

fast fading race. But these conditions were never fulfilled. Mr. Milligan's favor with Lady Franklin was great, but his competency as an ethnologist was infinitesimally small. Perhaps too his salary was too liberal, for he lived at his ease in Hobarton and never honored the aborigines with more than an annual visit. He compiled a so-called vocabulary of native words, which I have no hesitation in saying is perfectly worthless to the philologist as well as to the ethnologist, and the very brief notes which he occasionally produced with reference to the general characteristics of the tribes are not one whit more reliable. Thus was lost a splendid opportunity of giving to anthropology a complete history of this now extinct race, and, as a result, we really know very little about it.

It has been supposed that while Australia was peopled direct from the north through the islands of Timor and Rotti, Van Dieman's Land derived its population from the islands of the Pacific. This was Dr. Latham's opinion; but I have not been able to discover sufficient reason for the supposition. I am more disposed to think that the people originally came across Bass's Strait from the eastern portion of Australia, now known as Gipp's Land, through that chain of islands which connects the line of the Blue Mountains and Australian Alps with the mountains of Tasmania. In my intercourse with the natives of both places, I have found nothing which militates against this view; neither have I been able to detect any thing which seems to call for the theory that has received the powerful support of Dr. Latham.

When attention was first given to the natives of Van Dieman's Land, it was found that the tribes on the east differed in some respects from those on the west. They spoke the same language, but in dialects differing so much that the two people could with difficulty understand each other. Their customs were also different in some details. These points do not however indicate any difference of origin. The interior of Tasmania is of such a character that it would hardly have been possible—at any rate it was highly improbable—that the tribes on the east coast should have had any intercourse with those of the west. They were separated by an almost impassable barrier of mountain and forest, with an impenetrable undergrowth of scrub; so that it would have been very remarkable if some distinctive marks had not grown up in a series of generations. These distinctions however were completely lost when the whole aboriginal population was sent to Flinder's Island, and, except by their pedigree, it was impossible to ascertain with