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hostess was reflected in the cleanliness and neatness of the natives whom she had been able to collect there and retain until we had an opportunity to examine them.

The little homestead at Mirra Mitta is near the bore, from which extremely hot water is conducted by a pipe to the house. Apart from a few trees growing within an enclosure surrounding the building and formed by a low mud wall, scarcely a vestige of vegetation could be seen in a radius of many miles—only gibbers, brightly colored and polished. Sand had drifted against the enclosure, almost obliterating it on the windward side. In this lonely setting, there were to be seen a few hundred yards down the slope two graves, side by side, one of them marking the last resting place of Mrs. Morley's former husband.

tion at Mungeranie, Mr. Aiston being for a long time the police officer for the north-eastern corner of the State. His duties brought him into close contact with the natives, more numerous then than they are now.

It was natural, then, that members of our party had a great deal in common with Mr. Aiston, who was already known to some of us personally, and to all of us by repute. He and his wife were very kind to us and treated us splendidly. The same neatness and freshness remarked earlier in this article when referring to Mrs. Crabb and Mrs. Morley, was in evidence here also. What a powerful influence women of this type must exert in that great region where white women are so few.

Strange Museum

Mr. Aiston retired from the police force many years ago, and now runs a store and controls the bore, besides looking after his adjacent pastoral holding. I was very much surprised on entering his "den"—a room of very spacious dimensions—to behold a remarkable collection of weapons and other curios that would do credit to a goodly sized museum. On the mantelpiece I noted many different kinds of pistols, powder horns, steel woven gauntlets, German helmets, bugles, spurs of all sorts—large and small, ancient and modern—war medals, Kopi mourning caps worn by native Dieri widows, and many other trinkets. Lining the walls were well-filled bookshelves.

There were also many different kinds of firearms; one of these was a firelock with a very long barrel and a queerly-shaped stock—a relic of one of the Scinde wars. Nearby was a heavy French flintlock dating back to the seventeen hundreds; also a walking-stick gun for frightening poachers. Pistols and revolvers were in profusion, nearly all of them different. Swords of all sorts were represented—sabres, cutlasses, scimitars, Indian and Japanese swords, and queer weapons for in-fighting from Rajputana. Another had old inscriptions in Arabic, or some similar type of script, on both sides of the blade. Malay krises and swords of various kinds were represented, as were arrows, bows, and clubs.

Some of the battle axes were fine examples of the smith's art; the steel was beautifully damascened in some; in another the large handle was covered by carefully woven wire, a Zulu trophy. The articles which especially held my attention were a complete suit of old Japanese armor, and a suit of woven mail with a damascened steel shield and helmet of Persian or Western Indian type. The helmet was of a peculiar shape, with a rod-like piece projecting in such a way as as to prevent the wearer from having his nose and mouth sliced off during an argument with an enemy. Ad adjacent room was decorated with a large collection of native implements and weapons, both stone and wood, including a particularly fine assemblage of the types which were used by the Dieri people.

Wireless Medical Service

On a table nearby was a wireless set and a typewriter, which is used to tap out in Morse code a message to be sent over the air to faraway Cloncurry to the Australian Inland Mission station there, whence it is carried to the local telegraph station, to be wired to its final destination. Birdsville, Pandie, Clifton Hills, and New Well form parts of the chain of wireless sending and receiving stations which stand, like the A.I.M. hostels, as a monument to the vision and nobility and energy of "Flynn of the Inland," and these stations are voluntarily manned at regular stated hours each day to receive or transmit, as the case may be, and so news is disseminated, sickness is reported and, if necessary, medical aid is asked for, and soon the flying doctor arrives where needed, and treats the patient there, or else carries him back to a hospital for further attention.

The lonely "Centre" is now less lonely and more safe than it was a few years ago. Men, women, and children now have a better chance of surviving accident or sickness than they had before this splendid chain of voluntary wireless workers and listeners, together with the A.I.M. hostels, nursing sisters, and flying doctors, was organised. No wonder these hostels represent all that is noble and friendly to these pioneer men and women of the great lonely Centre. They are more than hospitals they are, indeed, hostels where people can meet for social intercourse. No wonder the local people endeavor to raise funds to assist the institution—race meetings, dances, and sports being held at intervals.

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MORALS OF ABORIGINES

Strict Code Observed

IDEAS OF PROPERTY

This is the last of the series of articles on the far North-East written by members of the recent University anthropological expedition to Pandy Pandy. In it the writer discusses the morals of the aborigines, their degrees of relationship, marriage customs and ideas of property ownership.

By a Member of the Adelaide University Expedition to Pandy Pandy

Some people would have us believe that our blacks in a state of nature are devoid of moral sense, as some of their practices are offensive to our ideas of what is right and proper. Native customs regarding marriage and property are particularly subject to such criticism. But so much depends on the point of view in a controversial topic that it is worth while looking into the subject a little more closely, before drawing any conclusions.

Firstly, with regard to marriage. This is normally regarded by degrees of relationship. Some of us may be able to recite, for example, the list of relatives whom a man may not marry, as laid down in the Prayer Book. Aboriginal marriages also are regulated by degrees of relationship, but the aboriginal method of reckoning relationships is entirely different from ours. According to the native idea, brothers are of one flesh to such an extent that a man calls both his own and his brother's children by the same terms, meaning son and daughter, and those children all call one another brother and sister. In the same way a woman calls her own and her sister's children by the same relationship terms, and these children also call one another brother and sister. But the terms used by a woman for her son and daughter are usually different to those used by her husband. As this custom has gone on for numberless generations, people whom a native man or woman call brother and sister, may bear no traceable blood relationship to the speaker. The fact of brotherhood or sisterhood is decided by the custom that children receive a common distinguishing name from either the father or the mother. In the western half of Australia such names usually are transmitted from the father's side, while in the eastern half of Australia the name usually comes down through the mother.

The natural consequence of such a system is that in addition to widely distributed brothers and sisters, the aboriginal man or woman possesses numerous fathers, mothers, grandfathers, and grandmothers, sons, daughters and grandchildren who are not related to him at all, according to our method of recognising kindred. Every person whom an aborigine knows, both of his own and neighboring tribes, is looked upon and addressed as a relative.

Wife Customs

A further consequence of this custom is that every man is related to a number of women in such a way that he calls them by the kinship term which means "wife." In the normal course of events, a man is betrothed to one or more of these women by arrangement with her relatives, usually by promising one of his sisters to one of his fiancee's brothers. Eventually he marries this "wife" and she becomes his own particular property, and he has to pay toll constantly to her relatives, giving them a goodly portion of his food and possessions. The generalised term "wife," however, carries with it a certain amount of generalised obligation. When a stranger of importance visits the camp, custom

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demands that one of his "wives" be lent to him. If the man to whom the woman belongs should object, he is considered to be a mean person. More important occasions arise during the performance of certain ceremonies which are considered to be necessary to maintain the natural increase of animals and plants which form the food supplies of the tribes. Some of these ceremonies involve the lending of wives. Should a man refuse to lend his own particular wife on demand, he is considered to be a menace to the welfare of the people. He is liable to be condemned by the tribal council and executed by magic or more direct action. The Australian aborigine is by no means alone in prescribing a community of women for special ceremonies. Such customs at one time were widely spread, and some of the modern European carnivals are mitigated survivals of earlier customs of the same type.

So far examples have been considered where the consent of the actual husband is presupposed. Should an aborigine steal a woman who is no "wife" of his, but who actually belongs to another man, the wrong which has been committed is looked upon as a purely personal one between the two "husbands" concerned, their respective relatives and friends, and also the woman's relatives who had arranged her former marriage. The final right to possess the woman is decided by combat between the abductor and the aggrieved people at the earliest possible occasion. Tribal authority steps in to attempt to prevent fatal consequences, if possible. On the other hand, if an aborigine should elope with a woman who is his sister, native ideas of morality are outraged, even if she bear no known blood relationship to her lover. Vengeance for such a crime is a tribal matter, not a mere personal grievance. The crime can be expiated only by the death of the culprits at the hands of any member of the tribe. Therefore, although many of the native customs may suggest very lax ideas concerning marriage, yet the aborigine has an exceedingly rigid system of prohibited marriages between certain individuals. His ideas as to what is right and wrong are very different from ours, yet they represent nevertheless a strict moral code.

Property Obligations

With regard to property, our blacks are considered to be hopelessly improvident. An apparently typical instance of this occurred in the Cooper district. A station was left as a going concern by a white man to his half-caste son, who was still regarded as one of the tribe by his mother's people. The station property in a very short time was distributed among the members of the tribe, and the station as such ceased to exist. This example is, however, not so much one of native improvidence, as an illustration of native custom. An aborigine is not supposed to retain for his own use more than a small share of any game he may kill, and foodstuffs his wife may collect, or any possessions he may have made or acquired. He keeps what he needs for immediate purposes, and custom demands that the rest be handed over to other members of the tribe, chiefly to the relatives of the woman he has married, or to whom he is betrothed, and also to certain of the elders of the tribe. Should he not carry out these distributions fairly, then these people will consider themselves aggrieved. They will be constrained to demand their rightful portion, under which circumstances not only will the culprit be shamed and disgraced in the eyes of his people, but he will also be liable to suffer bodily harm. Even if the man should not be attacked directly, he becomes unpopular and he will be liable to lose the support of his people when he is menaced by personal or tribal enemies, and his life is almost sure to be forfeited. The aborigine, therefore, is brought up in a hard school, and behind his apparently improvident generosity lurks the practice of a custom backed up by heavy penalties for the transgressor. By the time an aborigine has attained adult status he usually has learned by precept and example to follow implicitely the rules of his social system, and is, in fact, an extremely "moral" person.

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SCIENCE AND THE BLACKS

Through various causes, Australians of late have had what may be called their share of the "white man's burden" very much before them; but, of its scientific aspects, much remains to be learned even by the savants. Were it otherwise, the University anthropological expeditions which have visited Central Australia in recent years to study the black "in his habit as he lives," would not have had the importance now universally attached to them. As everyone knows, anthropologists on the same quest for knowledge have come from all parts of the earth, and especially America; and, though the care of the last survivors of the Stone Age is a heavy responsibility, which alas, has only lately been generally recognised. Australians have come to view almost in a spirit of boastfulness the distinction their land enjoys in being the home of what, in many respects, is the most astonishing, as it is the oldest, race in the world. Human progress has been achieved largely through the admixture of races—miscegenation it is called—but, in our aborigines we have a people who for thousands of years have lived in a state of the completest possible isolation from the rest of mankind, yet who, as the scientists assure us, are not inferior in mentality to the whites.

The suggestion once recklessly made, that Australia might add to her just claims that of being the cradle of humanity, has long since been discarded. Wherever the transition took place from the "missing link" to the human stage, it was certainly not on this continent, where it was as a fully developed homo sapiens that man made his appearance, probably, as now believed, at a time when Europe and Asia were in great part under ice. The Australian aborigines arrived, as is also believed, from Asia, via New Guinea and other islands to the north of us, rather than by any continuous, though now sunken, land connection with the outer world. The presumption is favored by the absence from this continent of Asiatic mammals other than those introduced by man, and also by the probability that the distance to be traversed by sea would have been greatly abbreviated by the existence of a land link, now sundered, with New Guinea. However that may be, these men for 20,000 years, have, like Wordsworth's star, "dwelt apart, majestic, free." With a civilisation dating back to the Stone Age, they managed to survive without an infusion of fresh blood, until the white man arrived and the tragedy began whose culmination is pathetically described by Mr. Norman Tindale, ethnologist to the South Australian Museum, in his story in "The Advertiser" of a race weaned from its nomadic life and "transmuted into the hangers-on of the cattle stations." Of the dozen tribes which once inhabited the Arunta desert and the Lake Eyre Basin, he furnishes a woeful account. Some have wholly disappeared; of others, only one or two members remain; and of some, the survivors were too aged to be mustered for interrogation. This attempt to take what may be called the dying depositions of the blacks, was not wholly futile; for some were vigorous enough to respond to the call for information. Such testimony as Mr. Tindale offers, however, must strengthen the regret long felt that the work of research was not begun some decades ago, when the full-blooded aborigines were much more numerous.

Doubtless, the extent to which, in earlier days, the blacks were maligned, had much to do