12 November 1899.

My dear Spencer,

Your letter of 17th Sept. has only just reached me. I have been down through the Peninsula, and got it at Fremantle, I being now on the Government steamer on my way to Thursday Island. Please excuse the note paper and the handwriting, but the ship's vibration is too much for me.

I have taken some careful scientific notes - ethnological of the coast-black between Dauphin Point and Albatross Bay and came across a very curious burial custom - the Jew relative, the one who ate portions of the deceased - remains. It is dumb for some months after, his voice being ultimately restored to him at a special ceremony.

The history of the interview in the Brisbane Courier may be given shortly as follows. A good many people up here are curious of my bill and several questions have been published, asked - the press & elsewhere, as to what work I am doing for the salary. Parliament was also to meet, and being interested in the passing of an amending Aboriginal Bill, I took the opportunity of being interviewed while at Brisbane. The reporter happened to be an old pupil of mine, so that accounts for all the 'Ja'm' - because I do not for a moment hold myself responsible for all that is stated there. I think you know me well enough to know that I would not make such injurious comparisons or have any more interesting imitation ceremonies like than yourself. I have since been informed that it was this same young reporter who reviewed your book as well as my brother's on the Tasmanians in the Courier. I am also sincerely sorry at the remarks re Professor Norris and the word Kangaroo, but you must remember that some few months ago (or perhaps last year) in the Queenslanders there was a whole series of correspondents about the word in question, and hence the Professor's name again cropping up in connection with it.

Of course all my scientific report go down to the Home Secretary now - I keep a press copy of course - but