

Political.

The further progress report from the Select Committee 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 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 district surveyors, but generally under petition from the public resident in the locality. The Government have also reserved roads in anticipation of settlement as a matter of public policy.

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 railway purposes.

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 impossible because the roads are not proclaimed on account of the expense of fencing."

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.

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."

Natural History.

By GEORGE KNEPP.

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.

Take the most intelligent of human beings, and 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.

Not to pursue the subject further, it comes to this, we cannot keep our artificial breeding up, and all our varieties, when left alone, return to the primitive state.

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.

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 observation of so keen a sportsman for years.

With the lower orders, such as insects, shells, &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.

Not to speculate upon such subjects any more, it is a 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 skeletons as a whole, and the greatest philosopher cannot distinguish from some well made savage, except, perhaps, by his defective teeth.

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.

Commercial.

CUSTOMS DUTIES.

Table with columns for item name and amount. Includes items like Spirits, Wine, Ale, Porter, Tobacco, Cigars, Tea, Coffee, Sugar, Opium, Rice, Dried fruits, Nuts, Salt, Hops, Ad valorem duty, Specific duty, Bonding warehouse duty, Gold, Silver, and Harbour dues.

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.

Lady Belmore's teas at from £4 11s. to £7 10s. These constitute almost everything done in the import markets since our last.

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.

Messrs. Raynes, Treve, and Co. report having effected the following sales of freehold properties by public auction and private contract within the past week:—Block of land, 40 feet, Newtown Road, at £6 5s. foot.

Messrs. Richardson and Wrench sold 500 bags tin ore at auction, at from £99 15s. per ton for 70-3 assay up to £73 2s. 6d. for 78 per cent. ore.

Messrs. Bradley, Newton, and Lamb sold 990 bags tin, averaging from 65.3 to 74.3 per cent., which were quoted at the following rates:—Maryland Ruby, £73 7s. 6d.; Sydney, £73 12s. 6d.; Basil Gammon, £72 2s. 6d.; Little Wonder, £70 12s. 6d.; Hogan's Creek, £70 5s.; Wheel Edith, £69 5s.; Vegetable Creek, £68 5s.; Oban, £60 5s.; Tiengah, £65; Glendower, £68.

At the produce sales held on the 28th ultimo hides were in better request, and slightly improved prices were obtained for well-cured medium weights.

By Messrs. Harrison, Jones, and Devlin: 15 hides at 7d. per lb. 76 at 6d., 2 at 6d., 74 at 6d., 160 at 6d., 138 at 6d., 62 at 6d.; calfskins at 3s. to 8s. 3d.; kangaroo skins at 2s. 9d.; goatskins at 1s.; horse hides at 6s. to 12s. 6d. Hair, at 2 1/2d. to 2 3/4d. JM No. 1, 6 caulk tallow, at £33; HM, 11 at £32 2s. 6d.; Sx B, 30 at £33; CMP Co., 8 at £36; H, 12 at £32 2s. 6d.; M, 48 at £32 2s. 6d.; JDS, 10 at £32 2s. 6d.; JM No. 1, 6 at £32 2s. 6d.; U, 8 at £32 2s. 6d.; M, 28 at £35; K, 15 at £33 5s.; I, at £40, 1 £39 15s., 1 at £36, 1 at £33, 4 at £32 2s. 6d., 1 at £32, 6 at £31, 2 at £29 10s., 4 at £23 10s.

There was a fair attendance at the leather sales on Thursday, good competition for almost every line submitted, and prices steady. Sole leather realized 6 1/2d. to 12 1/2d.; harness, 14d. to 17 1/2d.; goat, 14d. to 3s. 0 1/2d.; calf, 3s. to 4s.; cordovan, 3s. 2d.; yearling, 2s. 7d. to 3s.; kip, 1s. 9 1/2d. to 2s. 5d.; tweed, 3s. to 4s. 9d.; kangaroo, 3s. 4d. to 4s.; wallaby, 3s. 3d. The sales were:—

AUSTRALIAN PRODUCE.

[W. MOBT 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:—

Table showing wool sales data for various regions: New South Wales and Queensland, Tasmania, South Australian, West Australian, New Zealand, Cape and Natal.

The attendance of buyers, both home and foreign, was very large at the commencement, and has so continued; and there was an enthusiasm in the biddings at the opening sale which seemed to augur well for sellers.

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 1/4d per lb., though at the moment a slightly better demand has sprung up.

Arrivals.—From Sydney: Deerpollis, Strathdon, Fentleson, Abergeldie, Ben Lomond, Strathnaver, Border Chief, and Dover Castle, with 783 bales of cotton. From Brisbane: The Indus, with 1 bale.

Copper.—The market has been dull and prices have dropped. Australian receded to £94 per ton for Burra and Wallaroo, then improved to £95 10s. again, but are now at about £91. Business has been done in Peak Downs at £94 10s. Chili has been receded to £37.