

Oempelli Station
 Hart Alligator River
 May 24, 16

Professor Baldwin Spencer Esq
 National Museum
 Melbourne

Dear Professor

I got home a week ago to day, from a very unpleasant trip, and found waiting about 250 two hundred and fifty natives. They had come from Cape Don and as far back as the Liverpool River. Some were sick and were after medicine. Others were after tobacco. Some of the older natives that I first knew about 25 years ago said, we come to you for tobacco, nobody work along the coast and we are nearly dead for tobacco. We have smoked since we were very little boys and we feel the want of tobacco. That was their meaning, but not the way they put it. Some of the older men had been splendid men, and had done a great deal of buffalo shooting in their younger days, for Cooper, Robinson and others, and now the old chaps cannot get a smoke. O'Brien; the man that I left in charge here; while I was away, told me that there was nearly five hundred natives here at one time, during

my absence. They are holding a farm-bour -
 up the West Alligator River, about 40 miles from
 here. There is a good deal of sickness among
 them, many with nasty open sores, some with bad
 eyes, + other with influenza etc. It is 11.30 A.M.
 and I have done nothing else, than attend to their
 wants. One little chap (old Harryson by name) fell
 from a tree + two pieces of wood went into his thigh,
 + made nasty wounds on the little chap. I got the
 last piece of stick out this morning, and now he will
 shortly be all right (the natives say). Other young children
 have had burns on them. They all come to me for
 treatment. Eye lotion is in great demand. Cough
 cure, they come thirty miles for it. I use Penfield's
 brand of cough cure, consisting of Benzoin,
 native honey, quinine, + water. It is very effective, and
 soon cures them. I fancy that faith has a good deal to
 do with the cure. I am very busy just at the
 present time + have to get through a good deal of
 work before July. I will, or hope to be at Darwin to
 meet my wife, on July 12th so will have to get through
 as much work as I possibly can by then. I am
 sending you four parcels or bundles of Sacred Murri-an
Murri-an Womels. Just at the time of writing
 I am unable to send you the names of them. The
Murri-ans are all numbered, with the exception

of a few that were bought while I was away. You can easily find out their names; by comparing them with others of the same kind. I will ship them through E.V.V. Brown & get him to wire you when he ships them. I have fastened them up in paper bags & tied them with wire, so they should reach you safely. Just as soon as I get or find my book with full particulars of them, I will send the full particulars along to you. You will not be in a hurry to open them I hope. My being away & Mrs Cahill also being away, kind of upset things in general & several little things that has been put away carefully, take a lot of finding when one is in a hurry. By Jove I do not know what things are coming to in the N.T. No private individual will speculate here, Wages will kill all private enterprise, just fancy, 6/- six shillings per hour for wharf lumps. It is a pity that conscription is not in force in Australia, We have heaps of good strong young men in the N.T. That would be much better at the front, than drinking grog at the Hotels here, as they are doing. It is wonderful what a great crowd there is every night at the hotel bars. I tried hard to find out, why poor Linton took his life, but without avail. The two girls are unemployed

in the Government Offices & they all live in the same house yet. Marsh is acting temporarily, and a new man will shortly be at Darwin. Vesty Brothers have completely changed the face of the country at Bullocky Point. Buildings everywhere. The Administrator had a road cut from Myilly Point right to the cliff near Vesty Bros. a real pleasure to drive along and a great improvement to Darwin. We have four or five motor cars plying for hire in Darwin & the people think that they are getting up to date. I ran down from the Hotel Victoria to the Doctors, only stopping at the Doctors' a minute, & the charge was of about 7 minutes for 5/- is a very fair income. I bought a case of Whisky for a friend, charged 4-18-0 four pounds 18/- how is that for high - I bought one for myself to bring to Campelli; two days later and paid 3-15-0 three pounds 15/- the price had fallen. A bottle of Whisky over the bar counter when I was in, was 12/- or 9/- ninepence a noddler. If a good job too, the Gov. will get some of its money back. Sly grog shops are worked this way. The sly grog seller goes to a lot of men who he knows are good drinkers, he has a lot of orders & gets each man to sign an order for a certain amount of grog & ^{he} gets it in bulk. If the police raid the shanty, the keeper

simply shows the orders from the men & the police are powerless. I fancy it won't be long before a new ordinance will deal with the evil.

A good number of old hands are passing away every year. Old Kilian, Larry Benison and several upcountry died. Giles soninlaw, Perry, I hear took poison and died, near Bon Rook Station. The last that I heard from M^{rs} Cahill; she is out of the Doctors hands & able to get about again. She had been under an operation, which turned out to be more serious than she expected, but thanks goodness it is all over & M^{rs} Cahill will be coming back by the Montros, about July 12th. Ruby and her husband, (J.J. Roney) are at the Daly River Demonstrator Farm, which Roney is managing. Roney was out this way, with a survey party and seems a strong, healthy, hard working chap & likely to get on, so Ruby should be satisfied. She said she wanted a bushman for a husband if ever she got married & now she has a good bushman so she should be happy. Some time ago I gave a horse to M^{rs} Gilmore, for the Red Cross fund, Ruby took a ticket and won the horse. Rather strange thing. I hope that this scrawl will ^{find} you in tip top health & that all is well with your

Yours faithfully Paddy Cahill