SEPTEMBER, 1875.

The usual monthly meeting of the society was held on Monday, the 13th September. M. Allport, Esq., V.P., in the chair.

The following returns were brought under notice:—

1. Visitors to Museum during August, 1,253.
2. Ditto to Botanic Gardens, 3537.
3. Plants received at gardens:—From Captain Willet, 74 packets of imported seeds. From the Dolroyd Nursery Company, Sydney, 32 plants. From S. B. Heyne, Adelaide, 8 packets seeds. From Messrs. Shepherd and Co., Sydney, 60 plants.
4. Plants, etc., sent from gardens:—To the Botanic Gardens, Christchurch, New Zealand, 90 plants. To Dobroyd Nursery, Sydney, 32 plants. To Botanic Gardens, Adelaide, 100 packets seeds. For the grounds of St. David's Cathedral, 114 plants.
5. Time of leafiing, etc., of a few standard plants in Botanic Gardens during August.
6. Books and periodicals received.
7. Presentations to Museum and Library.

Meteorological Returns.

1. Hobart Town, from F. Abbott, Esq.—Table for August.
2. Port Arthur, from J. Coverdale, Esq.—Ditto July.
3. From the Marine Board.—Mount Nelson table for August; Swan Island ditto for June and July.
4. From the Government Observer, Melbourne.—Table for March.
5. From ditto, Sydney.—Tables for May and June.

The presentations to the Museum and Library were as follows:—

1. From P. T. Smith, Esq.—A Musk Duck *(Biziura lobata)*, shot at Cleveland.
2. From Mr. E. P. Cotton, Swansea.—A young Tippet Grebe *(Podiceps Australis)*.
3. From Mr. John Crawford.—Specimen of Flax from the Huon, grown and prepared by the donor.
4. From C. E. Hogg, Esq.—Specimen of the paper-like bark of a species of *Melaleuca*, from Lake Hindmarsh, Victoria.
5. From Mr. W. E. Baynton, Kingston.—A collection of the stone implements of Tasmanian Aborigines from that district.
6. From Mr. S. H. Wintle.—Specimen of Bismuth from Mount Ramsay; tin bearing wash dirt and porphyry, cassiterite on sandstone, etc., from George's Bay. Skin of an echidna.
7. A Japanese bronze coin, value about one penny, and a note value 10 cents.
8. From Mr. W. Parker, Lewisham.—A curious growth, known as "arching" of branch of gum tree.
9. From Mr. E. Gard, Sorell.—A Ferret.
10. From G. Bennett, Esq., M.D., F.L.S., F.Z S., Sydney.—A large collection of bones of fossil mammals from Gowrie Creek, Darling Downs, Queensland, viz.:—Fossil Kangaroo—16 Vertebræ; 7 fragments of Pelvis; 5 ditto Tibia; 1 ditto Radius; 2 ditto Humerus; 1 ditto Scapula; 2 bones of Foot; 1 fragment of Femur; 2 ditto of Jaw; 1 bone of Sternum; 5 Ribs. Fossil Wombat—1 Upper Jaw; 2 Vertebræ; 1 Radius. Diprotodon—Portion of Skull; Lower Jaw; 9 Vertebræ; 4 fragments of Pelvis; 10 Ribs; 1 Humerus; 1 fragment of Tusk. Nototherium—1 Jaw.
11. From T. Stephens, Esq.—Three specimens from the prospecting shaft, Spring Bay. In reference to this presentation the following remarks by the donor were read:—

["These specimens have been kindly furnished by the Hon C. Meredith. The coal, which was struck at a depth of about 120 feet,

is a slaty anthracite, containing some calcite, like the Jerusalem coal, and a little sulphur. It is of no value, owing to the thinness of the seam—8 or 9 inches. The specimen of shale (No. 3) was met with at about 140 feet. It contains numerous vegetable impressions, but they are so much confused and obliterated that I can only identify a fragment of *Pecopteris Australis*. So far as the evidence goes, there is nothing to discourage the promoters of this enterprise; but if they do not strike what is known as the 5ft. seam, at a depth of 180 to 200 feet, the inference will be that they are too low down in the series, and they should look out for a locality in which there has been less denudation of its upper members."]

Presentations to the Library—

1. From Dr. Agnew.—Journal of the Archeological Society of Ireland, Nos. 13 to 19, and part 4 (plates).
2. From the author, Baron F. von Mueller, on the part of the Government of Victoria—"Fragmenta phytographiæ Australiæ, vol. 8.
3. From the Government of New Zealand.—"Transactions of the New Zealand Institute," vol. 7.
4. From the author, J. Wood Beilby, Melbourne.—A pamphlet on mining for gold and coal.
5. From the Royal University of Norway.—Sundry publications on Geology, Entomology, Egyptian inscriptions, etc.

J. R. Scott, Esq., M L.C., read an account of a visit made by him to Port Davey in March last. This exceedingly interesting paper was listened to with marked attention. It was illustrated by sketches of the local scenery, the "piners" huts or "Badger Boxes," etc., and also by a large and very well executed chart of Port Davey and the surrounding country, drawn by Mr. Scott himself, partly from personal survey, and in part from the Government map of the country.

The Rev. Julian Woods drew attention to some remarks made by him at the previous meeting with reference to certain flint implements, and the antiquity of cave remains. What he intended to convey was not so much his own opinion as that of eminent geologists, whose conclusions on these subjects had undergone considerable modification of late years. He was only citing the observations of Prof. Prestwich in his inaugural address on assuming the professorship of geology at Oxford on the 29th of January of this year; in which, referring to the theories of other geologists, and to the philosophy of Hutton, Playfair, and their successors, Mr. Prestwich said it is a question whether the license which was formerly taken with energy is not now taken with time. The points at issue are, first, whether our experience on these questions is sufficient to enable us to reason from analogy; and secondly, whether all changes on the earth's surface are to be explained by the agency of forces alike in kind and degree with those now in action. Mr. Prestwich then states his reasons for answering these questions in the negative. He (Mr. Woods) merely drew attention to the fact of a race using flint implements having become extinct within the last 60 years as a case in point.

Mr. Rule took occasion to remark with regard to the cave at Brixham, mentioned last month, as one of the evidences of the great antiquity of man, that the stalagmite forming the floor was only one foot thick, not many feet, as the published report represented him to have said. He added that the thickness of the floor was not the only indication of the remote period when the cave-dwellers lived, for underneath was a bed of loam fifteen feet deep, beneath that a bed of gravel deeper still, and some of the flint implements were found at the bottom of all. Moreover, the cave was on a hill side, a hundred feet higher than the present beds of the neighbouring streams, which, since the water deposits in question, appear to have worn down their beds to that extent. This process (the

formation of ravines by running water) must, under ordinary circumstances, occupy an enormous period of time.

After some further conversation on the subject, in which the Chairman and Messrs. Grant and Woods took part, Mr. Barnard moved that the cordial thanks of the meeting be given to Mr. Scott for his highly interesting paper. He would also include a special vote of thanks to Dr. Bennett for the large and valuable selection of Queensland fossils, with which he had enriched the museum.

The motion was carried by acclamation, and the meeting closed with the usual acknowledgement to the other donors of presentations.