Illamurta
28th Jan 1896.

Dear Professor,

Many thanks for "Lydekker" who arrived safely this mail. After last mail we had simply terrific heat until about a fortnight ago when a few welcome thunder-showers put a green complexion on affairs. You, no doubt will have heard that I did not visit Alice Aps for the Races & Xmas, which I spent quietly here. I gave an old fellow a month's wood cooking for one so that I would not be entirely alone then.
Turned up on the 24th with the aid of two bottles of beer, things were more typical of a Bush Xmas. Felker sent me out a little pudding when Martin returned, also what he calls a bottle of generous Port to wash it down. It is needless to dilate on his vivid imagination to you, who can readily picture how easily he would translate cheap Colonial into the above highly named liqueur. It was reported that he was to visit the Mission Station this month, and asked him to let me know the date so that I could meet him there. But he changed his mind, dreading the damage to his complexion. Now has he the
I think I should have an opportunity of
receiving from you in a letter, not only the
beginning but also something which he has
told me, that he has some sort of an idea
that he wants to travel. I should quite
adore to hear from him as often as possible,
and his letters, which I should greatly
value, I should greatly value, I should
value very highly. But, as long as he
remains with us, he is not likely to
receive anything from France, and that makes
it most desirable for him to return shortly.
And I am quite sure that he will do so,
otherwise I have an idea that he wants to
continue to stay with us, and that he will
not come back here until the end of the
time. But I hope that he will stay with us
for a long time, and that he will be able to
continue to stay with us.
The complications at home are I suppose settled now this Australia could easily be captured and all of us transferred to a Foreign Power without any of us up here being much wiser with this side weekly mail - I hope America has to come down for although the British race are very much inclined to be aggressive they can retreat when convinced of error and this time I really believe they are in the right. I recently have been presented with a Swan Fountain Pen and an Independent Pen, I am writing with the latter and must say that it is acting up to its name, each time you observe any alteration in the shading of the writing in this pen...
you can fancy one screwing & unscrewing and breathing blessings on the sender & donor equally.

That boot which is to make

Hoorn or Mar ham must have left you with but little time for pleasure for over twelve months now & I can't make out why you don't quietly pack things up & by the dignified silence ride yourself. I fancy if you ignored Hoorn altogether for a time it would bring matters into better train & convince him that common courtesy is just as welcome & necessary at the Antipodes as it is at St James & Hampton Court or such places as your nobility frequent.

Sisters, Aunts & Cousins unite in desiring my presence in Victoria to such an extent that I am almost afraid to go down & cross the Border for fear of only getting back in sections. I have seen none of them for fifteen years & their recollections of me are confined to visions of a youth with nice manners which he dared not to cast off as his spirit tempered having a healthy dread of a long reaching maternal & paternal hand. This has now lessened & if I could really convince myself that it is merely distance lending enchantment to the view I would visit it.

With heartiest good wishes for self & those you left behind when you went to the mountains with Mr Trench. Believe me

Yours very sincerely

Chas