Melbourne
Dec 12-97

My dear Balfour,

The immediate

function of the labours is to tell

you that our old friend Roth

has been at work amongst the

aboriginals of Queensland and he just

published a book called "Ethnological

studies among the North West Central

Queensland Aborigines." It is published

by the Queensland Government and

contains some valuable material. He has

evidently worked in complete ignorance

of what has been done by others which

in certain respects make his work all

the more valuable. There are certain

points in which it would have been a

great advantage to him if he had

known something of what had been

done already by men such as Howitt.
In the session from 7 to 8, I was interested in the

presentation of a series of images which I call "pictures". The images are not literal but rather a form of abstract representation. The images are meant to evoke certain emotions and thoughts in the viewer. One key element in my work is the use of color, which I believe can greatly enhance the overall impact of the images. I am currently experimenting with different color schemes and techniques to achieve the desired effect. I am also working on developing a narrative structure for the images, as I believe this can add an additional layer of meaning and engagement for the viewer.
I am told that some work left to take a little time.

Affairs - my own work left for the next week.

[Handwritten text not clearly legible]
...
Jan. 28. 98

I found this little in my bag today, though it is now rather a matter of ancient history. It is being sent. Since W was begun I have heard from Kite.

In a critique in one of our papers I made some remarks concerning his having missed the latems but he tells me that as they didn't fit in with the train except N. Ann. widows he came to the conclusion that they were not latems in the strict sense of the word. He has been appointed medical officer or something in charge of the natives of N. Queensland and evidently as yet been on the work but I am much afraid that he will tire in a short time though he has opportunities now such as no man has yet had out here.

In Sydney Hovell was president of the Ethnological Section of the Ass. and gave a
Jan 28, 98.

Surely most truly address on the origin of the Australian natives. He has a good part of the requisite anthropological, geographical & philological knowledge such as I think he save himself has. Seeing that he is resident in the Colone, one at home seem to take much notice of his work as in England he would be F.R.S. & others know that.

We had some rare and philosophical cranks at the meetings & amidst some good work I never before heard such idiotic book as one of them pronounced.

Old Fison was in the chair at times & the way in which he dealt with them was enough to bring down as it did the audience. I had come to the conclusion that if you have any capacity at all it is a good thing to say 'Sir, I am a fool' &fortunately broad. To see
It must be borne in mind that we whom we think your friends, the Aborigines, are smaller than myself. I am a comic sight. Meantime, in about a few days or fortuitous event I hope to have finished this.

There seems to be a kind of platitude in the way of semi-autobiographical-religious literature. But there is a futility in being so as well as a mystery. The evolution of the idea of God seems to me to be the main event of extracts from every body except himself. We can then imagine him saying when he becomes the Maker (where do I come in?)

In short I prefer to read Fraser undisturbed.

Have you ever read a book called "Old New Zealand" by a "Patrician Man" (pub. in Auckland 1863). If you have not you might. It is an account by an early visitor to N.Z. Of his experiences, and you a wonderfully bright idea of certain of their customs. This Patrician was a man with a most remarkable sense of humour and also one who could see things from the native point of view which as I have said before I myself have not been able to.

What we want most in regard to Australian anthropology is a small committee to draw up an index explanatory. It is simply exasperating to see the statements which find their way into print or are accepted by European writers as gospel truths. Your people at home can scarcely realize the fact that it is only about one man in a thousand who has the special ability of understanding a savage.
most unfortunately he is the one man who cannot write what he knows. A man may be really honest and well meaning but unless he can put himself into the position of a writer and think as he does he will in all good faith write as some of them do the veriest nonsense and yet because it is in black and white it is quoted and quoted until people believe it is true.

I hope that things please with you in Oxford and would much like just now to have a look round some things in the Pitt Papers. You have probably all heard of Australian Things House that we have out there which is not saying very much for you. I am sorry to say our chance has passed by.

Yours sincerely,

W. Aldenbridge.