

study the native in his natural state. However if our work provides you with material for your use we shall feel fully compensated. After used to 'choke' over bits which in the report would be of value to you. Yours very truly W. S. D. S. P. E. N. T.

FRAZER

Melbourne

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June 13. 03

My dear Frazer,

I have just been reading through Lang's 'Social Origin' etc. & write to warn you against a man named R. H. Mathews whom you once quoted in a paper sent out to the Aust. Ass. when Dick was Sec. On p 38 Lang writes "Perhaps the most recent, lucid, and well informed writer on the various divisions which regulate the marriage of the Australian Tribes is Mr. R. H. Mathews" - he then goes on to give certain tables called from the same writer. The first two of these are practically based on Huxley's work the third dealing with the 'Worbya' tribe is based though Mr. Mathews does not say so on information derived from a correspondent. The latter gave our 'well informed' Mr. M. the

comed intermarriage in classes with  
the descent of the children. But  
Mr. M. proceeds to arrange the  
classes so as to fit in with indirect  
maternal descent & remarks as  
quoted by Lang that the women  
remain pure to their phosphy which  
is precisely the essence of what paper  
place.

Mr. M's idea was to  
make the Wombaya (real name  
Umbaria) fit in with the Kamitani  
system whereas in reality this tribe  
has the indirect paternal descent  
system.

Later on in his paper  
Mr. M. (un-noticed by Lang) arranges  
the classes so that they fall into  
what he calls 'tribes' because he  
finds quite rightly that the Harem  
follow the father! That is in this  
tribe according to Mr. M. the 'class'  
follow the mother & the Harem the  
father!

I have pointed this out to Lang  
than told him that owing to the  
fact that Mr. M. appropriate with out

acknowledgment work done by others  
& is utterly unreliable neither Sturt,  
Dr. M., R. St., J. M. nor myself will  
have anything to do with him.

The trouble is that Mr. M. knows not  
so many papers that under at times  
also of course cannot know anything of  
the way in which he gets his  
information: an apt to think that he  
is reliable.

Lang seem to me to be in a  
helpless kind of 'muddle'. At the  
present time he is full of the idea of  
the primitive savage as a man  
of really high 'moral' character  
who believes in a great Supreme being  
& therefore on this belief is not  
compatible with such a 'primitive'  
idea as that of 'communal marriage'  
he is against the latter & is  
inclined to support Cradock.

For the time being we must expect  
to find that Lang's ideas will be  
accepted but in future years when  
the evidence is carefully & dispassionately  
weighed I think that the verdict  
will not be in his favour.

I have serious thoughts of paying with  
filled a short flying visit to the nearest  
tribe with maternal descent - the Waraburna -  
just to see whether it really has ~~intelligent~~  
and whether it believes in reincarnation.  
If it has the former then the bottom is pretty  
well knocked out of Lang's criticisms that  
the Arunta etc are 'sports'. I see that he  
keeps harping on this in the new work.

These 'sports' if such they be have a  
wonderfully wide distribution in Australia  
and would have a far wider one if only  
we knew as much of other tribes as we do  
of the central ones. I am hankering  
after the west but cannot at present see  
how to get time to go there as it is absolutely  
impossible, nor would it be fair to the  
University, for me to get away for awhile  
for any length of time. Oh for a minute  
slice of Carnegie's millions which would make  
me independent of the University. As it is +  
having given "hostages unto fate" in the form of  
a wife + two children I must meanwhile  
be content to devote spare time to anthropologic  
work + also what spare means I have.

(Private) that last expedition cost me £500  
beyond the £1000 which Mr Lyne most  
generously gave me. No one but Fison  
knows this + I only mention it to show you  
that work of this kind out here means not  
only time but money if we are to be able to