

(13) Darwin

Dec 10<sup>th</sup> 1915

Dear Spencer

I regret to admit that I did not write you per Aldenham by which Ship I send you a case of Curious needles for me to mention what they are & what they are for as you will understand that when you see them they left here this morning per Aldenham. - hope they will reach you safely & in good order, it is a long time since I heard from you. I have been waiting for a letter from you as I think you owe me one or perhaps I may owe you one, however as there has been a rumor that I may be forced to leave the Island, partly on account of my bad behavior & bad treatment of the Blacks I thought I would send you the case of goods mentioned above. while in a position to do so, I am sorry to inform you that I have not got the Pyongs as promised & that there is little hope of your getting them now for some time as the Aborigine Dpt have made me take all the mainland Boys off the Island

as far as I can learn it was on acct  
of their supposed illtreatment of the M<sup>r</sup>  
Women <sup>obtaining</sup> & detaining them by force. It was  
supposed that the Women would return  
to their supposed rightful husbands, what  
a farce as not one has yet returned to  
an M<sup>r</sup>. man & not likely to, as they  
were given to the Mainland Boys by their  
relatives such as Father Mother & Brother  
as is the Custom with all the Blacks I have  
known, & the Melville Isd Natives are very  
sore about it asking me what right have  
the Government to interfere with their rights  
& Customs, as they (the Government) have not  
given us Blankets or Tomahawks & ask me  
do they intend to give us any. I say I dont know  
& have found it difficult to prove to them that  
I am not the cause of the trouble. I still hope  
to be able to get the Dugongs for you some  
time certainly not this year. My Son returned  
from Adelaide last May. He has grown very  
much as he is only 17 year old & weighs over 11 st  
& is 5 feet 11 in high. he did most of the Buffalo  
Shooting this year we got 650 since July 10<sup>th</sup>  
have now finished for the season. have been



(3)

2

shooting for Warty Bros. no doubt you  
have heard that the Fed has changed hands.  
Do you remember Ted your or our interpreter  
well he died poor Boy about a month ago  
in Darwin Hospital & a few other Mainland Boys  
have died on the Fed in the last 2 years, but  
not many M.S. Boys the last 2 years in com-  
parison to what died in 1910-11 & 12. Thankful  
to say Alice is well also the Baby Girl born  
22<sup>nd</sup> May, poor Josephine died over 14 months  
ago. Trusting this will find both you  
& yours in good health as we are all well  
here. I hope the goods will be acceptable &  
approved of by you, will now close with  
the compliments of the season. I remain  
sincerely yours, from R. J. Cooper  
Darwin.

as B 4 RJB.