

weapon of war and for killing game. It is shaped like the small segment of a circle, about two and a half inches broad, an eighth of an inch thick, and two feet long, the ends being rounded. One side of the boomerang is flat, the other rounded, and has a bluntish edge. The native throws it up into the air slantwise with great force. You can see it going up and up until it looks like a little bird in the sky, disappearing altogether at last, then it returns circling to his feet.

The Victorian aborigines belong to one of the lowest types of the human race; they have flat noses and woolly hair. The race is fast dying out. The only survivors of the tribe I knew died some years ago. These were old King Billy and Queen Eliza. The last time I remember seeing them was at Mordialoc, about twenty miles from Melbourne. I was camping out there with some friends, and these two came to our camp begging. King Billy was crowned with a battered straw hat and robed in the remnants of a red flannel shirt. Eliza's queenly form was somewhat lightly covered with the fragments of a blanket. Their only followers were two or three miserable looking kangaroo hounds, if possible more starved than they themselves.

I shall never forget how much pleased I was when visiting the Colonial Exhibition in London in the year 1886 to see on exhibition there a painting of King Billy, which was hanging on the walls of the Victorian Court. A few of the natives of the interior became after a time somewhat civilized. Some proved themselves expert cricketers, and were chosen to play in the Australian team against the All England Eleven on their first visit to the Antipodes.

The Queenslanders are a superior race to the Victorian natives, but even they were essentially cruel and would often leave their little babies to die alone, rather than be burdened with them when travelling any long distance.

I remember the doctor in the vessel in which I went to England from Australia, telling me that his father, who was a squatter in Queensland, found one of these forsaken children, a little girl, on his sheep station (ranch). He thought he would try the experiment of bringing it up as a white child, and having a baby daughter of his own, he had the two children educated alike. The experiment proved eminently successful until the girls were about eighteen years of age. The Lubra (unmarried woman) grew to be a nice girl, and able to both play and sing. Unfortunately, however, some of her tribe returned to the district, and after all those years the race instinct became so strong in her that she forsook her kind benefactor, went back to her own people, and, when seen some years afterwards, had completely lost all traces of her civilized life.

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Ashcroft, November, 1903.