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Source: *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. 15 (1886), pp. 409-422

Published by: [Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland](#)

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Dr. E. B. TYLOR gave a verbal abstract of the following paper:—

On the MIGRATIONS of the KURNAI ANCESTORS.

By A. W. HOWITT, Esq., F.G.S., Cor. Memb. Anthropol. Inst.

Introductory Note.

It might well be thought an almost impossible task to indicate with any probability of certainty the directions followed by the early Australian tribes during their migrations. Savages keep no records except such as are handed down by word of mouth, and which in the process of transmission become so distorted by age and by imaginations of the transmitters that it is only very rarely that such legendary tales can be recognised as referring to events which probably once happened.

This is the case with the Australian tribes. Of their legends and tales there are but few which can be reasonably believed to relate to past events. Such are the Deluge legend of the Kurnai, Woiworung, and Coast Murring tribes; the Woiworung and Kurnai legend of Loän,¹ and perhaps also the legend of the migration into Gippsland of the “first old man Kurnai.”² Such legends as these only throw a dim and doubtful light on some parts of the tribal history, such as their early migrations, and it is in this aspect that I now refer to them.

On this view I have thought it might be well to draft a preliminary memoir, which should have for its general object the broad delineation of some main lines of migration and for its special object the question, “From which stock did the somewhat abnormally developed Kurnai tribe spring?”

I do not propose to consider whence was derived the original stock, the Australian aborigines, but I start from the assumption that their distribution over Australia was from its northern shores, if not from an earlier continental extension still further to the north.

The Migratory Process.

The existing distribution of the class-systems, so far as I have yet been able to collect and compare them, leads me to think that the migrations have not been in an undivided stream advancing in an unbroken front across the continent, but in several streams which spread out on either hand of the main

¹ See p. 416.

² See p. 416.

routes wherever the conditions of water and food were favourable.

In other words, the migration has been diverted into various routes by meeting with obstacles such as waterless tracts or mountain barriers.

It seems to me that the most probable process by which this continent has been peopled has been this. It is reasonable to suppose that whenever a group of the aborigines, who were settled in some favourable spot, became too large for the natural resources of the locality, its younger members would spread outwards in search of new centres, from which in time new departures might again be made. It may, perhaps, be more correct to describe such a process of settlement by saying that from time to time "swarms left the parent hive" to take up a quasi independent existence on their own account, in some favourable locality, either already known to or to be sought out by them.¹

Besides this, which may be called the regular and orderly process of settlement, there must have been also what may be termed the irregular and disorderly process. Intertribal wars would tend to send forth "war-driven" emigrants; broken men escaping from individual or tribal vengeance, and couples who had broken the moral laws of their tribe, would seek safety in flight; and even, perhaps, the wreck of a "totem" may have escaped from a feud which involved it in an unequal strife with a related group far stronger than itself.² Instances illustrative of such causes have been made known to me, and in the past there must have been many fertile but unoccupied tracts into which the guilty or the unfortunate might flee and find a safe refuge from the pursuer. I shall have occasion to point out, when speaking later on of the Bidweli tribe of Eastern Gippsland, that there is evidence that out of such materials new tribes have been formed on the ancient social lines.

Whatever may have been the mode of settlement, there are

¹ According to Taplin, the Narrinyeri had a tradition that their ancestors were led by Nurundere, the Supreme Being, down the Darling and Murray Rivers, and thence east and west along the coast, where they were settled when the white men first arrived. "Native Tribes of South Australia," pp. 3, 55, 61. Wigg, Adelaide, 1879.

² Such a case might have arisen in the Wotjobaluk tribe of the Wimmera River. A "white cockatoo" man had killed one of the "black snake" totem, and according to the tribal custom he had to submit to spear-throwing by the kin of the deceased. He was spared during this ordeal, and, quoting my informant's words, "the old head-man of the Gartchukas (white cockatoo) threw up the piece of lighted bark he was carrying, and the fight ceased." To my question, "Supposing that the Wülernünt (black snake) men had continued their attack, what would have been done?" he replied—"If they had not ceased there would have been a war between all the Gartchukas and all the Wülernünts."

two main lines of march clearly indicated, namely, the eastern and western coast-lines. Others probably lay along the well-watered and generally fertile downs of the great dividing range, and perhaps also followed approximately the direction of the transcontinental telegraph.

Assuming that when the migration began, the physical features of the Australian continent were much as they are now, one line of advance would clearly be indicated as extending southwards from Carpentaria and the country extending eastwards to the sea. So far as the country proved favourable, population would spread, ascending the streams to their sources, and thence descending by other waters flowing on the one hand into the Pacific Ocean, and on the other into the great and arid expanse of Central Australia.

As the streams proceed further from the great dividing range of Queensland into the central depression they become more widely separated from each other by generally waterless and often almost desert tracts, until at length they are lost in the great saline depression in which lie a vast series of salt lakes, such as Lake Eyre.

Still further to the southward where the great dividing range approaches and finally enters into New South Wales, the rivers still flow widely separated from each other by dry tracts, but finally, as the Darling, Lachlan, and Murrumbidgee, contribute to the perennial stream of the river Murray.

Migrations in early times most certainly would extend down such great waters, and would thus become more or less completely isolated from their kindred who occupied adjoining rivers. Thus, in time, well-marked groups of tribes have arisen having certain characteristics in common; usually recognising kindred with each other, and also joining in the same initiation ceremonies. They are distinguished from each other by dialect, by variation of custom, often by variation of initiation ceremonies, and frequently from all other tribes by applying to themselves some special word meaning "man."

Such large groups are recognisable in the better watered parts of Eastern Australia, and even also in Victoria.

I have said just now that such great aggregates of tribes are frequently marked by the use of a common word meaning "man," which is restricted in use to their own males. Thus a very large group of tribes having the Kamilaroi organisation might be spoken of as the "Murri Nation," and this designation would bring them properly into relation with their southern and south-eastern neighbours, who use the word "Murring" or "Murrin" in the same sense. Similarly, a great group of tribes

occupying the country surrounding Lake Eyre, in South Australia, might collectively be spoken of as the "Kurna Nation."¹

In Eastern Victoria there would be found a large "Kulin Nation," and a smaller in the south-west of the colony to which the term "Mara" might be applied.

I suggest that these words signifying "man" may be conveniently used for distinguishing the great tribal aggregates referred to, and in this sense I use them in this paper.

My preceding remarks will have shown my views as to the general process of migration. A few more are now necessary before I proceed to consider of which migratory stream the Kurnai ancestors were most likely an offshoot.

One stream of settlement seems to have followed down the waters which unite to form the Darling, and to have thence traced the Murray River from the junction of the two, until, reaching the sea-coast, it spread east and west along it.

Its eastern termination may perhaps be recognised in the Mara Nation, which in Victoria coalesced with the Kulin, somewhere, so far as I can make out, about the southern slopes of the Grampian Mountains, and more to the east about Colac.²

Another stream which had followed the well-watered country southwards from the sources of the Darling River seems to have divided when meeting with the great block of mountains of which the Australian Alps are the culminating points. These people spread round the northern and western flanks of the mountains into Victoria, where they are represented by the Kulin Nation, whose termination in the south was in the Bünworung tribe, in the extreme south-eastern part of the Western Port District. The Kulin seem to have occupied all the flanks of the mountains from the Ovens River to Cape Patterson, and westwards as far as Geelong, Ballarat, and the sources of the Richardson River. Another branch of the same stream flowed round the eastern flanks of the mountains on to the Maneroo tableland, and down the southern coast of New South Wales, where as one of the Katungal tribes it formed, near Towfold Bay

¹ The *Kurnai Tribe* of Gippsland must be distinguished from the *Kurna Nation* of the Barcoo Delta. The term "Nation" which I now use must be understood as meaning no more than an aggregate of kindred tribes, without implying any kind of confederacy between them. I take this opportunity of pointing out that there is no warrant for the use, which I have observed, of the word *Murri* or *Murray*, as meaning "Australian aborigine." There is no word in the native languages having that meaning. Such words as *Murri*, *Kulin*, *Kurnai*, *Mara*, have a strictly local meaning. A male aborigine of Victoria is no more a "Murri" than a Scot is a Welshman.

² The Narrinyeri tradition quoted by Taplin ("Native Tribes of South Australia," p. 61) says: "Nurundere . . . led his sons, *i.e.*, his tribe, down the southern shore of the Lakes, and there turned up the Coorong. There he appears to have met another tribe coming from the south-east."

and Cape Howe, the extreme south-western termination of the great Murri (or Murring) Nation.

Between the south-eastern termination of the Kulin Nation, at about the Tarwin River in South-west Gippsland and the south-western termination of the Murri Nation at about Malla-goota Inlet in Eastern Gippsland, there was the Kurnai tribe. This remarkable tribe can be shown to be neither Kulin nor Murring, and an inquiry now arises of which of the advancing lines to which those people respectively belong it has been an offshoot. In seeking for a reply to this question, I have met with some curious facts which are worthy of notice.

The Kurnai Ancestors.

The Kurnai acknowledge no kindred with any of the tribes adjoining them. In olden times they were hostile to all, and applied to them a name as distinguished from themselves of "Wild men." It is therefore necessary, in attempting to trace out from which migratory stream of those I have mentioned the Kurnai ancestors were derived, to turn to the customs and the beliefs of the tribes for light.

I am not in a position to compare the languages of these tribes in a satisfactory manner, for to do this it would require one to have a competent knowledge of the languages of at least three of the tribes adjoining the Kurnai country. Besides this, it would also be necessary to have a good acquaintance with the three Kurnai dialects, the Mük-thang, the Thang-quai, and the Nūlit, of which the former only is familiar to me. It is therefore necessary to have recourse to the aid to be derived from the comparison of vocabularies, and of such slight knowledge of the neighbouring Murring languages as I have obtained.

The result has been to prove that the Kurnai dialects are most nearly allied to those of the Kulin, and differ as much on the other hand from those of the Murring, both of the coast and of the mountains. Yet I must also note that the Thang-quai, as spoken by the most easterly of the Kurnai, namely, the Krauatun, has words which are no doubt due to the intimate relations of this clan with its Murring neighbours.

The customs of the various tribes do not in comparison afford much light, but what little there is shows a greater resemblance in details between those of the Kurnai and Kulin than between those of the Kurnai and Murring.

Two illustrations will suffice as examples of this part of the evidence. As I have elsewhere shown, the Kurnai Jeraeil has no resemblance to the Murring Kuringal, excepting in the first

principles which underlie both. The Jibauk of the Kulin were probably the survival of more complete ceremonies, which, if resembling either of the others, did so more as to the Jeracil than as to the Kuringal.

The practice of sending messengers was common to all the tribes, but the practice of the Kurnai and Kulin agreed most, even to the name applied to the messenger,¹ and to the method of enumerating the number of camping stages to which the message might refer.

This resemblance is still further and more strongly supported by a comparison of the local organisation of the tribes, as I have now evidence to show. The imperfect remains of the class-systems of the Wolgal, Ngarego, and Coast Murring point to a derivation of their social organisation from systems of the Kamilaroi type. Indeed, that of the Wolgal preserves two of the four classes in precisely the form of name which still obtains in the neighbouring Wirajuri tribe. Nothing in these systems throws any light upon the mere traces of the class organisation which the Kurnai have retained.

On turning to the Kulin tribes, however, the case is very different. The very names of the two primary classes suggest an explanation of the peculiar designation which is applied to many of the Kurnai men when reaching mature age. In explaining this, and in illustrating the comparisons possible, I must now note a few facts as to the Kulin, and for this I use the Woiworung tribe, which is indeed the only one as to which anything like complete data are now obtainable.

In all the tribes of the Kulin Nation which were settled in the country extending from the Upper Goulburn River southwards to the sea-coast in the Western Port District, there obtained a class system having only two main divisions with totems. Together with agnatic descent there was this peculiarity, that each local division consisted only of men of one or other of the two class-names, the wives of these men being all, of course, of the other class, and the children all of the class to which their fathers belonged. Thus it was that each local division was perpetuated by men of the same class-name. The people who spoke the Woiworung language afford an illustration. They were divided into five clans, one of which, the Ūrŭnjéri-Balŭk,² claimed the country lying between the Yarra and Saltwater Rivers, and it is to this clan that my information particularly refers. All the people of Urunjéri descent were of the Waa (Crow) class. Of the other four clans, two were likewise Waa

¹ *Paicara* with the Kurnai, and *Baiaur* with the Kulin.

² *Urun* = white gum-tree; *baluk* = a number of people.

and two were Bunjil (Eaglehawk). The class system of this tribe, as I have said, has these two primary class divisions Eaglehawk and Crow. In addition to these, there is one totem, Hawk, which belongs to Bunjil, while Waa has not any totems. The folklore of this tribe, however, has a more complete list of the totems of Bunjil. A legend relates that long ago, "in the beginning," the great Supreme Being, Bunjil, lived on the earth with his sons, Thara (Hawk), Yūkoḗ (Musk Lorikeet), Jūrt-jurt (Nankeen Kestrel), Dantūn (Blue Mountain Lorikeet), Turnūng (Brushtailed Phascogale). Bunjil being at feud with Balaiaṅg (the Bat), sent his sons to burn all the country towards the Murray River, and in this conflagration the Bat was scorched so that he has remained bare and grinning ever since. This enterprise having been successfully accomplished, Bunjil and his "sons" ascended to the sky, where they now are as stars.¹ We may, I think, surmise from this legend that the "sons of Bunjil" represent the totems formerly existing in that class. I have not learned any corresponding legend as to the "sons" of Waa.

Now it is to be noted that with the Kurnai the term Bunjil has no significance as "Eaglehawk," but is a name which is applied to many old men, in conjunction with some term expressing some characteristic or quality. For instance, an old man who had a deep growling voice became known as Bunjil Gworūn (thunder). The crow is regarded by the Kurnai as being one of the "Muk-Kurnai," or ancestors, and they reverence it, and think that it watches over them and can answer their questions by its cawing (*Nga*, Yes; or *Ngat-bun*, No). As the Kurnai have no true totems, it is not possible to make a satisfactory comparison, but it is not perhaps without significance that one of the Woiworung "sons of Bunjil" (the Brushtailed Phascogale) is called by the Kurnai in the Nūlit language; Bunjil wadtun, that is to say, "Bunjil opossum." The Hawk, which is one of Bunjil's sons, and also the sole remaining totem of that class, also appears in the Kurnai folklore as a Muk-Kurnai, who prevented the supernatural female "duality," Būlūm-Baukan, from stealing the fire of the Kurnai.²

I have elsewhere noted the peculiar bird totems of the Kurnai

¹ Among the Wotjo-balluk of the Wimmera River, in North-western Victoria, Bunjil is a sub-totem of the Gárchūka totem of the Krókitch class. It is related that long ago he was a very powerful man who ascended to the sky with his two wives, who were sisters, Gūnawara (swan), of the class Gámūtch.

² I use this word "duality" as the only one I can think of which expresses the peculiar conception of the supernatural being "Bulum-baukan." Two Baukans are always spoken of, but at the same time as if inseparable, and having one son, "Bulum-tut," common to both. Baukan is in some respects analogous to the Ngálalbal of the Murring Kuringal ceremonies, to the two wives of Bunjil, of Baiame, &c.

which divide the community into a group of males and a group of females. But these totems are not of a kind peculiar to this tribe, for I find them throughout South-eastern Australia, and they probably have a wider range. They are not true totems in the sense that these represent subdivisions of the primary classes, yet they are true totems in so far that they are regarded as being the "brothers" or "sisters" of the human beings who bear their names. I cannot now enter into a further consideration of the very interesting subject of Australian totems, which requires a separate memoir for its treatment, but must confine myself to such facts as have a bearing upon the questions with which I am at present concerned.

The bird totems of the Kurnai are the Emu wren and the Superb Warbler, which are respectively the "man's brother" and "woman's sister." With the Coast Murring the Emu wren is also the "man's brother," but the "woman's sister" is the Tree creeper (*Climacteris scandens*), and this is the only totemic connection which I can trace out between these tribes. When, however, we turn to the Kulin we find both the Kurnai totems in just the same position. In addition, there are also a second male and female totem, namely, the Bat and the small Nightjar, and these two are found to extend to the extreme north-western confines of Victoria as the "man's brother" and the "woman's sister."¹

In the Woiworung language the Emu wren is called "Bunjil Bóroin," and possibly this may have a connection with the legend of the Kurnai "Adam"—for it is related that the "first Kurnai old man," Bunjil Borun, walked across the plains from the north to the sea, carrying his wife in a canoe on his head. I feel a difficulty in connecting the two names, as in the Kurnai dialects Borun means "Pelican," and not "Emu wren."

There is another legend, however, which is found in what I may call its complementary parts in the Woiworung and Kurnai tribes, and to me it seems to speak of an early migration of the Kurnai ancestors in unmistakable terms.

The Woiworung say that long ago a gigantic being like a blackfellow lived on the banks of the Yarra River. He was named Loän, and is now pointed out as one of the stars. Observing that pieces of swan's-down were carried to the Yarra by the south-east wind he journeyed in that direction and discovered the Inlets at Western Port Bay, where he settled down for a time. By-and-by he again wandered onwards, following the swans in their migrations, and thus discovered Corner Inlet in

¹ Mr. A. L. P. Cameron has shown that these totems extend still further into New South Wales.

Gippsland, where he permanently took up his abode, living in the mountainous recesses of Wilson's Promontory.

The Kurnai on their part say that a great being called Loän lives in a cave at Wilson's Promontory, where he has at times been seen wandering armed with an enormous spear.¹

It is to this Loän that is attributed the institution of the remarkable formalities which attended the admission of alien but friendly blackfellows into his country. By the Kulin of Western Port and Melbourne, and by the Kurnai, the country for some distance on each side of Wilson's Promontory was known as "the Bad ground."² It was believed that any blackfellow other than a native of it who should enter it, without being under the charge of a Brataua man and the protection of the proper formalities, would certainly become ill, and most likely die.

From what I have heard of this belief, and of the formalities connected with it, I suspect that at the bottom lies the liability to some kind of fever by blacks from warmer and dryer parts of the country if they come and camp in the damp and swampy forests of the "Bad ground."³

The legend of Loän and the belief in the "Bad ground" connect the Kulin and Kurnai tribes and strengthen the views suggested by the class-names. It seems to me more than probable that the Kurnai are of the same stock as the Woiworung Kulin, and that the legends which I have noted refer to one, if not more than one, immigration into Gippsland; one migration by way of Western Port, and another, if the story of the Kurnai "first old man" has any reference to the facts of the past, by way of the Macallister River valley, which even since the whites have settled in the country has been the war-path of the Kurnai when making a raid upon the Kulin of the Mansfield district.⁴

It is now well to consider what were the relations of the Kurnai with their immediate neighbours to the east, that is to

¹ The name Loän seems properly to belong to the Brataua Kurnai clan, which, living in his country, were supposed to be protected by him. The other Kurnai knew of him from them, but also spoke of him by the name of "Külüngrük." Both these names are applied to white men, and white women have received the designation of the wife of Loän, namely, Loän-tüka. Old men tell me that these names have been used for the supernatural being in the Brataua country "from the beginning," that is, the origin of these names is unknown to them.

² In the Nulit dialect = Wia-wek; in the Woiworung = Márine-bek.

³ Mr. James McAlpine, who has lived in South Gippsland almost since its settlement, tells me that when he first came there he became acquainted with a very old blackfellow who gave him much information, and who said that "his fathers came from the West, and the country to the East was at that time empty of people."

⁴ These Kulin were also divided into Bunjil and Waa.

say, with the Coast Murring. The language spoken by the Krauatun, who were the most easterly clan, was a dialect of the Kurnai language, and was quite unintelligible to the adjoining Murring.¹ Yet there are a few peculiarities which show that the language of the latter has influenced it.

The Krauatun Kurnai occupied the country along the coast from near Lake Tyers eastward to Mallagoota Inlet. The Tatung Kurnai extended along the strip of country westwards from the entrance to the Gippsland Lakes, and between them and the sea. The full names of these two clans are Krauatungalung and Tatungalung. The termination "galung" is a possessive suffix which slightly differs from the form which I find in the Mukthang, where it is "lung," as in the clan name Brabralung, which may be translated as "manly," or "belonging to that which is manly;" another example is in the possessive pronoun *ngitalung*, = "mine," which is properly and in full, when not colloquially abbreviated, *ngaiw-ta-lung*, that is to say, "I, belonging to," or "of." In the termination "galung" I find a common possessive suffix of the Murring language, "gal," added to that used in the Mukthang. As examples of the use of "gal" I take the local names of the Coast Murring tribes as "Bemerin-gal" and "Katun-gal," where Bemerin = Mountains, and Katun = Sea. The term Katungal, as meaning those "of" or "belonging to" the sea coast, is applied by the Murring to all those thus located on each side of them, in one direction into Gippsland, and in the other beyond Sydney. I cannot but think that the name Tatungalung of the Kurnai is in fact this word with the "K" altered to "T," and the Kurnai possessive suffix added.

The word "Tat" is by them used as meaning "south." Hence a southerly rain is "Tätung-willung," but there is a second word in use also meaning "south," namely "káter." This, I think, is merely a variation of the same root.

The Krauatun consider themselves to be, and are recognised by the other clans as, Kurnai. But they do not participate in the Jeraeil of their own tribe, nor in the Kuringal of the Murring, except in rare cases, such as where a man's mother belonged to that tribe, and he might be admitted to what may be called an "honorary membership." The Tatung had con-

¹ There were three dialects in Gippsland—the Nülit, spoken by the Braiaka and Brataua; the Mük-thang, by the Brabra; and the Thang-quai, by the Krauatun and Tatung. The difference between these three dialects and the Murring language can be shown by the statement which a Krauatun man might make. He would probably say, "I can understand the Mük-thang, and speak it a little; I can understand the Nülit, though I cannot speak it; but I cannot understand the Murring language at all."

nubium only with the other clans of the Kurnai. The Krauatun had this, but also in addition with the Murring.

This connubium, existing between the Krauatun, Kurnai, and the Coast Murring, leads to an interesting conclusion. It was not the alliance of two local divisions of the same tribe, but of divisions of two totally distinct tribes. It shows that even when two groups such as these met in the past as complete strangers to each other, permanent hostility was not necessarily the consequence. It even suggests that unless impassable natural barriers intervened between tribes, their outlying members would be sure to become more or less connected by the bonds of acquaintance and of kindred formed by inter-marriage. This would, it seems to me, be the case even when two tribes were, as entities, in a chronic state of feud with each other.

Who can say, or even conjecture, how long the two migratory streams had been separated when in olden times the ancestors of the Kurnai and of the Murring met first at Mallagoota Inlet? It is not possible to say, but the period must have been sufficiently long to admit of their customs having diverged, the initiation ceremonies of one branch having been lost, and of their languages having become mutually unintelligible. Yet, in spite of all this, we find the two migrations not only on as friendly a footing with each other as were the Kurnai clans to each other, but also in some respects having undergone a partial fusion.

On the grounds I have now stated, it seems to me almost if not quite clear that the Kurnai ancestors entered into Gippsland from the westward, or perhaps also from the north-westward, in one or in more than one migration.

The Bidweli Tribe.

The discussion of the preceding questions brings into view a subject of much interest, namely, the Bidweli tribe.¹

Between the country of the Krauatun Kurnai at the Snowy River and along the coast, and that of the Murring of the Maneroo tableland to the north and of the sea coast Murring to the east, there lies a large stretch of country which was occupied by the now almost extinct Bidweli tribe. This tract is one of the most inhospitable that I have seen in Australia. I have traversed its scrubs, mountains, and swamps four several times, and I observed little in it of living creatures excepting a few wallaby, snakes, leeches, mosquitoes, and flies. Yet the Bidweli inhabited the few small open tracts in it and called themselves "men" (*maap*).

¹ Sometimes spoken of as the Bidwel, or Bidwelk. I cannot give any translation of this word.

After lengthened inquiries from the few survivors, and from those of their neighbours who knew them, I have ascertained as follows:—

Their language is compounded from the surrounding dialects. The class-names and totems are similarly derived from their neighbours, for I have found them to be Yeerung (Krauatun Kurnai), Yūkembrük = Crow, and Tchūteba = Rabbit Rat (Ngarego), and Yalonga = Rock Wallaby (Coast Murring). I even found one family bearing the name of Bunjil. Their relationship terms are also derived from the same neighbouring tribes, some being Kurnai and some Murring, as might have been forecast from their compound language. Further, the Bidweli had no initiation ceremonies, and the last survivors are not, as I have observed, even admitted to those of the neighbouring tribes with whom there was connubium. This *prima facie* case of a mixed descent is strengthened by the case of a Bidweli man claiming as his country the upper valley of the Brodribb River.¹ He stated to me that his "father's father" was a Kurnai of Buchan² who left his country and settled in the small open tract known as the Goungra Valley, west of Mount Ellery. His son obtained a wife from the Thedora of Omeo, and the son of this marriage, my informant, married a Ngarego woman. This pedigree accounts for both Yeerung and Yukembruk.

Such a case as this of my informant's grandfather is just on all fours with one mentioned by me elsewhere³ of a man who, having broken the moral law of his tribe, escaped out of reach of its vengeance, and only reappeared when the whites had settled the country, and he could thus find protection against tribal vengeance.

I can feel no doubt that the Bidweli country has been an Australian "Cave of Adullam," and that its tribe has been built up by the refugees from tribal justice or individual vengeance, who have organised themselves so far as they could do so on the old accustomed lines. It is a good example of what Dr. Hearn has called the formation of a non-genealogical tribe.

The general conclusions which may be drawn from preceding statements are these:—

¹ So far as I can learn, it was only about fifteen years back that this man "came in," that is to say, abandoned his wild life and went to live among the stations of the Maneroo tableland. He was the last wild blackfellow in Gippsland.

² This is not, as might be supposed, a Scotch name given to the locality by some of the early settlers, who were mostly from North Britain, but a native word, which should be properly written Būkan, meaning the large net-bag in which the blackfellows carried their things. The proper name of the place is Būkan-mūnji, meaning "Bag-there," or the "Place of the Bag."

³ "Kamilaroi and Kurnai," p. 348, footnote.

- (1) The early aborigines of Australia in spreading southwards over the continent followed the well-watered tracts along the coasts and the rivers.
- (2) The spreading population gradually became separated into groups of tribes having certain common features, one of which, namely, the use of a word meaning "man," conveniently affords a means of marking the extent of such of these groups as may be termed "nations."
- (3) Where migratory streams again met, the tribes which formed their extreme terminations coalesced and established connubium, in spite of difference in custom and language.
- (4) The Kurnai tribe is an offshoot from such a migratory stream which spread round the northern and western flanks of the Australian Alps, and penetrated to Gippsland in two or more immigrations.
- (5) Tribes have been formed not only by the regular process of growth of groups separated from genealogical tribes, but also by the organisation on the accustomed lines of aggregates of "broken men."

DISCUSSION.

Dr. E. B. TYLOR, in calling attention to the chief points of Mr. Howitt's argument on the ancestry and former home of the Kurnai tribe, remarked that the anthropological interest attaching to this tribe, which induced Mr. Howitt to study in such detail the traces of its past movements, depends on its illustrating a remarkable course of social change. While the neighbouring tribes follow the ordinary Australian matriarchal rule of female descent, and are divided into intermarrying classes, the Kurnai have as to males the rule of male descent, and marry into different divisions within the tribe. Their peculiar marriage-custom, however, gives reason to suppose that exogamous marriage-classes, comparable with those of the Kamilaroi, once existed among them. Couples elope together, and though this is the only mode of marriage the parties are pursued and punished as offenders, till eventually the crime is condoned and the married pairs settle into the tribe. This is fairly explained by considering the Kurnai to represent one intermarrying body whose corresponding body has been destroyed or separated, so that they are now compelled to violate the law of exogamy, though they do so under ceremonial protest. At the same time they have made some part of the transition from the matriarchal to the patriarchal system. These are changes of such importance in social development, that Mr. Howitt rightly judges it worth while to ascertain

the historical circumstances under which, in this particular case, they have come to pass. Referring to Mr. Howitt's paper on the initiation ceremonies of the Kurnai ("Journ. Anthropol. Inst.," Vol. XIV, p. 301), Dr. Tylor produced specimens of the sacred *tundun*, or "bull-roarer," sent over to him by Mr. Howitt, and whirled them to show the difference between the deep tone of the larger or "man tundun" (Grandfather) and the weaker shrill tone of the small "woman tundun." Illustrative of the horror felt by the natives lest these sacred instruments should be seen by women or children, is the myth current in this region of a deluge caused by some children finding a tundun which had been hidden in a bush, and bringing it home to their mothers, whereupon the sea burst out over the land. After displaying the remarkable mechanical action of the bull-roarer, Dr. Tylor noticed its wide prevalence in religious mysteries, as where in front of the Moqui procession of dancers, each with a live rattlesnake or two in his mouth, the priest walks whirling a bull-roarer, much as Mr. Andrew Lang has shown the ancient Greeks in the mysteries of Dionysos Zagreus to have whirled their *ῥομβος*, which the description shows plainly to have been a bull-roarer. This word itself is good local English, belonging to the flat slip of wood fastened at the end to a string which represents in European boys' play the instrument which has had so high a mystic import in the barbaric and ancient world.

DECEMBER 8TH, 1885.

FRANCIS GALTON, Esq., F.R.S., *President, in the Chair.*

The Minutes of the last meeting were read and signed.

The following presents were announced, and thanks voted to the respective donors:—

FOR THE LIBRARY.

From H. H. PRINCE ROLAND BONAPARTE.—A Collection of Photographs of New Caledonians and Australian Natives (Queensland).

From H. W. SETON KARR, Esq.—Photographs of North American Indians.

From the SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.—Annual Report for 1883.

From the DEUTSCHE GESELLSCHAFT FÜR ANTHROPOLOGIE.—Correspondenz-Blatt. October, 1885.