

questions when I have time. With very kind regards to him and you
and to my other Australian friends Fison and Howitt (When I think of you all
I feel inclined to say Bravo Australia!
I wish the other colonies would only go and do likewise) -- I am
I am
I am
I am

My dear Sir

Your letter of June 8th. has reached me. I am happy and proud to be in any small way helpful in bringing to the birth (I mean in securing the publication of) such a very valuable work as the joint work of yourself and Mr. Gillen. I feel that all that I can do is little indeed, but I do it with all my heart. Works such as yours (I wish there were more of them than there are), recording a phase of human history which before long will have passed away, will have a permanent value so long as men exist on earth and take an

Yours very sincerely
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interest in their own part. Books like mine, merely speculative, will be superseded sooner or later (the sooner the better for the sake of truth) by better inductions based on fuller knowledge; books like yours, containing records of observation, can never be superseded. I congratulate Mr. Gillen and yourself on having done a splendid piece of work! The labour involved in the collection of all the facts embodied in your book must have been immense. And the presentation of them is excellent.

So far as I see, they could not have been put more lucidly than you have put them. The style is simple, clear, and flowing, without anything superfluous or redundant, just in fact what the style of such a book should be. You are most well advised in eschewing comparisons. Nothing (short of gross inaccuracy) is apt to spoil a work of descriptive ethnology so much

as an attempt to combine the description with comparisons. Descriptive and comparative ethnology should be kept most rigidly apart; to try to combine both is to spoil both. I think that all the finest descriptions of individual races that we possess are wholly free from the comparative element and are written (as they should be) just as if the writer was unaware of the existence of any race but the ^{one} descriptive he is describing. Similarly the writer should absolutely ignore the speculations of comparative ethnology. You are entirely right in doing so; the one exception to this rule which you have made (that of referring to the controversy between MacLennan and Morgan) could hardly have been avoided, and I think you have been judicious in making this exception to your very wise rule of avoiding comparisons.

I shall be glad to pass the 'revises' in your hand. You will have

seen from the proofs I have sent you that my corrections are extremely slight and wholly (I think) verbal or literal. You need not fear that I shall make any radical alterations in the revise. An author's text, in all that concerns the matter, I regard as almost sacred, and your book is so well written that even in the form of it there is very little indeed that I should wish to see altered. So you may, I hope, rely on the conservatism of my revision. Probably the changes, if any, will hardly amount to more than the correction of printer's errors.

Your proposal to add a glossary of the native words used in the book is excellent and should by all means be carried out. The number of native words used, though probably inevitable, is rather a stumbling block to the English reader, and this would be to some extent removed by a glossary. The glossary should be complete, embracing even words of constant and familiar recurrence like *Churinga*.

I am glad Mr. Gillen is not leaving Central Australia for some time yet. I shall hope to send him out some more