

Box 310
or 552 West St., Durban, Natal
25 Nov 1897.

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Prof H. Baldwin Spencer
The University
Melbourne

Dear Sir,

I have before me your favor of 19 Dec^r last together with reprinted account of 'the Ceremony' for which I thank you. - I had already perused this account in the Report of the Horn Expedition which I obtained in Melbourne when coming to S. Africa. First to deal with my little publication which you have read - As you would readily recognize it laid no claim whatever to anything but a popular discourse on the subject, it was in fact a reprint from several articles written for the Maitland Weekly Mercury & as such bears many imperfections both as to style, plan and strict scientific exactness.

A copy of this publication reached the hands of Mr. Andrew Lang, who wrote relative to it in Longman's of October '96. & also wrote me suggesting my undertaking a properly constructed essay on the Bona Ceremony with full details

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+ authorities - this work I immediately took in
hand and had completed about 300 pp. In 1848.
When circumstances arose which compelled
me to seek to better my fortunes in this part
of the world. I brought the MS. over here with
me together with all or most of my works
of reference on Ethnology etc. but the struggle
for existence has been too keen for me
to allow my thoughts or energies to wander
from the "strict path of duty" to those who
are dependent upon me - this fact has
caused me much disappointment from one
point of view - I have however partially
satisfied my desire in the direction of Ethnology
by being able in my various trips in different
parts of S. Africa, to collect about 50
exceedingly interesting examples of Bushman
Cave paintings. - These I procured some
from ^{the late} Dr. Bleeker's papers in Cape Town which I
arranged & indexed & noted for the Cape Town
library & for his daughter & others from
Mr. Orpen & Mr. Schumker's records & from
my own observations of examples in caves.

These again I have not had time to "write up" or fair copy for publication - My friend Dr. Pat. Moloney ^{of Rhodes} wrote me for information on Zulu life Customs &c - this again I have been unable for some reasons to send him.

I am excusing myself beforehand in order that you will rather that it is not for lack of interest but for other reasons that I cannot write you to great length upon the sacrifice portion of the Bora Ceremony. There is no doubt whatever in my mind that this killing and sacrificating of a victim at certain Bora Ceremonies did actually take place - I spent a lot of time & money in endeavoring to establish the fact beyond dispute but could obtain secondary evidence only upon the point. Four Aborigines with whom I conversed upon the subject did not deny it but by evading my questions - practically admitted them - My first informant was an elderly man (who had absolutely no knowledge of the great importance of the fact if it existed) and who

had not read anything on similar rites. This
man (Miller) obtained the secret from ^{Kamilaroi} an aborigine
on the Laroon R. (N.S.W.) in the fifties or early sixties.
To my knowledge no white man has seen the rite.
It would on account of its nature be most jealously
guarded - An old aborigine, head man, from
the Naroon District a Kamilaroi admitted the
fact to me & gave me further information.
I got into his confidence by showing him the
Bora signs & giving him the two words for
Kamilaroi. He thought me an initiate to a
certain extent. - From this old man I got
much information ~~of~~ on the subject of the
gibbers or magic stones also mentioned by
you & Mr. Jillem in Report. - All my notes
are with me here but require a great deal
of overhauling & editing. & this work I cannot
honestly afford to do at present. - However I
shall seize the first opportunity & "ship"
them into some shape. add them to what
I have already written & send them to
you - The matter is one of such great
importance that I could not merely "throw

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my material together & have it cast aside
for lack of proper care being exercised -

My financial losses ^{here} combined with a general
distaste for the Country have turned my eyes
~~away~~ back to Australia & if I receive
letters containing any congenial offer in reply
to my enquiries, I shall return & try to make
the best of a huge mistake - if I do return
I shall have the greatest pleasure in
interviewing you & having a conversation on the

subject - I have given you more information
of a kind ⁱⁿ this letter than you asked for but less
than I should have wished on the subject

You most desire to hear of - why I should
have done the first I do not know. but you
may put it down to the fact that I haven't
looked at The Golden Bough for over 5 months.
In any matter pertaining to the Zulus upon which
you wish information I ~~will~~ am at your service.

Yours faithfully

H. A. Squibb