

Illamurta

8th Jan 1898.

Dear Professor

It is just a year today since we left the Alice together + much as I would like you up here again I reckon you are damned lucky to be out of the country or at least the Western portion of it this year - I fancy all the ground vermin must be dead, one never sees the track of any species of rat + even snakes are missing. The higher mammals such as Sheep, Cattle + horses are rapidly

following suit. I hear eleven horses are dead out of the Missionary teams at Horse Shoe Bend. Things are serious here, at the Mission, Henrybury, & at Tempe although Martin wrote that he had a third of an inch in December. I had a long trip about & on top of the Gill Range in November & secured you a few nose bones & hair girdles, the blacks had very little except these & stone adzes which I could not carry, the ubiquitous butcher knife was there but no stone ones & I feel convinced that it is almost a thing of the past for many miles West & at least as far

South as Ayers Rock. As soon as I got back I set sail for Alice Springs but as I had to go on to Paddy's hole I had but little time with the fillen, not even time to quarrel as he devoted most of the conversation we did have to a dissertation on Kingston's many good qualities. He (the Pontiff) looked very well but complained as usual of overwork. I interrogated him as to the duplex system & he told me he had it all at his fingers ends but was not so confident when I asked him why Dodd sent up Griffiths & Johns while he & Kiernan were already on the ground - I told you I had

a job getting back & after the mail left I took a walking tour through from here to the Mission via Palm Creek to start the Blacks back to their own haunts. I should say it was not more than about 32 miles but I found the Bed of the Finde pretty heavy from Palm Creek up carrying a waterbag & some tucker in my fly round my shoulders. I quite agree with your remarks as to his ^{old} knowledge of blacks & I think he would make a most excellent Protector down below. he & the Missionaries I do not regard as a blessing to either Native or Caucasian Population in the

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Country & I leave it to your own unbiassed judgment to say whether the aged & infirm have really done any better from the presence of either party. I had a lively interview at the Mission when I got there but Bogner & I are first rate friends again & trouble I think comes from Pochlow. I objected strongly to being held out as a threat to the uncivilized blacks while the Christian ones were being allowed to do as they listed - you should see the state of affairs there & without being prejudiced, honestly they only hear of the things that are done by the natives who do not happen to be persona grata

with the scholars. The others they
rig out & shield in every way
& when anything does occur they
pretend not to know who has done
it. fancy psalm singing all day
& then dancing all night with
the others in the looer. I have not
heard from Byrne for some time
& cannot understand why he
does not write to French or you,
by the way can you instil into
the mind of this respected gentle-
-man that Pado & I live only a
trifle over 200 miles apart & that
it is much easier to communicate
with him from Adelaide generally
than from here. writing for a Bower
bird he says "if you can't get time
"to skin, send one down in spirits"
"I think Byrne has plenty" as if

as if Pado & I played in each others yards daily.

12th Jan. Today I packed up four poor skins for Mr French & hope he will get one good one out of them & the Bird of Paradise into his possession, in the same box I am sending two large "Liliques" for you, gutted & dressed with arsenical, soap they appear to have dried well & should be stuffable without losing colour. I wish you would let me know how they get down, the large one was a male & the lesser a female. Kean had wasted the spirits when I got back but I expect two gallons by Marsh next month, he is bringing Rations for Tempe. I can't say when I will get another chance

at Boomerang who runs about the Darwent & Belt Range but when I do, rest assured that I will get him in two or three positions. I fancied that his legs would assist you, there is nothing wrong with the Point & I often told you of his legs before when you expressed a desire to have his shin bones. hint the Missionaries & Protector & perhaps you will or perhaps I might get you an order from Kingston for his Skeleton in toto. Jillen was pleased to say that I focussed alright after trying one with his camera but we had no time for lessons in anything else. I sent him the pelates of Boomerang & some others that he asked

for so that he could print & tone some himself, haven't heard or seen results. I had to lay my camera up, could not spare horseflesh to carry it this last trip or two & did not care to risk having to leave it & the packbags hung up indefinitely in a mulgah while we walked home. must try & take it next time though. Dr. Grant sends me a lot of prints that he takes with details on the back but of course he scarcely understands the sort of place we live in, postal disabilities etc & that we have not a druggist within 5 or 600 miles to get "Rodinal hydrochinone etc from. I have an exposure meter & have also made a note of your hints.

Had a very quiet Xmas this year but not so bad if the horse feed worry was away. The boys got a lot of ducks from the Finde & I really spread myself in the manufacture of the pudding. I do not think there ~~was~~ another mob of natives in the North so well satisfied with themselves & their lot for the time being as ours. Mr G's pudding to come & one from my sister sampled today. The Post mistress at W. Lofty told the sister she could send up to 11 lbs. ~~with~~ C. E. C. to E. H. S.

Bend.

Parcel paid Wells 3/- Sargant 3/- = 6/-
Wells has rose price to 6^d p lb. Honest Ted has done the same. Happy New Year.

Yrs truly
E. Sargant

This is from Charlotte Waters.

Kean is just back from Erldunda
tells me Parde is going to put 500
cattle at Sepilla (you know a mile from
here) & this means that I will have
to take our horses somewhere if it
holds out. Colata & Co on Erldunda
or Glen Helen are only places I can
think of at present but I might get
a swagge down at Roger's Pass.

Glad your garden is still flourishing,
ours is a shadow of itself & everything
stunted - tomatoes spotted & melons burst
when half ripe - fancy us being glad to
buy as the passing Afghan to sell.
Potatoes a 3^d lb & Onions a 6^d - low rates
owing to so many going bad on the
Vendor but it will give you an idea
of what the vaunted Oavis has come to.

This will reach you in the midst

of the Federation Tuss & I believe
the clan will be very strongly rep-
resented in your city about that
even Felix & his wife are coming over
from West Aust. I hope Mr Spencer &
the children had a really nice time
at Toronto & that the publication of
the Book of the Century will enable
both you & Ellen to devote a little

time to your wives. Mrs G. looked hap-
py & tried. Please thank Mr Spencer
for her kind enquiries after me. I am
right as ever & the spell here for the
last three weeks has completely set me
up. Most sincerely wishing that you
all will have many pleasant prosperous
New years & at least seven of Plenty with
the phenomenal low. Believe me

Yours very affectionately
Ernest Lowe