

Dear little Friends.

I should like you to know some thing about the little black children who lived on the banks of the Murray long long ago. & who have now passed away from it for ever.

They must have been strong little children, they had the beautiful ~~drinking~~ ^{to drink} waters of this great river. ~~that~~ they had the Murray Cod & its little ~~fish~~ ^{fish} cousins the Yabbies & Crayfish & mussels & frogs & the many water birds - ~~but I am~~ ^{that I am} I am I would with flood & drought. & they had the land creatures

too, to feed on, Kangaroo, Lemur, Mallee hen's eggs - every little ^{land} creature bird, animal, reptile.

was their food in its season. In the cold ^{wet} season their built - back shelter ~~was the chestnut shaped~~ like a beehive ~~cut in two~~. Cut in half. & a fire

was always in ~~the~~ ^{the} front of the shelter. The little ~~back shelter~~ ~~to~~ ~~be~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~river~~, & when the

river changed - the mothers would turn the back ^{were} round so that their little huts ~~would~~ ^{were} always ~~be~~ ^{be} always ~~dry~~ ^{dry} & dry. There was plenty of vegetable food for

them too, edible roots, berries or fruit of some kind & tiny edible seeds of a species of rye grass -

which their mothers gathered ^{when the} ~~in the~~ ~~season~~, & ~~it~~ ^{ground} ~~was~~ ^{with} made a kind of cake. Mixing the seeds with water, & the cooking steers in the hot ashes. And there were many kinds of rubs in the Mallee & other trees of which

cut from the trees & hollowed out
holes cut from
hollow wood
bees were
smaller wood

The children (love). These girls feed on the
catt. only in the night & think of making holes
then. These were by brown beetles which they
ate long & thin race. Because they were so
good to eat. The big girls feeds like crickets
sometimes. The little children were (p) (w)
each other for those girls. ~~that~~
I do not think the little means were chosen
were ever very hungry. There is always plenty
of grass in the river area of Australia.
The little children ~~of the~~ their rivers ~~are~~
over apparatus ~~of~~ every position of the
river bank & country which their father
positions on for thousands of years. The
girl ~~children~~ & all little girls children were
made & suppose for. I think all the
mother all green up. ~~the~~ ~~was~~ ~~know~~ how
they will think for these. I feel their little
boy knows how to hear from their father
mother. I suppose as better with each
other. The father knows better
their boy. I see that they feed
when appears in the night. ~~are~~

Very often they ~~went~~ for a walk about

~~sometimes~~
 Though the little Murray natives had no
 schools such as we white people have - yet
 the little ^{the} children ~~school~~; learning ^{daily how} to find
 & kill & catch & dig out iguanas & other meat-
 food ~~& the boys~~ as they saw their mothers
 do - & the boys learned from seeing their
 fathers hunt spears or club. at - Kaiparoo or
 emu, ^{or fish} each little girl & boy, learned something
 every day - the river & the land which their
 fathers & ~~mothers~~ & grandfathers had
 lived on for thousands of years - was their
 river & land, & so they must know ~~every~~ the
 where to find their daily food ~~in it~~. They has
 no pantry or cupboards ~~etc~~ or storage place
 of any kind, & so the food that ~~was~~ brought
 back from the day's hunting were eaten ^{or} ~~in~~
 the evening - all the food being ^{meat} ~~shared~~ ^{divided}
 among ~~the~~ ^{them according to the native food laws.} ~~well~~
 No one punishes the children, no mother comes
 correct her little boy if he did wrong, but the
 little boy ~~learn~~ & girls learned all the
 things necessary for them to know - learned
 the tracks of every living creature, & played in
 the camp at making the best tracks of possum
 or reptile - The boys saw their fathers kill &
 cut up Kaiparoo or emu, giving the proper
 portion to every one - & when they were
 grown up & killed a Kaiparoo - they

would
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divided the meat - in just the same way
as they saw their fathers divide it. The only
knives they had were pieces of flint, which
they chipped ~~to~~ to make a sharp cutting
edge. I have found so few flints in the
Murray area, ~~that~~ & these are so ~~poor~~ ^{small}
small & so poorly ~~chipped~~ ^{made} that I gather ~~from~~
think the Murray natives had to borrow ^{for} ~~for~~ ^{the} ~~the~~
these flints, with some other groups ^{to the} ~~to~~
not west of them.

I cannot find a trace of their campsites
in this place. Since I have pitched my tent -
The whole district is now a farming & orchard
area - acreage are fenced in, & I ~~must~~
walk along an old ^{the deserts} ~~car~~ track to come to
the public road. ~~It~~ ^{all} has been transformed
from wild scrub & waste land into a most
fertile wheat & orchard area & is a source
of living to all its white inhabitants; but I can
understand why its natives have vanished
without leaving a trace today.

In their old wild life, food - from river & bush -
was plentiful - always a - hand - when the men
elected to ~~to~~ in camp they saw these women
to forage, & loafed & sang & corroborated as
long as they desired. They were masters of their
world - lords of the ~~of~~ creation & ~~their~~ women
& children waited upon them always. The
women were the workers & were absolutely
subservient to every man & boy in camp.
A man could beat, man, ~~man~~ & ill-treat.

his ^{woman} ~~wife~~ as his nature ^{prompted} dictated & she had no
address. She was ^{as much} his property, as his tamest
dingo was his property. ~~She came after his dog~~
~~in his mind.~~

I would like you my dear children to remember
that the poor native woman has ~~no~~ ~~idea~~ of her
own - she was the most slavish poor creature
in the world. If food became scarce in drought-
times, she had to bring all her catch to her
man & ~~take~~ after his dog, she might be thrown
a bone or some other miserable gratification - she
had to serve him at all times, ~~find~~ ~~up~~ his
bark or bush shelter, bring wood & water to him
& never eat any ~~thing~~ ^{food} she had gathered until
her man has fed on it & left her the dregs.

When the white people came to Australia,
every native woman was living in this
degraded state - ~~the slave of the man from~~
~~her youth~~ & when she became too old & feeble
to hunt for grubs & lizards - when she comes no
rise from her sandy bed & follow the other
women in their daily hunt - for food for their
men - she was left in the spot - when she has
~~lain~~ ~~fallen~~ down - & the ~~men~~ others went on
without her. ~~she either died of starvation or~~
~~a wild dingo killed & ate her.~~

The white people came & took up their acres
& cleared & fenced & worked, women & men
open ~~together~~ worked in ~~praddock~~
together & get the land ready & make

a new home for themselves & their little children
The natives watched them. The white people
saw no houses or huts of ~~human~~ that men
& women would live in, the little beehive shells
~~could not be called huts~~ - has no meaning for
them. The land was empty - & they had
boys with ^{by their sides} the native women & children
were seen ^{to} to ^{be} ⁱⁿ ^{the} ^{ground} ^{prepar-} ^{ing} ^{on} ^{these} ^{strange}
humans & the white women & children
treated these kindly from their first
contact - ~~with them~~. Some young white
women were kind at first - but their great
compassion was soon roused - & they gave
help & food, & tried to teach the native women
to share in the work of home making - &
the white men endeavoured to get the native
men to ~~share~~ help in the hard work of
~~home making~~, ^{fence & paddock} but these hated the native
men watched the white man & his manner
of life - his kindly treatment of wife & children -
~~the quietness of his life of the white man~~
~~all over the world~~ - his way of living - labours
beyond all - his manner of storing his
provisions - the flour tea & sugar & bacon -
when the native man tasted of these things -
saw the ~~the~~ ^{everlasting} abundance of these
food - the trouble began - he wanted the poor
but being master of all his own necessities
& loved well them - he could not adopt the
white man's routine of ~~of~~ daily walk for
& so he stole & killed or wandered here
& there - stopped by fence & house & 40

his native roots ploughed up & thrown away
for the white man's grubstake which had to be
planted & tended & brought to fruit on his own
& manual labour - & daily manual labour
was work for women only - & so he wandered
with his women & children, but with no rest
his ~~old~~ ^{new} back area was covered with great & fine
foods & fruits - but they had to be worked & watered
& ploughed - & through the centuries of his people
the bush has thickened & the sea has to
yield without labour. He ~~moves~~ ^{would} wander
aimless, from place to place - he ~~could~~ ^{would} not
learn to labour * he has ~~no space~~ ^{no desire} to let off
his energy - he was fed & clothed by the white
people who took up his ground - but he
could not be made to see the value of work -
or the greatness of turning a wild area into
a fruitful one - The white man's food was too
soft - too easily digested - his ^{strong} digestive organs
required the hard coarse food they had fed
on - & he became flabby & weak

The hard working white man despised the lazy native
the native despised the white man for his love &
respect towards his wife & children - the ~~women~~
were slaves - All the white man's ways were new &
strange, & he saw no place for himself to lounge
& do as he pleased - The white food & when he
his family crossed the boundary of their own ground
they became intruders, ~~on the ground~~ ^{when they} because every
group had its defined area & ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~step~~ ^{step} ~~over~~ ^{over} that boundary
was without ~~the~~ ^{the} invitation - they broke the
native group law - & fighting & wounding, sometimes
killing - followed - & then the white man's

Law Council.

~~Gradually they gravitated towards townships~~

~~In Stations or farms or orchards~~

Here in this Murray River area, they saw such
hard constant - day by day work, women & children all
evident - on the days duties rising early & working late,
but their lives had passed so lazily in this bounteous
river area, that it seemed all that they fled from
the vicinity - & as all these native groups were at odds
or at enmity with each other. ^{any} The one group whose
home ground was ploughed over - could not look for
hospitality from its neighbouring group, & so ~~its~~
the families sought the shelter of townships
& sent their women to beg or steal. Giving or causing
trouble in these young towns, they were collected
became derelicts - wandering hither & thither among
the white people. till the King Gov gave them a
big or little reserve where they would receive
rations or work with white men for their living.
Each step they made - after they had left - their
own boundaries took them into strange places
full of strange river maps, & the fear in their
hearts overrode their will to live & they & they
passed on. It is a terrible thing ~~that~~ to see a man
turn over on his side & die from no disease but
a lack of the will to absorb new ways new outlook.
The every day energy of the white man rapped their
vitality & overwhelmed them.
~~They~~ ^{they} has no more place in the scheme of things
than we should have were we suddenly overrun
by such a race of primitives as they were &
we ourselves in such an ~~unfavourable~~ ^{unfavourable} as this
they found in our civilized way civilization

before our presence & our labours changed the
dried desert into fertile lands

My dear little Precious - I may not speak to
you again - your ~~young lives are growing in~~
~~health & vigor~~, but I want you to remember
this that I will say to you with all the truth
& sincerity. Do not think that in the years to
come - when you will be meet & women, some
of you in ~~the Church~~, some in positions of
power & responsibility - do not think that our
natives ~~are dying~~ ^{die} on. because of our cruelty
to them, or because we neglected them or humiliated
them away or ~~we~~ ^{were} unkind to them - I have
spent thirty & more years in proving that
these statements are not true. I do
They are passing from us surely & truly -
because we are Twentieth Century people
every century having advanced us ^{a little more a little}
civilization & they are primitive mankind
unable to ~~span~~ ^{jump} the centuries between. The
new basis of our civilization destroys the
old ^{premises} vessel could not be filled with the new
wine of our civilization

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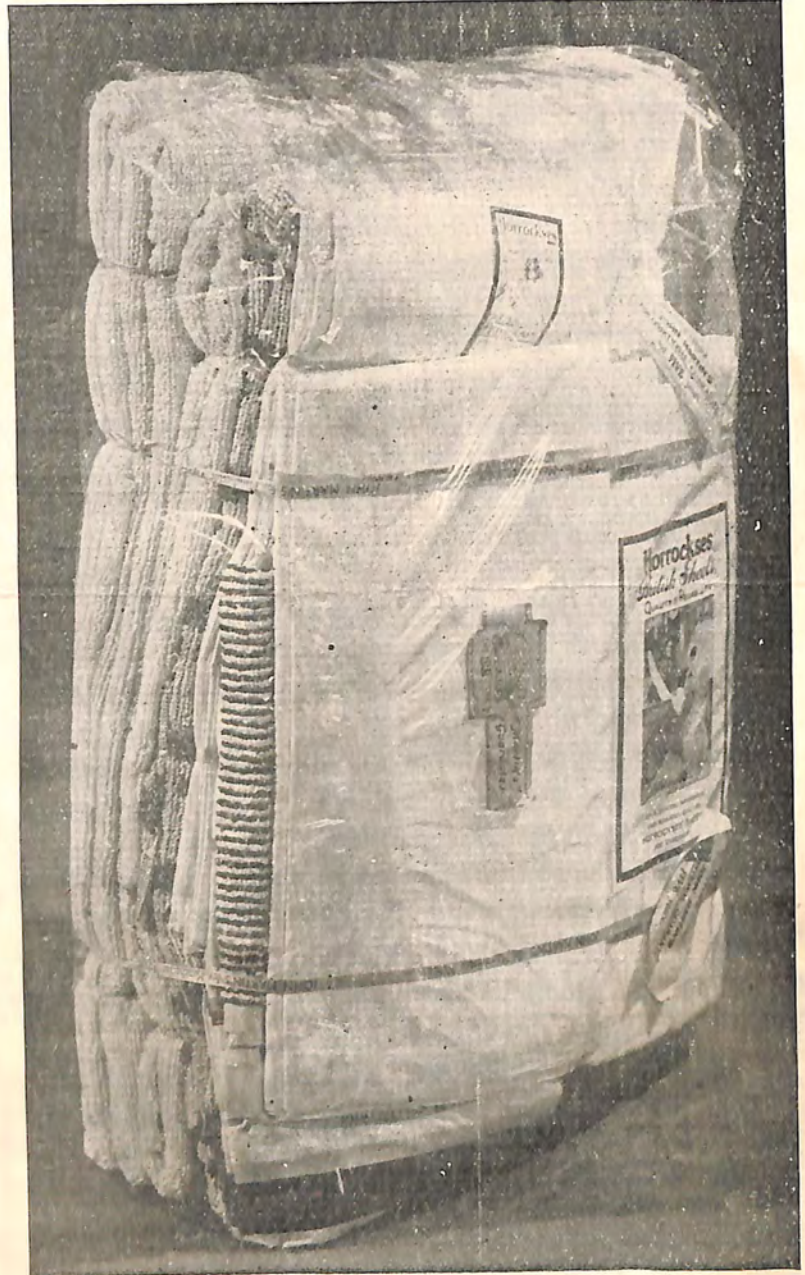
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