

18 /

The Museum. Eford. Nov. 16 1886

My dear Spencer

You must have thought me an ungrateful brute. but when you hear all the facts I feel sure you will modify your opinion. To put it briefly I only ascertained from Fairbairn that you were the student of the black man's penis. The package arrived without any note or card to intimate the student & as I had got promises from several friends that they would send me some what specimens they could lay hold of. I was naturally at a loss to know to whom I was indebted for the "article" I admit that I thought of you in connection therewith but I made up my mind it was not exactly in your line & that most probably it was a piece offered from some medical friend. However I made up my mind that I would wait until I received the letter which I felt sure was bound to follow telling me something about the specimen. This news came, hence my ignorance not only of the nature of the thing but also of the donor to whose kindness I was so much indebted. At last Fairbairn's arrival has cleared up the mystery of the donor & I hasten to thank you very heartily, for he truly remembered me. but Fairbairn appears to have very ^{happy} ideas with regard to the nature of the object. I gathered

from him that the specimen belonged to
 a male who had practised certain
 mutilations upon for tribal or other
 purposes. Indeed I at once concluded
 that Fairbairn referred to the "white cock"
 but I was certain the specimen must
 come not be such. For I have photos
 of natives who described which show
 an appearance which I represent
 roughly in the accompanying diagram
 (a) is the urethra split up throughout
 the whole length of the body of the
 penis whilst b is placed over the
 orifice of the canal where the penis
 joins the scrotum. I at once hurried
 up your specimen again & confirmed
 the view I had previously formed
 that it had not been similarly treated.
 From what I could gather from an
 inspection of the specimen the penis
 was of stunted form, (I have seen such
 specimens in this country) & apparently
 circumcision had been practised the
 operation had apparently involved
 the ~~removal~~ & a small part of the
 anterior end of the urethra had thus
 been cut into - That circumcision
 is practised by some Australian
 I believe an acknowledged fact.
 but I am not familiar with any
 method of stunting the growth of the
 organ & I naturally concluded that
 that was a congenital defect. *Question*
 I am very much interested in the whole



franium



If you can find time to write me a short account of the practice of the natives as illustrated by the specimens you sent home. I should be very much indebted to you.

I was glad to hear from Fairbairn such good accounts of you. You must have had grand opportunities when you were up country with that expedition.

There things are pretty much as they were. Gotte you know has returned to us as Professor of Jurisprudence. Sanderson is my *in Regis & Laikesio* has ceased from travelling at least in an open way though he is never weary of trying to get at us by underhand means.

Dear old Jackson I see very little of his duties at Kirk seem to absorb all his time - Brinkham seems to have settled down for good. & Bourne evidently going to run hard for the vacant Professorship when that he comes vacant. He has made himself a University position by his all round good business qualities so you have held up your wisest old man when his time comes. Myelin seems happy & contented as a fellow of Mertons & Garstang is keeping proud by having married on his Lincoln fellowship. You would be sorry to hear of poor Pollards death, an able man I always thought. Chalmers Mitchell is deep in journalism, scientific

otherwise in London. You know
he married one of the Marquis
bodies daughters. Atoms I haven't
seen for some time. I should think
St. John was ^{not} a great success at
Manchester. Marshall was a fault
to follow. Balfour of the Pitt Rivers
has been in very poor health for some
time his condition was at one time
very serious but he is set up again
now & though I cannot say he
has much to fall back upon yet
I hope he may yet prosper as time
goes on. poor chap his system is
soaked with Gout & at times he
has several attacks which leave him
in a very prostrated condition.

Now I think I have told you most of
the news. I am sure after what I
have said that you will forgive me
for my apparent rudeness.

I hope all your family keep well &
heartily. When may we expect to
see you home again?

With true regards & renewed thanks

Yours truly

James Esq

Arthur Thomson