



Report on Australian Languages and Traditions.

Author(s): William Ridley

Source: *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. 2 (1873), pp. 257-275

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

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2841174>

Accessed: 15/06/2014 21:54

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

The following are the principal localities of the picture writings sketched in the annexed drawings :

1. On the Essequibo, the largest river in British Guiana, they are found in five different places, viz., at Waraputa cataract ; at Cumutie rock ; at the Onropocari cataract ; at the Takarimi rock ; and at Bubumana cataract. These places are mentioned in the order in which they occur in ascending the river. The first is in about $5^{\circ} 20'$, and the last in 2° of north latitude. They are also found on the Cassikityn river, a tributary of the Essequibo.

2. On the Quitaro river, about sixty miles to the north west of the Cassikityn.

3. On the southern slope of the Pacaraima mountains, near the Indian village of Karakanang, near the Cotinga river.

4. At Wantriana fall, on the Ireng river, some thirty miles to the westward of the last locality, and between Mora and Caracara villages, near the same river.

5. On the Corentyne river, at Temerhi rock ; in the vicinity of the Wonotobo cataract ; between the last place and the Aratipu cataract ; and on a branch of the Corentyne lately discovered by the Geological Survey.

6. On the Berbice river at Marlissa rapids ; and above the Christmas cataracts, where many curious specimens occur.

REPORT on AUSTRALIAN LANGUAGES and TRADITIONS. By the Rev. WILLIAM RIDLEY, M.A. Communicated by the Earl of KIMBERLEY.

To the Honourable the Colonial Secretary of New South Wales.

SIR,—I have the honour to lay before you the result of investigations made during the journey to Namoi and Barwon Rivers, in compliance with instructions received from you.

I left Sydney on the 20th June last by the Morpeth steamer ; I landed next morning at Newcastle, and went on by railway to Scone. Thence I travelled on horseback, by way of Murrurundi and Breeza Plains, to Gunedah, on the Namoi, down that river to its junction with the Barwon at Walgett, and along the course of the Barwon, from Gingi, near Walgett, to Collemungul, at the junction of the Gwydir. In going and returning I travelled 1070 miles, and reached Sydney again on the 24th July.

The information obtained during this tour is here arranged in three divisions : 1. Language ; 2, Social Laws and Customs ; 3, Religious and Mythical Traditions.

It is assumed that those to whose consideration this information is submitted have access to my work on "Kamilaroi, Dippil,

and Turrubul", sent to the Paris International Exhibition of 1867, to which this report may be regarded as supplementary.

1.—*Language.*

In writing aboriginal words I use the vowels thus :

ā as a in father	o as o in on
ū as a in arise	ū as oo in moon
a as a in mat	ū as u in put
ē as ey in obey	u as u in but
e as e in met	ai as i in wine
i as i in marine	ao as ow in how
i as i in bit	oi as oi in noise
ō as o in tone	

G has only the hard sound as in go ; z has the sound of n in bank or of ng in ring ; w and y have only the consonant in we and ye.

Names of Places, with their Meanings.

Gunedā (commonly spelt Gunnedah)—destitute. This is a thriving township on the Namoi, near Breeza Plains. The name indicates that at some time a man was found there without food, fire, or blanket.

Bogābrai (Boggabri)—high bank. This is the township on Cox's Creek, Namoi. It is on a slope above the reach of the floods which sometimes cover Gunedā.

Gūligal—long grass-seed.

Ināriendrai (Heuriendy)—the sale of the woman.

Nurrābūrai (Narrabi, central town of the Namoi)—the forks.

Wī-awā (Wee Waa—the next town)—roasting-place.

Būlerāwā (Mr. Dangar's station—a place of bulera, a tree, bastard myalla acacia).

Wolobrai (another station)—stones (in Wiraiarai dialect).

Deran—dry ground.

Yāruldūl (a station on the Namoi)—stony.

Gūigola (a station)—red ground.

Telūba, or Kelūba (a station)—indigenous clover.

Derildūl, Drilldool (a station)—reedy.

Wārian—a poisonous onion.

Mobbo—beefwood (a tree).

Wūriga—clear ground.

Tūri—a water weed.

Miat, or Miari—a well (in Wiraiarai).

Gūlaigul—a sapling.

Ginne—wood (in Wuzai dialect).

Tinai—iron-bark.

Tinwai—string.

Burran—boomerang.

Bulgāri—boomerang (in Wuzai).

Kogil, or Kagil—bad, no good.

Wurai—no (in Wiraiarai).

Kumbul—turkey buzzard (in Wailwun).

Milkomai—eye dropped out.

Kubbo—a grub.

Mianbār—a deep tank.

Kollemungūl (at the junction of the Gwydir and Barwon)—too much water.

Duzgalia (on the Barwon)—a little piece of wood.

Buri, or Bri-warina (Brewarina)—acacia pendula springs up.

Yuri Yuri—a species of parrot.

Mūrgūdūl—abounding in the murgu, or night cuckoo.

Kolorinbrai—abounding in kolorin, the flowers of the kulubā tree.

Yunder—deep bank.

Bāwan (in Kamilaroi), Wāwun (in Wailwun)—the river (Barwon).

Wolgër (Walgett, town at the junction of the Namoi and Barwon)—a hollow in the ground.

Worina (Warina, a point near the junction)—rising ground. The township was named after the hollow "wolger", but was prudently fixed on the "worina", or rising ground, above the floods.

Yûroka (a station on the Barwon)—sun.

Yugalwun—place of yugal (a tree, myrtacea).

Gôaz-gara (on Namoi)—black.

Piliga—oaks.

Wiriginigal (on the Bugaira, Bokhara)—long tooth.

Wongun (Wangun, near Baradine)—crooked bark (Wiragere).

Dungun (same in Kamilaroi).

Kûmal—a place where a man died.

Geribila—a place where twins were born.

Burburget, Burburgate (on Namoi)—thick gum scrub; but, according to Billy M. Bundar, "burbur" means belts.

Diri (the proper name of a sheep station connected with Burburgate, commonly called Currambede)—grey.

Worri—Mount Lindsay, between the Namoi and the Gwyder.

Kawirri—a mountain east of Mount Lindsay.

Bâwir—a sugar-loaf peak in the same range.

Mûkai, Mooki (a river flowing from Liverpool Range to the Namoi)—rocky. This river runs through deep black mud, and is very boggy, except at Wallhollow, where it runs over rocks.

Languages Spoken on the Namoi.—Kamilaroi, Koinbere or Goinberai, and Wirâthere.

Languages Spoken on the Barwon.—Kamilaroi, above Walgett; Wailwun, below Walgett—the junction of the Namoi; Mûrrieri, to the west; Woyai-bun, Wolaroi, Wirairai, and Kuno or Guno, to the south.

Additional Words and Phrases in Kamilaroi, Wailwun, etc.

I.—KAMILAROI.

Kai,	little child.
Birribirai,	a youth not yet admitted to a bora.
Rubora,	a young man who has just attended
Borbâ,	a full man. [his first bora.
Mirêdûl,	a young woman.
Inâr,	a woman.
Yambuli,	an old woman.
Burian and Tûri,	light.
Yûrû,	darkness.
Kurra,	grass.
Kurriil,	leaf.
Gûren,	a flower.
Ugan,	a branch.
Diril or Dûril,	a large reed.
Wurrian,	another reed.
Kârui,	bush.
Nizil and Piririqul,	salt bush.
Wozgun, Wâun, and Wârû,	a crow.
Quai,	the Namoi pine.
Bilar,	swamp oak.
Qurarâ,	indigenous clover.
Yûrûl,	scrub underwood.
Buriar, Maieri, and Yaraga,	the wind.
Buli,	whirlwind (an object of great terror).
Gâulan and Gûnagulla,	sky.
Yurumi and Mî,	lightning.
Tulumi,	thunder.
Ginbi,	a muscle.

Gurman,	a leech.
Quleale, Qulamboli, Yarumbon,	a pelican.
Gunundal, [and Yarabon]	a large diver.
Guminbai,	wood-duck.
Gulawilil,	crested pigeon.
Tummar,	bronze-wing pigeon.
Mulygal,	a little bird (white throat).
Yürü and Gundār,	cloud.
Du or Dhu,	smoke.
Mulganulga,	horns.
Kua,	fog.
Bülümin,	apple tree (eucalyptus).
Bibil,	broad-leaved box.
Bürigul,	bugalow.
Kübü,	forest oak.
Maiäl,	acacia pendula.
Käwi,	bastard acacia pendula.
Turilawa,	water-lily.
Yerau,	gum tree.
Yürü,	Namoi pine.
Dhulindiar,	a flowering shrub.

Weapons.—Burran, boomerang; bundi and beramba, clubs; burin, shield; dülu and pilär, a spear. In the language of Baradine, M. Wuzai or Wozai, a boomerang is bulgari.

Kunmulla,	catch hold.
Wunnabilla,	let go.
Turruwulle or duraole,	go back.

Colours.—Gue, blood-red; yutta, bay; bülii, black or dark blue or brown; bülumbülüi, dull light green or brown; zündizündi, roan; güloliba, piebald; bulla, white or grey.

II.—WAILWUN WORDS.

Wail,	no.
Sun,	duni; in Kamilaroi, yarai; in Wairairai, yaraqun, also yüröka.
Moon,	givor; in K., gille.
Sky,	gunaqualla; in K. same.
Stars,	girili; in K., mirri.
Fire,	wi; in K. same.
Water,	kolle; in K. same.
Tree,	koqür and kobürü.
Pine,	gurabä; in K., guai and gurere.
Acacia pendula,	bürü or bri; in K., maiäl.
Father,	büba; in K. same; "papa" in all the world.
Mother,	günni; in K., zumba; but where K. is spoken "günnü" or "güni" is used by children in addressing their mothers, as "mamma" or "mother dear."
Child,	worrü; in K., kai, but "würrüme" is marra; in K. same. [son in K.
Hand,	dinna; in K. same.
Foot,	durra; in K. same, and nearly over all the continent.
Thigh,	bundë; in K., dinbir
Knee,	gunendir; in K., güreredirba
Thumb,	worria.
Fingers,	tagün; in K., taon.
Ground,	zunümba.
Cut-bark,	

Fishponds,	zūnnū.
Cockatoo,	mūrrai; in K., biloēla.
Crow,	wārū; in K. same.
Laughing jackass bird,	kūtkūburra; in K. same, also gorra- worra and kūtkūrāka.
Crested pigeon,	tao-ilgera; in K., gūlawilil.
Bronze-winged pigeon,	mūnūmbi; in K., tummur.
Pelican,	gūlamboli; in K. same.
Black swan,	kūzadūa; in K., barriānmul.
Padymelon,	wirū; in K., murriira.
Bandicoot,	gūrū; in K., bilba.
Opossum,	kuragi; in K., mute.
Iguana,	dūli; in K. same.
Black snake,	dūrū; in K., nurai.
Carpet snake,	yubba; in K. same.
Black duck,	būdumbā.
Whistling duck,	thipaiyu.
Teal,	daraoer.
Red duck,	guraoer.
Blue-winged duck,	ūlūlū.
Wood-duck,	kūnambi; in K., gunambi, also kaoai.
Spoonbill duck,	wilidubai.
Musk duck (diver),	kumogūmar.
Small diver,	tirmum.
Large diver,	dūgūrū.
Black swan,	burrima.
Black and white wagtail,	dirijiri.

(These ducks, etc., are chiefly named from their notes.)

Turtle,	waiember.
Cod (fresh water),	kuddu.
Black bream,	kumbal (this word also means turkey
Yellow-bellied bream (the best	tuggai or duggai. [buzzard.
Small bream, [fish here),	berze.
Catfish (with poisonous prickles),	duzgūr.
Shrimp,	tugāle.
Lobster,	kēri.
Crab,	zulga.
Porcupine,	bigabilla.

A yam found on the ridges of the hills near these rivers, with the flavour of an apple, and always of an ice-like cold, is called in Wailwun, gūnawā, in Kamilaroi, gūweai.

To laugh,	gindani.
To cry,	yūzāni.
To sing,	buga.
To sneeze,	tiga.
To cough,	gunuzgūna.

North-West—Mūrāla.—From this point, according to King Rory, of Gingi, on the Barwon, the race of Murra originally came.

Cold,	gūnūndai; in K., kārīl.
Hot,	girru; in K., kūdūwailona.
Sick,	wogin or giraugira; in K., wibil.
Anger,	gulgi; in K., yili.
Catch,	mumulli; in K., kunmulli.
Bite,	kutulli; in K., yildona.

III.—PIKUMBUL—SPOKEN ON THE MACINTYRE.

“Pika” signifies yes. As in Kamilaroi, “yuru” is sky, “gille” moon, “wi” fire; but water is “bunna” (in K., kolle); tree, “kazgar”; to speak, “guagga” (in K., goala). The numerals in use on the Barwon and Balonne are:

1, mal	6, malmulanbu mummi
2, bŭlār	7, bularmulanbu mummi
3, gŭlibā	8, gulibamulanbu mummi
4, bŭlār bŭlār	9, bularbularmulanbu mummi
5, mŭlanbŭ	10, bularin murra

N.B.—*-zu* and *-u* are terminations of the genitive or possessive case, so that “bularin murra” means “belonging to the two hands”; that is, ten fingers.

11, maldinna mummi	16, mal dinna mulanbu
12, bular dinna mummi	17, bular dinna mulanbu
13, guliba dinna mummi	18, guliba dinna mulanbu
14, bular bular dinna mummi	19, bular bular dinna mulanbu
15, mulanba dinna	20, bularin dinna

Here “bularin dinna” means “belonging to the two feet”; that is, ten toes—assuming that the ten fingers are counted before we begin with the toes; so that eleven is one of the toes added on (to ten fingers); fifteen is five toes added on; eighteen is three, and five toes added on.

IV.—KOGAI—SPOKEN WESTWARD OF THE BALONNE.

Black fellow,	murdia.
Father,	yabunu.
Mother,	yazānū.
Son,	andu.
Daughter,	bŭrgal.
Grandson,	yāmbirū.
My,	yuddu.
Dog,	murrun.
Honey,	ubba.
Opossum,	duzur.

Phrases.

1. A Corroboree in Kamilaroi sung in 1854, on the Mooni ponds :

“Diza diza burula, murriza dibbŭra.”

Supposed meaning: Wild dogs, wild dogs in plenty, black fellows spearing them.

2. A Corroboree in Kamilaroi sung in 1871, near Bulerawa, Namoi :

“Bŭkumulle mullimulli, dubzēr wine.”

Skinning ghost, double up let fall.

i.e., the ghost was skinning him, and doubled him up, and let him fall.

3. Phrases spoken on the Barwon :

My friend,	zai dhŭrŭdī.
You and I hate one another,	thal (<i>or</i> dhal) mda wima bulanba-
'Tis only lies,	yeal gŭnial. [rana.
Truth,	girū.
My own,	zaii guizun.
The water runs over the stones,	kolle bunagilla yarula.
I shall be there by the day mentioned,	yerāla zaia zērma dhŭrālī zurri.
Where he is I do not know. I was	zerma zuriluna kamil zaia zērma
not there this morning. I think	warizene; wollai ya zurrilona.
he is at the camp.	

4. Phrases in Wailwun :

I think,	winuzunni.
I love you,	kurridu yinunduz inda.
I hate you,	zadunu gumallago.
I do not like you,	wail du zinunda zinda.
Murrai is angry with Ippai, and	Murrai Ippai gulgai maii kumulla
threatens to fight him.	gurri.
Ippai and Murrai are good friends,	Ippai Murrai bōbāmbon.
You are my love (little spouse),	za zinda gulērdul.
He is a bad man, have nothing to	gŭn murruba, wonna guma.
I hope,	yaia barābai daraocela.
[do with him,	

2.—*Social Classification, and Laws of Marriage and Descent.*

Over a large portion of this colony and of Queensland, and probably with some variations in all parts of Australia, there prevails a system of classification, including every one of the people from birth, which is made the foundation of certain rules of marriage. In districts where different names are used similar rules prevail.

On the Namoi and Barwon, and a great distance to the north and south, the classes are: 1, Ippai and Ippāthā; 2, Murri and Māthā; 3, Kumbo and Būthā; 4, Kubbi and Kubbōtha. In some families all the sons are Ippai, all the daughters Ippatha; in others, all the sons are Murri, the daughters Matka; in others, all the sons are Kumbo, the daughters Butha; in the remaining families, all the sons are Kubbi, the daughters Kubbotha.

In the use of the consonants, the aborigines often change their mute middle consonants and aspirates. Thus, "ippai" is sometimes sounded "ibbai"; and the name of Ippai's sister is pronounced "ibbata", "ippata", and "ippatha". Then the vowels *a* and *u* are interchanged, as some English people pronounce servant "servunt". Thus, the name of Kubbi's sister is pronounced "kapota", "kupota", "kaphota", and "kubbotha", and Murri's sister is "Mātā" or "Māthā", Kumbo's is "Buta" or "Būtha". There is no variation in the pronunciation of Murri, Kumbo, or Kubbi, although in other words *p* is softened into *b*, and *k* into *g*. I write the names according to what seemed to me the most common mode of pronouncing them among their own people. As a general rule, the children of Ippai are Murri and Matha; the children of Murrai are Ippai and Ippatha; the children of Kumbo are Kubbi and Kubbotha; those of Kubbi are Kumbo and Butha. And generally Ippai marries Kubbotha, Murri marries Butha, Kumbo marries Matha, and Kubbi marries Ippatha.

But there are exceptions; for when Ippai marries Ippatha, their children are Kumbo and Butha; when a Kumbo marries a Butha, their children are Ippai and Ippatha. This apparent exception shows that the mother's name, and not the father's, determines the names of the children. Thus, Ippai's children are Murri and Matha or Kumbo and Butha; but Ippatha's children are always Kumbo and Butha, whether she is married to Kubbi or Ippai, and Butha's children are always Ippai and Ippatha, whether she marries Murri or Kumbo.

A subdivision of the four classes, which was explained to me during my late journey, illustrates this principle of the mother's name determining those of the children, and also shows how an Ippai may, within certain limits, marry an Ippatha without danger of being guilty of incest. And though the polygamy

allowed by their law displays, to our judgment, a want of moral sense, the aborigines are undoubtedly very zealous for purity as they define it.

The four classes are subdivided into ten; that is, two subdivisions of Murri, two of Kumbo, three of Ippai, and three of Kubbi. In some places it is affirmed that the Ippai are the highest class; in other places Kumbo; but those who seemed to me most reliable witnesses stated that the order was: 1st, Murri; 2nd, Kumbo; 3rd, Ippai; and 4th, Kubbi. The Murri bear a name almost identical with that of the nation, Murri. This title, "Murri", seems allied to "murra", great or good; with the suffix "-ba", it is always "murruba", good. A conviction of their own excellence may have led these people to call themselves Murri, as the Hindus call themselves Aryan. The resemblance of the class name to that of the nation, and to the word signifying great and also good, supports the assertion made by a half-caste of great intelligence who had been brought up with the blacks, that the Murri are the first of the four classes.

Here are the ten subdivisions of the four classes:

1. Murri and Watha dūli, or tuli (iguana).
2. Murri and Matha murriira (paddy-melon).
3. Kumbo and Butha dīnoun (emu).
4. Kumbo and Butha nūrai (black snake).
5. Ippai and Ippatha dīnoun (emu).
6. Ippai and Ippatha nūrai (black snake).
7. Ippai and Ippatha bilba (bandicoot).
8. Kubbi and Kubbotha mūtē (opossum).
9. Kubbi and Kubbotha dūli (iguana).
10. Kubbi and Kubbotha murriirā (paddy-melon).

Ten rules of marriages are founded on this classification.

1. Murri duli marries Matha murriira, or any Butha.
2. Murri murriira marries Matha duli, or any Butha.
3. Kumbo dīnoun marries Butha nurai, or any Matha.
4. Kumbo nurai marries Butha dīnoun, or any Matha.
5. Ippai dīnoun marries Ippatha nurai, or Kubbotha duli, or Kubbotha murriira.
6. Ippai nurai marries Ippatha dīnoun, or Kubbotha mute.
7. Ippai bilba marries Ippatha nurai, or Kubbotha murriira.
8. Kubbi mute marries Kubbotha duli, or Ippatha dīnoun.
9. Kubbi duli marries Kubbotha murriira, or Ippatha bilba.
10. Kubbi murriiri marries Kubbotha duli, or Ippatha nurai.

"Guler" signifies spouse, either husband or wife.

Five rules comprise the law of descent. In all these it is the mother's name that determines those of the children.

1. The second name of the sons and daughters is always the same as the mother's. Thus, if the mother is a dīnoun, all her

children are *dinoun* ; if a mother is a *murriira*, all her children are *murriira*. It follows that whatever animal's name a man now bears has been the name of his mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and upwards, of the mothers in all generations. So, if a woman is a "*duli*", all her descendants to the end of the world must be "*duli*", whether male or female.

2. The children of *Matha* are *Kubbi* and *Kubbotha*.

3. The children of *Butha* are *Ippai* and *Ippatha*.

4. The children of *Ippatha* are *Kumbo* and *Butha*.

5. The children of *Kubbotha* are *Murri* and *Matha*.

These rules, founded on the mothers' names and the subdivisions, explain all the apparent exceptions which came up when an attempt was made to discover rules of descent founded on the fathers' names. This system seems to combine something like caste with communistic equality. *Murri* is of the highest class ; but his son is either *Ippai* of the third (if his mother is *Butha*), or *Kubbi* of the lowest (if his mother is *Matha*). *Kubbi* is of the lowest rank ; but if he marries a *Kubbotha* his sons will be in the highest.

On the *Narron*, the next river to the westward of the *Barwon*, there are three subdivisions of *Murri* : *M. duli*, *M. mute*, and *M. maierai* (*paddy-melon*) ; and only two of *Kubi* : *K. duli* and *K. maieri*. There are also three of *Kumbo* : *K. bundar* (*kangaroo*), *K. nurai*, and *K. kuzuzalu* (*bandicoot*) ; and only two of *Ippai*, *I. bundar* and *I. nurai*.

On the Upper *Namoi* the names "*Murri bundar*" are found together, and for *murriira* they use "*maiera*".

Among the *Wailwun* tribes, below the junction of the *Namoi* and *Barwon*, there are four subdivisions of *Murri* : *M. murriira*, *M. mute*, *M. gūrū* (*bandicoot*), and *M. duli* ; four of *Kubbi* with the same animals' names as the *Murri* ; three of *Kumbo*, and three of *Ippai*, each class having the names *dinoun*, *nurai*, and *bundar*. In other parts of the country, about the *Balonne*, the *Kumbos* are *dinoun* and *burrōwen* (a *wombat*) ; the *Ippais* are *bundar* and *nurai* ; the *Murris* are *mute* and *maieri* ; and the *Kubbis* are *maieri*, *mute*, *duli*, and *gūlū* (*bandicoot*). Among the *Pikumbul* blacks on the *Macintyre*, the *Ippai* are divided into *I. dinoun*, *nurai*, and *yūlūma*.

Among the *Kogai* speaking blacks on the west of the *Balonne*, the class names are *wuzgo*, *wuzgōgun* for *Murri* and *Matha* ; *Unburri* and *Unburrigun* for *Kumbo* and *Butha* ; *Urgilla* and *Urgillagun* for *Ippai* and *Ippatha* ; *Obūr* and *Obūrugun* for *Kubbi* and *Kubbatha*. Between *Moreton Bay* and *Wide Bay* in *Queensland*, the names are *Bārāz* and *Barazgun* ; *Bundār* and *Bundārūn* ; *Bāndūr* and *Bāndūrun* ; *Derwain* and *Derwaizgun*.

Brothers and sisters speak of one another by titles that indi-

cate relative age; that is, their words for brother and sister always involve the distinction of elder or younger. In Kamilaroi "daiādī" is elder brother, "gullami" younger brother; "boādi" is elder sister, "būrī" younger sister. So that in a family of seven brothers the eldest has no daiādī, but he has six gullami; the youngest has no gullami, but six daiādī; the third has two daiādī and four gullami, and so on. Of seven sisters the eldest has no boadi, but six buri; the youngest has no buri, but six boadi; the fourth has three boadi and three buri. In Kogai, "Tāgūndilla" is elder brother, "miandilla" younger brother; "munzunu" is elder sister, "bābunnu" younger sister. Higher up the Namoi, the name for younger brother is kolami, and those signifying elder and younger sister are būkañdī and bōriandi.

This system of relationship comprises, as I was informed by the Rev. Lorimer Fison, Wesleyan Missionary in Fiji, to whom I shewed it with a view to obtain his judgment on the subject, all the eight characteristics of the Tamil system, which has been found established among the Tamil tribes of Hindustan, the Fijians, and some of the North American tribes. For to take examples, Murri and Matha: (1.) Murri's brothers' children are generally Ippai and Ippatha, like his own; while his sisters' children are always Kubbi and Kubbotha. (2.) Matha's sisters' children are always Kubbi and Kubbotha, like her own; while her brothers' children are generally Ippai and Ippatha. (3.) Murri's father is Ippai, so are all his father's brothers; but his father's sisters are Ippatha, they are aunts not mothers. (4.) Murri's mother's sisters are Kubbotha, like his mother; his mother's brothers are Kubbi. (5.) Murri's father's brothers' children are all Murri and Matha, his brothers and sisters, so are his brothers' sisters' children all Murri and Matha; but his father's sisters children are Kumbo and Butha, and his mother's brothers' children are also Kumbo and Butha. (6.) The children of Murri's cousins, Murri and Butha, are all Ippai and Ippatha, like his own children; the children of his cousins, Matha and Kumbo, are all Kubbi and Kubbotha. (7.) The brothers of Murri's paternal grandfather, Murri, are all Murri; and those of his maternal grandfather, Kumbo, are all Kumbo. The sisters of his paternal grandmother, Butha, are all Butha; those of his maternal grandmother, Matha, are all Matha. (8.) Brothers and sisters, when named as such, are always distinguished as elder or younger, there being no word signifying merely brother or sister, and equally applicable to elder and younger members of the family.

It will be seen that the above rules of descent and marriage prevent the intermarriage of near relations. They prohibit

marriage with a sister, half-sister, aunt, or niece. They also prohibit marriage between first cousins, children of two brothers or of two sisters. But when first cousins are the children of a brother and a sister respectively, the law does not prevent their union.

Any breach of these laws incurs sentence of death, or of exposure to an ordeal that may end in death. A few weeks ago, as I was informed by Mr. Neale of Sydney, at Bundabarina, while he was at the Narrau, two young black fellows had been found guilty of taking to themselves women within the prohibited classes. As the women had consented to this breach of the laws, they as well as the young men were condemned by the tribe to die. But an aboriginal known by the name of Peter, who had acquired, by the boldness with which he assumed authority, great influence over all the tribes in that part of the country, knowing that these two young men were useful servants to the squatters and wishing to render a good turn to his white neighbours, resolved to save their lives, and came forward as their champion. He had to stand before a shower of spears from the men of the tribe. While he was defending himself, the young men skulked off, but the women remained and helped him by picking up the spears, which he broke in pieces. He remained exposed to the spears till the tribe were satisfied that justice demanded no more, and then told the young men who deserted him, that if they offended again he would leave them to their doom.

The following words are used for relatives: "zumbā," mother; "zumbadi," mother's sister; "kurugi," uncle; "kurugāndi," nephew; "pāmāndi," uncle's wife; "wūrrume," son; "yamur," daughter; "boanmundi," grandson; K.'s mother's sister's son is to K. "daiadi" or "gulami"; K.'s mother's sister's daughter is to K. "bukandi" or "bōriandi."

The above rules fix two names on every person from birth. It is common to have a third name. Here are some examples: an Ippai nurai is called "kurai brūddhin mūniyē" (duck's feather); a woman Ippatha, is known as "yadai yunderi" (opossum cloak); another woman is called "bungul" (short); another Ippai is "yuggai wilai" (a kind of snake); a Wirathere speaking man is called "Taratalu" (speared in the shoulder); his son is Yippumenele" (an eagle looking all round). Another man is called "Thugerwun" (turtle). The aborigines also give distinctive names, generally derived from some personal peculiarity, to the white people with whom they are familiar. Thus, the gentleman who told me the above names is himself called "Dungumbir" (the rain maker), a complimentary recognition of his cleverness in meeting an emergency. Another squatter is called

“wolum bididi” (large head), and another is known as “Tarunderai” (great legs and arms). A black on the Namoi, Kumbo dinoun, known to the whites as “Billy,” is distinguished by the name “Bünberüge,” signifying that his leg was once broken by a fall from a horse. Billy Murri Bundar of Burburgate, is called “zumera gunaga,” from the place where his father was buried. He says every Murri is named from his father’s burial place.

Law as to Childbirth.—Women are strictly secluded at the time of childbirth, and for six weeks afterwards. An old gin is appointed to attend the mother in her confinement. At the end of the time of seclusion, this old gin burns every vessel that has been used by the secluded woman; and in some parts of the country also burns off part of her hair. During the monthly illness, the woman is not allowed to touch anything that men use, or even to walk on a path that any man frequents, on pain of death.

Law of Retaliation.—If one man kills another maliciously and unfairly, an obligation rests on the men of the same class as the murdered man to kill one of the class to which the murderer belongs. Thus, if a Kubbi murriira kills an Ippai dinoun, some Ippai dinoun must satisfy justice (as understood by the Murri) by killing a Kubbi murriira.

3.—*Religious and Mythical Traditions.*

In every part of Australia where I have conversed with the aborigines, they have a traditional belief in one Supreme Creator. It seems strange to those who are at all familiar with the thoughts of these people, that in such standard works as the “*Encyclopædia Britannica*” the statement should be repeated, even in late editions, that the aborigines of Australia have no notion of any beings superior to themselves. The fact is, they believe in many unseen spirits, some benevolent and some mischievous, departed spirits of dead men, and demons of forest, lake, river, and mountain, and they also believe in one Supreme God. The Kamilaroi and Wailwun blacks call him Baiäme, sometimes Paiäme or Paiöme. On the Macintyre, the main tributary of the Barwon, the name of the deity is Anambū, and in the neighbourhood also Minnumbū. In Queensland, the word Mūmbāl or Mūmbā (thunder) is used as the name of Him who thunders, who also made all things. In the southern part of this colony, at Twofold Bay, the name Dhūrūmbūlūm, which signifies on the Namoi a sacred staff originally given by Baiäme, is used as the title of Deity.

The common answer of intelligent black fellows on the Namoi or Barwon, when asked if they know Baiäme—an answer

that was made to me some eighteen years ago, and again by a man to whom I had never before spoken a few weeks ago—is this : “ Kamil zaia zummi Baiăme, zaia winuzguldā ” (I have not seen Baiăme ; I have heard, or perceived, him). If asked who made the sky, the earth, the animals, and man, they always answer “ Baiăme ”. Some avow the belief that when good men die their souls go up to Heaven to Baiăme, while the bad when they die cease to exist. Some say that all, good and bad, go up to Heaven. Others say that human beings, on dying, pass into the form of the turuwun, a little bird with a very cheerful note.

“ Wunda ” signifies ghost or spirit. They believe in many “ wunda ”, and when white men appeared they called them “ wunda ”. In all parts of Eastern Australia the word previously used for ghost was applied to white men. With the belief in dangerous ghosts, they have faith in the power of incantation to protect themselves against ghosts. I have seen a pantomime kept up all night by a party of black fellows, adorned with red, yellow, and white clay, marching, dancing, and beating the air, while women beat time and sing over and over with some of the men,

“ Yūrū thāri ze, yuru thari ze,
Dula raza būrulā, yuru thari ze.”

And the purpose of this night’s ceremony was said to be to drive away the spirits of the dead.

More of their religious ideas will be found in the following descriptions of the Bora, funeral rites, and legends of the stars.

The Bora.—The Bora is the ceremony of admitting young men to the privileges of manhood. It involves the idea of dedication to God. When I asked old Billy Murri Bundar if they worshipped Baiăme at the Bora, he replied, “ Of course they do ; it is held on his ground ; it is always near where black fellows are buried.” This answer evidently showed that to the minds of the aborigines the burial-ground and the place set apart for the initiation of young men are consecrated to the Deity. And the concluding part of the ceremony, as will be seen, confirms this view.

When a sufficient number of young men have arrived at an age to claim admission into the rank of adults, if the season is good—that is, if there is an abundance of animal food, fruits, and the herb crowsfoot—the blacks over a large extent of country, sometimes including tribes which at other times are separate and hostile, elect a dictator to manage their Bora. Sometimes one succeeds his brother in this office. This leader then selects a fit piece of ground, fixes the time for the beginning of the ceremony (always at the full moon), and then sends

a messenger round to all the tribes included in the Bora, to give notice of the time and place of meeting. This herald bears in his hand a boomerang and a spear with the skin of a murriira (paddy-melon) fastened to it. All who are summoned must attend. "If it is a hundred miles off," said Billy Murri Bundar to me, "a man must go. It is this way", he added, "all over country, and will be kept up always, I believe." Billy's faith in the perpetuity of the Bora was derived from his idea of its origin. For he assured me that Baiäme at first ordered them to keep the Bora, and gave them the Dhürümbülüm, or sacred staff, which is exhibited at the close of the service.

The notice is given from three weeks to three months before the opening of the Bora, according to the extent over which those summoned to it reside, and other circumstances. During the interval, the leader and other men prepare the ground, making a semi-circular embankment about it, clearing off the underwood, and marking on the trees figures of birds, snakes, etc. At the appointed time the men all leave their camps, where the women and boys remain, and assemble at the bora-ground. There they assist in completing the arrangements. When all is ready, some of the men go to the camp where the women and youths are left, and pretend that an enemy is coming to attack them. Upon this the women run away; and the young men and boys, from about thirteen years of age and upwards, accompany the men to the scene of the Bora. There a great fire is lighted up, around which the men dance night and day. There is no singing, as at a Corroboree, only dancing and beating time. The old men are blackened with charcoal, over which various figures are made with white clay. Some of them wear horns. The old men explain to the novices the meaning of the marks on the trees. The dancing and other performances continue three weeks. Towards the end of the time, as I was informed by old Billy with an air of great confidence and solemnity, the sacred wand, "dhürümbülüm", the gift of the deity, is produced before the awe-struck eyes of the novices in whose presence the old men perform various motions with it. The sight of this sacred symbol confers the privileges of manhood. No woman has ever seen it; and no boy is ever allowed to see it until he has passed through the earlier stages of the Bora.

Formerly they used to knock out one of the front teeth of the young men. This custom has been abandoned, one good fruit of their acquaintance with civilised men. It would be difficult to find out any other improvement derived from their intercourse with Europeans. They strenuously deny that they or their fathers ever practised a custom that has been ascribed to them by their detractors, of compelling the young men, on

their initiation, to eat excrement. This report has been repeated to me by several; but I never met any one, black or white, who said that he had seen it done.

When the men have finished their performance, the initiated youths are taken to a camp by themselves, where they stand in smoke, and afterwards lie down and continue many days without food. Altogether, the process of making men occupies two months. During the fast, the men who cover up the youths keep watch over them, and probably supply them with nourishment enough to keep them alive. But they are made to suffer severely, and come back from the Bora much reduced.

They are very jealous lest women or strangers should intrude upon their sacred mysteries. It is death for a woman to look into a Bora; and even when old King Rory began, in Mr. Sparke's kitchen, to speak about the Bora, Bungul, a young woman of his tribe, who had been listening to all he said on other subjects, instantly slunk away lest she should incur the guilt of hearing about the Bora.

As soon as the appointed time for concluding the fast is come, the youths, who were before "biribirai", are recognised as "kubora", and after a time become "bōrbā" (full men). They may then take wives in accordance with the marriage law, and eat turkey bustard, codfish, female opossum, and honey, not one of which may be touched by biribirai or unmarried women. Male opossum and jewfish are the food of the uninitiated. Married women, like men, may eat anything.

Funeral Rites.—As soon as the death of an aboriginal is known, the tribe unite in a loud and most melancholy wail. The next day in some cases, after two or three days in others, they bury the dead body either in a hollow tree or in the ground. A chief, a venerated father, or a loved friend, is put into a hollow tree. Men of less consequence, and all women, are buried in the ground. They make coffins of bark, and sometimes the ornaments and appendages of these stretch out its length to thirteen feet. As they lower the body into its resting-place they utter a loud "whirr", which is assumed to be the rushing sound made by the departing spirit in its ascent to Heaven. When the bodies are buried in the ground, a hole is dug deep enough for them to be put upright on their feet, and to have an empty space above them, which is covered in with wood so that nothing may touch the head of the deceased. The earth is carefully pressed down over the wooden roof of this tomb and a mound is raised over it. They are very careful in keeping these mounds; and in their cemeteries, as may be seen by engravings in Sir Thomas Mitchell's narrative of his journeys to

the North-west, an appearance of order and decorum is preserved.

Their lamentations for the dead are sometimes continued for five months, and even more. During this time the women of the tribe are plastered over with light mud, and often cut their heads with tomahawks. I have seen the blood running down from the head of an old woman, from four or five deep gashes over the white mud. The grief which they express by these remarkable artificial tokens is, in some cases at least, manifestly very deep. I saw, for instance, at Walgett, a young man whose wife was dying in consequence of having been severely burnt, and the tears that poured down his cheeks, the anxiety and grief expressed in his countenance and every act, were such as could not be counterfeited. Generally, perhaps the strongest natural affection they exhibit is that of parents for their children. Brothers and sisters, also, manifest in some cases great concern one for another. After a burial they often make many little fires about the place with leaves and boughs. At one place I was told that this was designed to drive away troublesome spirits from the living; but King Rory described it as a sacrifice for the benefit of the dead. A black fellow of doubtful character according to their code of morals, having died, his sister was for some time after the burial occupied in going all round about lighting fires, and thus, as Rory believed, "made him go up good".

Here is another of Rory's tales about the dead. A black fellow died on the Barwon, below the township of Bourke. He was buried in the ground. Two days after that a bad black fellow, named Tommy Tommy, with the help of some others, took up the body and skinned it. Tommy Tommy keeps the skin and a bone, with which he believes he can kill any one. Rory regards the conduct of Tommy Tommy as infamous. He never heard of such an outrage before.

The Krodjies and their Enchantments.—There are magicians, called by some Krodjies, but by the Murri in this quarter Dhurunmi. These men pretend to have power to throw stones so that they will go inside the bodies of those they desire to punish, and cause them to sicken and die. They also pretend to suck stones out of the bodies of the sick, and thus to restore them. When any of their people are ill, the common mode of seeking cure is to kneel down and suck a limb or side of the sick. After doing this for some time, the dhurunmi produces some stones, and declares that he has drawn them out of the patient and so procured a return of health. The young men and women regard the dhurunmi with great awe; and the fear lest, if they break their laws, the dhurunmi will inflict plagues

on them has at times a salutary effect. The office of dhurunmi is hereditary.

Recollections of Billy Murri Bundar.—Billy is an old black fellow at Burburgate. His father was Ippai Mūtē, and lived at Wundula, near the Mukai. Wāgūra was chief of the Wandula tribe; he was a leader in fights, and made laws when he chose. Billy cannot tell how he was appointed chief.

When Billy was a boy, a Burburgate black fellow, Charley, was killed by one of the Wee Waa tribe, some seventy miles lower down the Namoi. Upon this being known, a man known as Gūzguēla (charcoal), with the class names Murri Gānūr (red kangaroo), summoned the men of Burburgate to go and take vengeance on the guilty tribe. An old man called by the whites Natty (whose proper names are Yawirawiri Murri Ganur), was one of the leaders. The warriors were painted red and yellow. They were armed with spears and shields, with boomerangs, bandi and berambi (two kinds of clubs). They met near where the bridge now is, about half-way between Burburgate and Wee Waa, and, after great talk, fought till many were killed.

Traditions concerning the Stars.—Most of the information under this head was obtained from the chief of the Gingi tribe, Ippai Dinoun, called by the white people King Rory. He wears his title on a brass plate presented to him by E. J. Sparke, Esq., the owner of Gingi. King Rory is an elderly man, probably about sixty, tall, muscular, and well formed, intelligent and agreeable in his manner. I spent the 10th of July at Gingi, met Rory in the morning, and, after conversing on other subjects, got him to promise to come up in the evening and tell me about the stars.

The evening was beautifully clear. Three planets were visible: Venus, Zindigindoer (at Gundamine, on the Namoi, Venus is called Boian-gummer; higher up it is Gūnū); Mars, Gumba (fat); Saturn, Wuzgul (a small bird). The Milky-way is called Worambul (a common word, generally spelt by the colonists warrambool), a watercourse, with a grove, abounding in food, flowers, fruit, and all that is desirable. To this Worambul the souls of the good ascend when their bodies are committed to the grave, and they are supposed to be cognisant to some extent of what takes place on earth, and even to have power to help their fellow men below when invoked. For when Mr. Sparke had promised King Rory to take him to the races if the rain ceased, and the continuance of rain threatened to disappoint Rory's hopes, he appealed to his departed friends in the Milky-way, by cutting pieces of bark here and there and throw-

ing them on the ground, and crying "pu-a pu-a", until the black fellows above put a stop to the rain, and so enabled him to go to the races. This mode of obtaining fine weather he says he learnt from his fathers.

The Southern Cross is called Zūū (a shrub called by our colonists tea-tree); the dark space at the foot of the Cross is called gao-ergi (emu)—the bird is sitting under the tree. The two bright stars α and β Centauri, pointing to the Cross, are Murrāi (cockatoos). The Magellan Clouds are two buralga (native companions.) Canopus is Wumba (stupid or deaf): it seems strange that the star which the Arabs regard as the eye of the Divine Majesty should be thus designated; but perhaps the very beauty of the star, tempting the people to invoke aid which was not granted, provoked them to call the charmer who would not listen to their entreaties by this reproachful name. The star is fair to the sight, but "wumba" to the prayers of the Murri. Antares is Guddar (a lizard). In the tail of the Scorpion, two bright stars across the Milky-way are called gigeriga (small green parrots) The long dark space between two branches of the Milky-way near Scorpio, is called Wurrawilbūrū (demon). The S-shaped line of stars between the Northern Crown and Scorpio is called Mundēwur, *i.e.*, notches cut in a spiral form on the trunk of a tree to enable a black fellow to climb up. The chief star in the Peacock is called Mūrgū (night cuckoo). Corona, the four stars, are called Bundar (a kangaroo); Fomalhaut—Gani (a small iguana); Spica virginis—Guriē (a small crested parrot); the Pleiades—Worrul (bees' nest). At Gundamine, on the Namoi, the Pleiades are called Gindemar; higher up the river, at Burburgate, this constellation is called Dindīma (woman), and the Hyades Giwīr (man).

Sirius is called Zāzarī at Burburgate; Arcturus—Guembila, also Guebilla (bright red); the Northern Crown—Mullion Wollai (eagles' camp or nest), when this constellation, which is more like a nest than a crown, is about due north on the meridian. Altair, the chief star in Aquila, rises, and is called Mullion-ga (an eagle in action)—it is springing up to watch the nest. Shortly afterwards her more majestic mate, Vega, springs up, and is also called Mullion-ga. The whole vision of the nest, and the royal birds springing up to guard their young, is worthy of a place among the ancient myths of astronomy.

Benetnasch, which is visible in Sydney for a few weeks, and the next star in the tail of the Great Bear, which also appears in the latitude of Gingi, about 30°, both shone out clearly over the plain. These stars appear to us only in May, June, and July, when they rise about NNE, and set NNW, never soaring to the eyes of people here above the trees, but flying along near

the ground, their bright eyes peering into the grass and shrubs. Most appropriately, they are called Zūz-gū, the owls.

The above Report comprises the information obtained during my recent journey to the Barwon. From various quarters I expect further information concerning the languages and traditions of the aborigines, which I hope to forward to you in due time.

AUSTRALIAN LANGUAGES *and* TRADITIONS. By the Rev. WILLIAM RIDLEY, M.A.—No. II. (Communicated by the Earl of KIMBERLEY.)

To the Honourable the Colonial Secretary of New South Wales.

SIR,—I have the honour to return, with thanks, the manuscript Vocabulary and Grammar of the Wirradhurri Language, by the Rev. James Günther; the Vocabulary and Grammar, in two manuscript volumes, by the late Rev. James Watson; and the Report of the Select Committee of the Legislative Council of Victoria, 1858, on the Aborigines. For transmission with these, as further illustrations of the divers languages of Australia, I also send you copies of the Rev. L. E. Threlkeld's "Australian Grammar" and "Key to the Structure of the Aboriginal Language", and of the "Language of the Aborigines of the Colony of Victoria", by Daniel Bunce, Esq., Geelong. Mr. Threlkeld's works are not now to be purchased. As a sacred duty to his memory—that the fruit of his long and earnest labours among the aborigines may not be overlooked in the new and comprehensive efforts now made to collect all that can be known of the Australian race—I send the only copy at my command, the gift of the author. When the object for which this volume of Mr. Threlkeld's is sent has been accomplished, I shall, therefore, be glad to have it returned to me.

These works of the Rev. Messrs. Günther, Watson, and Threlkeld, will, I believe, be regarded by comparative philologists as most valuable contributions to the materials of their science. Mr. Günther's and Mr. Watson's treat of the same language, the Wirādhurri, or, as some aborigines pronounce it, Wirāgērē, a language spoken over a wide extent of country, from the Upper Namoi, the Castlereagh and Liverpool Plains in the north and east, to the Bawun or Darling west, and the Lachlan in the south. Many of its words are like those of the Kamilaroi, which adjoins it on the north. Like Kamilaroi, Wolaroi, Wailwun, and many other languages in that part of Australia, it is named after the negative "wirrai", variously pronounced "wirai" and "wurrai", signifying no. Mr. Watson's