NOVEMBER, 1878.

The monthly evening meeting of the Society, the last of the present session, was held on Tuesday, the 12th Nov., J. Barnard, Esq., in the chair.

The Secretary, Dr. AGNEW, brought forward the usual returns for the past month, viz.:—

1. Number of Visitors to Museum, 2616.
2. Ditto to Gardens, 5833.
3. Plants and Seeds received at the Botanic Gardens during October: —From C. H. Huber, France, 34 packets seeds; from Mr. F. M. Bailey, Queensland, seeds of *Eucalyptus Baileyana;* from Mr. E. B. Heyne, Adelaide, 200 packets seeds; from Mr. Lidbetter, plant of *Cephalotus follicularis.*
4. Time of leafing, flowering, and fruiting of a few standard plants in the Botanic Gardens during October.
5. Books and Periodicals received.
6. Presentations to Museum.

Meteorological Returns:—

1. Hobart Town, from F. Abbott, Esq.—Table for October.
2. New Norfolk, from W. E. Shoobridge, Esq.—Summary of Observations for October.
3. Coast Stations, from the Marine Board—King's Island, Tables for July, August, and September; Mount Nelson and South Bruni, Tables for October.

The presentations to the Museum were as follows:—

1. From Captain J. W. Johnson, barque Sea Shell—Two Bows, one Club, one Fishing Arrow, and a bundle of Poisoned Arrows, from Pentecost Island.
2. From Mr. W. F. Petterd — Fourteen new species of Tasmanian Land Shells.
3. From Mr. E. N. Spong—A curious sponge from King's Island.
4. From Mr. J. E. Baynton—Two Specimens of a Fungus, somewhat resembling the Morel of Europe, from a gully on Mount Wellington. (One of these specimens has been sent to Baron von Mueller for identification.)
5. From Mr. Yeoland—Three fine specimens of a species of Coral, from Long Bay.
6. From Mr. C. E. Beddome—Type specimens of a new species of *Succinea*, from Queenborough.
7. From Mr. J. C. Bethune, Dunrobin—Specimens of the Mountain Thrush (*Oreocincla lunulata*).
8. From the Rev. B. Stafford Bird—A Salmon grilse, caught off the Carlton Bluff.

(This fine specimen was caught in a net by the Rev. B. Stafford Bird, in the salt water, about fifteen miles to the east of the entrance to the Derwent.)

9. From Mr. B. R. Dyer—Specimens of curious shell-like cases made by the larva of an insect.

In reference to these specimens Mr. Dyer writes:—"Mr. Swainson, F.R.S., F.L.S., &c., &c., in his treatise on shells and shell-fish, gave a description and drawing, and also erected a new genus (*Thelidomus*) for the reception of what he supposed to be an entirely new and distinct form of fresh water shell. His disappointment must have been great when the observations of other scientists disclosed the fact that his supposed discovery was not a shell, but simply the home of a small freshwater insect, constructed with great skill out of small particles of sand cemented together with some glutinous substance. So true and

exact is the formation of a Helix imitated that Swainson may reasonably be pardoned for committing such an error, especially, considering he had not the opportunity of seeing the clever little insect which thus deceived him, and which is now known as "Swainson's mistake." It may be interesting to Naturalists to know the further distribution of these singular formations, which, hitherto, so far as I am aware, have only been found in India and Brazil. I had not heard of their presence in Tasmania before I discovered my first specimens, about nine months since, in a tributary of the Upper Huon River, where they abound in countless numbers. I had splendid opportunities of noticing the lively little insect which is the sole proprietor and tenant of its house. They are identical, in all respects, with those found in Brazil and India."

The SECRETARY read the original description of these "cases" from Swainson's Malacology; also, a notice of the genus *Thelidomus*, from Sowerby's Conchological Manual. Several specimens were placed under a microscope of low power, and examined by the members.

A letter from Dr. Milligan stating, *inter alia*, that he had forwarded some books for the Society, was read. Among those specially mentioned were Bewick's British Birds, 2 vols.; Bewick's Quadrupeds, 1 vol.; Crania Britannica (Dr. Davies), 1 vol., etc., etc.

A paper on the Land Shells of Tasmania, by Mr. W. F. Petterd, was read by Mr. Stephens, who prefaced the reading by stating that the writer was (unfortunately) not a member of the Society. The paper, however, had been forwarded to, and examined by the Council, and as it was considered to be of sufficient value and importance to entitle it to publication in the Transactions, he, by permission of the Council, accepted the responsibility of introducing it. On one particular point the author deserved great credit. It was a failing of many collectors to multiply exceedingly the number of species and even genera. Now, the man who properly reduces the number of species was as great a benefactor to science, as the individual who on the other hand makes two blades of grass grow instead of one, is to mankind. Mr. Petterd, he was glad to say, could happily be included among the former class, as a great number of instances could be pointed out in his paper, in which as many as three, four, or five forms which had previously been described as specifically different, had been comprised under the heads of single species.

The paper was one which admitted of little discussion, but it was remarked that, thanks to the labours of the Rev. J. E. Tenison-Woods, Mr. Legrand, Mr. Petterd, and Mr. R. M. Johnston, the Natural History of Tasmania, so far as the land, marine, freshwater, and fossil shells were concerned, was in a very advanced and satisfactory condition. Some parts of the island were certainly still unexplored, but it was probable that the greater number of specimens yet to be discovered could be classed with forms already placed under specific heads.

A vote of thanks to Mr. Petterd for his paper, and to the donors of presentations, closed the proceedings.