which man accommodates himself again to lead the life of a savage, and the time will come when all civilisation, and perhaps all life—as we know it—must cease for a time at least. If the next cycle produces an improved race of men, who do not invent the art of growing wine and brewing beer, these men of the future will be considerably puzzled hew to classify the profusion of empty bottles of all shapes which every excavation near a former Australian city is destined to bring forth. I wonder what they will think of them.

Not to speculate upon such subjects any more, it is curious fact that the form of man has remained the same for so many ages. When the flesh is removed there is not much difference in human skelemans as a whole, and the greatest philosopher cannot be distinguished from some well made savage, except, methods, by his defective teeth.

Will sature improve the race, and if so in which discussing the greatest ambition of man is to fig. The learner may have caused artists to attach wings to their figures when trying to represent beings uperior to man. But even artists should remember that all yertebrate can have only two pair of limbs, and when they represent winged beings the arms should be so arranged that they appear to support feathers or skin, instead of making their fancy creatures six-limbed. However, since the best naturalists consider birds to be nothing but an aberrant form of reptiles, such representations will probably be looked upon with less favour by future generations; and when these generations have become reconciled to what may be considered disagreeable facts—when they have learned to understand man's proper position, and his relation to the rest of the animal ki

POSTSCRIPT. - Since writing the above the mail has Postscript.—Since writing the above the mail has come in, and with it the usual periodicals, which do so much to enlighten us poor outsiders. There is one paper in particular by Mr. H. J. Carter, F.R.S., on "Points of distinction between the Spongiadæ and Foraminifers," in which the learned author pointedly remarks "In these matters minuteness goes for nothing. Size, light, darkness, motion, tenuity, &c., are only relative in degree; and the degree to which we can appreciate them depends upon the power of our brains respectively, which is limited."

The mind (taken in its general sense) alone can

The mind (taken in its general sense) alone can comprehend anything beyond the power of the brain, which builds up the whole of the body, and permits a portion of itself to be used by the brain it has developed, bearing a relation to the latter somewhat similar to that which steam bears to a steam-engine.

Thus, in the philosophy of the Buddhists, the mind does not perish with the brain; while Christianity promises a resurrection of the flesh. This digression is merely to show that we should not deny or affirm that which is beyond the power of our bre comprehend

## Commercial.

CUSTOMS DUTIES.

following Return shows the amount of custom House, Sydney, for the week endi-	Duties ig July	8:-	eated	
Spirite	#6824	0	2	
Wine	294	11	3	
Ale, porter, and beer (in wood)	1202	13	6	
(in bottle)	4 28	1	6	
Tobacco and snuff	664	17	6	
unmanufactured	497		ŏ	
Cigara	68	10	ě	
	710	16		
Tee	***	15	ŏ	
Coffee and chicory	10.72	12	ŏ	
Sugar (unrefined)	1905	in		
Opium	138	15	8	
Rice	79	19	8	
Dried fruits	19		6	
Nuts	11	16	8	
Malt	30	5	0	
Hops	32	8	0	
Ad valorem duty	5818		3	
Specific duty	1619	1	2	
Bonding warehouse duty	803	ā	•	
	-7	10		
Gold	100	15	7	
Pilotage	200	**		
Harbour dues	799		•	

The opening of the half-year would have been marked by an improvement in trade had it not been for the tolly of English shippers in keeping up the exports to this market at a preposterous rate. The mail steamer just in brought advices of this character; and one cargo, mentioned as valued at £107,000, has since arrived. Efforts have been made to quit English goods at auction, without success. Two sales, held this week, led to the clearance of the Traquebar's cargo of Bourbon sugars, at a decline of from £2 to £3 per ton on ration sorts, and the balances of the

Lady Belmore's tens at from £4 lie. to £7 10s. These constitute almost everything done in the impact.

our London telegram of Saturday last had the following:
—The Bank of England rate of discount is 6 per cent., and money in moderate demand. The bank's reserves are stronger; but the Stock market is stagnant. Victoria five per cents., January and July, 1062, New South Wales lives, 117. Tasmanina stuces, 1124. Bank of Anstralais shares, 524. Bank of South Australia, 33. London Chartered Bank shares, 222. The produce markets are depressed. Copper is dull. Child bars, 521, Wallaroo, £88 to 581. Tin is firm. Straits alaba, £19, Wallaroo, £88 to 581. Tin is firm. Straits alaba, £19, wallaroo, £88 to 581. Tin is firm. Straits alaba, £19, wallaroo, £88 to 581. Tin is firm. Straits alaba, £19, wallaroo, £28 to 581. Tin is firm. Straits alaba, £19, wallaroo, £28 to £41, which is an expected.

Meass. Expuse, Treeve, and Co. report having offected the following asles of freehold properties by public auxistication and private contract within the past week: —Block of land, 40 feet, Newtown Road, at £6 5s. foot.—Mr. Blanchard uprehaser: Thorrbury House, 60 feet frontage, at £11 flss. foot.—Mr. Tait purchaser; 2 silotments land, adjoining Thornbury House, 60 feet frontage, at £11 flss. foot.—Mr. Tait purchaser; allotment land, 70 feet frontage, £11 flss. foot.—Mr. Blanchard the flowing also and Wrench sold 500 bags tin ore at auction, at £3 foot; allotment land, 72 feet frontage, £28. def for 3 per cent. ore.

Meass. Richardson and Wrench sold 500 bags tin ore at auction, at from £66 flss. per ton for 703 assay up to £72 a. 6d. for 3 per cent. ore.

Measrs. Bradley, Newton, and Lamb sold 990 bags tin averaging from 65.3 to 74.3 per cent., which were quitted at the following rates:—Maryland Ruby, £73 7s. 6d.; \$1500.

Expendicular and the flowing flowing flowing rates:—Maryland Ruby, £73 7s. 6d.; \$1500.

Expense flowing rates:—Maryland Ruby, £73 7s. 6d.; \$1500.

Expense flowing rates:—Maryland Ruby, £73 7s. 6d.; \$1500.

Expense flowing rates:—Singular per control per control per control per control per control per control per co

### AUSTRALIAN PRODUCE.

[W. MORT AND CO.]

The wool sales, which commenced on the 24th April, are still proceeding, and will terminate on the 31st instant—the arrivals in time having been as follows:—

New South Wales	and	Queensland			20,648
Victorian	***	***	***	***	80,478
Tasmania	***	***	***	***	6,016
<b>Bouth Australian</b>		•••			31,794
West Australian		***	***	***	1,294
New Zealand		•••	***		37,738
Cape and Natal	***	***	***	***	23,256
Model					*10 *00

Total ... 110,306

The attendance of buyers, both home and foreign, was very large at the commencement, and has so continued; and there was an enthusiam in the biddings at the opening sale which seemed to augur well for setlers. This, however, was mainly benedicial to greasy wools, upon which an advance, as compared with previous sales, was soon established of fully a penny per bit, which advance has not only been sustained, but in some instances, as will be seen by the estalogues and account sales, has been exceeded. In other descriptions we cannot quote any improvement upon March prices; whilst in some, such as faulty Sydneys and Queenslands, we are sorry to have to repert a decline of something like a penny per lb. The high-class

provement upon March prices; whilst in some, such as faulty Sydneys and Queenslands, we are sorry to have to report a decline of something like a penny per lb. The high-close proves and Queenslands, we are sorry to have to report a decline of something like a penny per lb. The high-close Port Phillips are ldd per lb. lower than during the last series; and Capes, for which the demand has been small, may also be quoted fully light down. It is reasonable to suppose that the financial cruis in Germany, which has been for some time threatening, has had its influence upon the present sales, having already caused an advance of ! per cent. in the Bank of England rate of discount, with every probability of a still further advance being necessary. The sanguine and hopeful amongst us will think that when this influence has worked liself out, there will be a brighter prospect for our wool producers, which is by no means unlikely.

Cotton.—Receipts at the American ports have been very heavy; which fact, combined with the unfavorable state of the money market, has depressed the cotton trade, and prices of the raw material have fallen ¼d per lb., though at the moment a slightly better demand has sprung up. Owing to the inferiority of recent imports of American and Australian, and the abundant supply of the former, these descriptions have been every dull of sale. 400 bales of the latter kind have been cold at 1¼d to 3½d for low to good colour—poor staple. In commun with all long staple sorts, Fiji has been extremely dull, and prices have again declined. 169 bales have changed hands at 16d to 31d for middling to good long staple; 13d to 14d for slightly mixed stained; 9d to 11d for stained; and 9d for ordinary saw ginned kidney seed. The estimated stock of sea island in Liverpool on 5th instant was 11,000 bales against 6259 bales at corresponding peried of last year; and according to good authorities in that market, prices are in some cases 6d to 14d lowe!

Arrivals—From Sydney: Decapolis, Strathdon, Penthesiles, Abergelde, Ben

Btock of cotton at Liver- pool	200 00A 1	oalos, aga	inet 913,689 220,580	last year
Total	949,590		1,133,060	
Afloat to United King- dom Ditto Continent	411,860	i	454,660 174,340	last year

Total ... 455,480 " 605,900 Copper.—The market has been dull and prices have dre Australian receded to 599 per ton for Burra and Wallarco, improved to 599 10s again, but are now at about £91. But has been done in Penk Downs at £94 10s. Chill bits have ded to £87.