



Office of the Northern Protector of Aborigines,

of Home Secretary

Cooktown,

8th Feb. 1903

Brisbane

My dear Speeres.

Very many thanks indeed for all your trouble for the hints and references which in almost every case I have followed; - with regard to sections 67 and 68, see my notes on margin of attached slip.

In sect. 110, ham-string is correct: the blacks have an idea that when a person is sick, and ~~too weak to~~ ^{too weak to} get on his feet, ~~that~~ the ham-strings have been cut (a punishment which is inflicted for various offences); it is only fair to state that I never saw one of these alleged bits of ham-string which is supposed to bring luck to its owner.

The other points over which you had doubt, I think I have now made perfectly clear by the addition of foot-notes.

I am taking the revised proofs back to the Government Printer to-morrow and as he will next be making them up into pages - I will get ~~four~~ 2 extra proofs

struck off (just as they will appear when published) by the end of the week, and will send you and Tyler each an advance copy so to speak, together with the illustrations.

I have very good reason to ignore the gentleman whom you mention in your letter - (1) because he has always avoided meeting me straightforwardly (2) he has tried to do some dirty work with me - but it didn't come off, and (3) about 18 mos ago, he acted the Common or garden blackguard as follows.

A lady friend of mine, inspired with a little enthusiasm through the perusal of my grammar, took up the work and after a great deal of wavy time and labours got together a neat little paper on one of the N.S.W. dialects. The gentleman in question happening to hear of her work, expressed his great interest in it, and asked for ~~the~~ ^{his} lady's ~~read~~ ^{read} this grammar as his own before one of the local Societies! He is a true parasite - no "mutualism" or "Commensalism" about him.

I can assure you I feel very proud of your congratulations: you know me well enough to realise that when I say this I mean it. It's all Kicks and very little ha'pence up here! - by the by, did you hear how I was attacked in Parliament last November, and how the Minister defended me, the debate reaching into 6 or 7 pages of Hansard. It was very funny. I tell you candidly that I tried to make this present bulletin a success - it's the most difficult which so far I have attempted, but then it means no less, which have been collected since 1894 when I first ~~was~~ went to Borlita. I intend working in this district again this year - and hence hope to find something more about the re-incarnation & being from these Borlita blacks. What disheartens me so however is that all these blacks are dying off so speedily, and the younger generation knows nothing!

Please remember me kindly to Martin; I would much like to see the dear old chap again.

Let me congratulate you on having such nice fellows ~~under~~ ^{about} you like Frank Andrew and O'Brien: if you've got any more of that species, send them along.

Yes, I often think of the dear old times at Oxford, and how I wasted my opportunities. But I think I've now made up for all deficiencies and errors of early youth! - at least, I've worked hard since, and certainly tried to make up for lost time. These thoughts came back to me somewhat forcibly a few months ago when I heard of the death from cancer of poor Lady Ferguson - "Bee" Max Müller that was - my old "pal" of undergraduate days.

By the by, I'm going to ask you a favour old man. When you have time I would be awfully grateful if you could let me have a copy of the photo-group, with Moreley in the centre, that was taken at the Museum just before we went in for our finals: also please put underneath,



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all the names, some of which I dare say I shall have forgotten. Like yourself, I have the signs of age coming on, but thank God my heart is young, and I can still enjoy life and see and recognize all its charms and beauties. Added to this, I love my work, so what more does a man want?

My dear wife is looking forward to welcoming my boy Vincent who arrived in Sydney from Scotland yesterday. He is now thirteen, and it is 9 years since I have seen him, - so that you can imagine the rejoicing when he arrives next Thursday.

I quite agree with you ~~with~~ in your views about teaching the aborigines too much: - views endorsed by the

northern missionaries themselves; indeed, glancing at my reports you will see that they are really, reformatory and industrial schools - I quite agree with you as to the pauperizing, pampering, and over-education to which the blacks have been subjected in other states. At any rate, I shall soon have another annual report to send you - so you can then see for yourself what progress I have been making.

I sincerely trust that you and yours are all keeping well, and have got through the last heat-wave all right, and with kindest remembrances from us both to you all

Believe me

Always yours
Walter Roth

I will post ~~the~~ the advance proofs directly, I get them, both to yourself and Tylor - the latter wrote me on the same subject a few weeks ago - and I am very grateful for the references and notes you supplied me with.

I see in your letter you speak of Worgai; I presume there are the Waagai of your "Central Tribes" - which I call the Workai-a.