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The following paper was read by the Director :—

The JERAEIL, or INITIATION CEREMONIES of the KURNAI TRIBE.

By A. W. HOWITT, Esq., F.G.S.

The Kurnai Jeraeil.

IN a former communication on Australian ceremonies of initiation, I mentioned that there are marked differences between those of the Kurnai and those of the tribes whose initiation I therein described. I now propose to give an account of the Kurnai Jéra-eil¹ sufficiently detailed to bring into view its principal features, and to mark in what manner it differs from, or has resemblance to, the Kūringal of the Murring.

1. *Gathering the Jeraeil.*—The gathering together of four clans² of the Kurnai tribe who participated in these ceremonies was preceded by long consultations between the elders of the clan in which the initiative was taken. When it was found that there were a sufficient number of boys whom it was necessary to “make young men,” the principal headman³ took action by sending out his messenger,⁴ who conveyed a summons⁵ to the principal headman of the next clan. He carried with him some token from the sender—such as his club, or boomerang, or shield—and he had given to him, to be conveyed with great secrecy, one of the Sacred Bullroarers (Tūndūn) which was the special emblem of his mission.⁶ He delivered his message to the old man to whom he was sent, and handed to him the token and the tundun. The headman, having received these, called the elders together at some suitable place apart from the camp; and showing them the token and the tundun, repeated the message. After due consultation by the elders, their decision was announced in a general assembly of all the men; and the headman now in his turn sent the message forward by one of

¹ Each native word will be accented once for all when first used.

² It is well to bear in mind that the Kurnai tribe is divided into five clans, each of which has succession from father to son in the same portion of the tribal territory. I use the word “clan” advisedly, because this tribe has agnatic descent. When I use the word “horde,” I refer to a local division of a tribe having uterine descent as to its social organization. The agnatic clan and horde are distinct from the class and totem, which have descent through the mother.

³ Gwéra-eil = eminent or great, Kurnai = man.

⁴ Báiaur.

⁵ Lēwin.

⁶ The use of the “message stick” was in a very rudimentary stage with the Kurnai. When a messenger was sent to gather together certain local groups, there was given him, as a sort of *aide mémoire*, a plain stick for each group, cut from any convenient tree or bush: these he delivered with his message. They were not marked or notched.

his own people. In this way the message would travel from clan to clan, and from group to group, until the whole Kurnai community became aware of it—that is to say, all the initiated members of the community; for these proceedings were carefully concealed from the women and children, excepting that the elder women were made aware of what was being mooted by such expressions as “The Mrarts (ghosts) are going to kill a kangaroo.” This refers to one of the stages into which the Jeraeil is divided.

These preliminary proceedings take up a long time, perhaps several months. Time is of no value to the blacks, and as the ceremonies were usually held during the summer months, the initiative may have been taken even as far back as the previous autumn or winter.¹ More than one set of messengers travelled to and fro in the Kurnai country before the final arrangements were completed, that is, before the exact time for the meeting was agreed upon, as well as the locality. This latter would in most cases be in the country of the headman who called the assembly, for it would be to him, and at his call, that the others came.

When the time for assembly drew near, the most distant group started in company with the Báiaur (messenger) who had been accredited to them. Proceeding on their way by easy stages, they joined the next local group; until, on reaching the appointed tryst, their contingent might include all, or nearly all of their clan, who were on, or near to, their line of march,

The arrival of such a contingent was announced according to rule. A good instance is that of the last great Jeraeil, which was held on the north bank of the Mitchell River at Lucknow, nearly a quarter of a century ago. According to my informants this Jeraeil was called by the principal headman of the northern moiety of the tribe, the renowned warrior Brūthen Mūnji.² The southern moiety arrived under the guidance of their Gwéraeil Kurnai, Būnjil Gwórun.³ Marching in front of his people, and coming to the edge of the high bank overlooking the river where the town of Bairnsdale now stands, he gave the signal for halting by sticking the great jag-spear, which he carried, into the soil. The men thereupon all halted, and the women, hastily disembarrassing themselves of their burdens, and rolling up their 'possum rugs, commenced to beat time upon them to the words of a Jeraeil song. This, being heard at the encampment beyond the river, was immediately replied to by the same song.

¹ Thus, in calling together the Jeraeil which I describe in this paper, I sent out my messengers to the headman of the Brabra clan in August, and the Jeraeil was held at the end of January following.

² Bruthen-Munji, “Kamilaroi and Kurnai,” p. 213.

³ Gworun = Thunder.

As the contingents assembled at the appointed place, each one encamped on that side nearest to its own country. In time the whole assembly would thus be gathered together.

During the waiting for arrivals, and during the intervals between the several stages of the Jeraeil ceremony, there were songs and dances at night, in which sometimes the hosts and sometimes the visitors were the performers. At these ceremonial gatherings matters of tribal concern were arranged; and it not infrequently happened that feuds broke out, which required to be temporarily assuaged by those concerned claiming, or submitting to, the ordeal of spears or clubs.

These may be passed over without further notice, as not having any essential connection with the initiation ceremonies. I may, however, notice that these ceremonies were attended by the Kurnai alone, and not even by all of them; for the fifth clan of the tribe, the Kráuatün, did not participate, and had no ceremonies of its own. I have heard that some of the blacks of the Western Port district, which adjoins the Kurnai country on the west, did at times attend the South Gippsland Jeraeils, but I am unable to verify the statement. At any rate, no aliens from any other adjoining tribes were permitted to attend.

At the Jeraeil which I attended, and which I am about to describe, the old men had decided that, being short-handed, the Krauatun headman and one other should be permitted to *help*. This distinction between the words "help" and "participate" marks the fact that neither of these men had been formally initiated, that is to say, they had not passed through the stages of Tütñurring and Brëwit to Jeraeil. Moreover, although the Kurnai were short-handed, on this occasion, and had only six boys to be initiated, they absolutely refused to allow any half-castes even to be present, giving as their reason, "these half-castes have nothing to do with us." This is a well-marked illustration of the view of agnation, and of the derivation of the child, held by this tribe.¹

All the Kurnai being assembled, the headmen decide when the ceremonies shall commence. In the Jeraeil which I shall now describe, the ceremonies were, according to the statements of the old men who conducted them, the exact reproduction of the Jeraeil of their fathers, at which they themselves had been initiated, and made the depositories of the ancestral knowledge. After the occupation of Gippsland these ceremonies were held at intervals for some twenty years. They then fell into disuse, and were only now revived in response to the message which I had

¹ It would be unsafe to argue from the custom of the Kurnai on this matter to that of the Australian tribes in general.

sent round.¹ The old men said they were glad to receive my message, and to hold the Jeraeil, for the reason that the Kurnai youth "were now growing wild. They had been too much with the whites, so that now they paid no attention either to the words of the old men, or to those of the missionaries."

2. *The Preliminary Ceremony.*—In the afternoon of the day on which the first ceremony of the Jeraeil was held, the oldest woman,² the wife of the second headman, called the other women together near the camp; and, having then summoned to her the Tutnurring (novices)³ proceeded to drill them, as also their Krau-un,⁴ in the performances. It was, in fact, a rehearsal. The boys were seated cross-legged in a row with their arms folded, and were told by the old woman to keep their eyes cast down, and not to stare about, also to mind and keep good time to the drumming by the women. The Krauun were placed in a row just behind the Tutnurring, and were instructed to copy their movements exactly. The women now commenced to drum slowly on their folded rugs, and in accord with the time the two rows of seated figures moved their bodies sharply first to one side and then to the other, at the same time reclining the head almost on the alternate shoulders. One boy, who was not quite quick enough in his movements, was told by the old woman to "move more sharply, as if some one were tickling him." After some practice, the old woman thought the performance satisfactory, and told the boys to go away and rest themselves.

During the day the Jeraeil ground had been selected by the headman in an open space about a quarter of a mile from the camp. All the little bushes were chopped up, and the ground cleared of sticks and rubbish.

About sundown the headman gave the word to commence, and walked off into the forest, followed by the men. The old woman walked to the Jeraeil ground, followed by the women and by the novices, who were attended by one of the Bullawangs.⁵

¹ Those to whom the message goes accompanied by the Tundun must obey the call. Two of the Braiáka clan failed to attend after being summoned, having remained at one of the missions at a wedding. The old men were very indignant, and said, "when that kalk (wood) goes to a man he *must* come, he *cannot* stop away." In olden times this non-attendance would have had serious results for the two Braiakas.

² Gweraeil Rüküt; Rukut = woman.

³ The novices are called Tutnurring during the ceremonies, afterwards they are Brewit (young men) or Jeraeil.

⁴ The Krauun is one of those women who stand in the relation of "sister" to the Tutnurring. For instance, she is his "tribal," if not "own," mother's brother's daughter. In other words, she is the "tribal," if not "own" sister to the Bullawang.

⁵ The Kurnai name for the Australian robin (*Petroica multicolor*). Pointing to one of these birds, an old man said to me, "that is the policeman who looks after the boys." The birds Bullawang, Yeerung, and Djeetgun are said to be three of the "Iëen muk-kurnai" ("real Kurnai ancestors").

This man being a cripple was unable to take an active part in the ceremonies; and had therefore been assigned specially to watch and instruct the Tutnurring.

On reaching the ground the Tutnurring and the Krauun were seated in two rows, as at the rehearsal, the pairs being allotted to each other in accordance with their group-relationship. The mothers of the boys stood in a row behind them, each bearing a staff surmounted by a tuft of eucalyptus twigs.¹ The Gweraeil Rukut acted as mistress of the ceremonies. When the arrangements had been completed and the boys were sitting silently with their eyes cast down on the ground, a distant noise was heard of rhythmical shouts, accompanied by dull muffled-sounding blows. These coming nearer, a procession of men came in sight led by the headman. The performers were smeared over with charcoal powder,² and bound round with strips of white bark, across their bodies like shoulder-belts, round their waists, legs, and arms, and in coronets round their heads, from which rose tall waving tufts of grass. Similar bunches of grass were thrust from each side through the nose-perforations. Each man held a strip of bark, about three feet in length and four inches wide, in each hand. In the olden times—twenty odd years back—the men were entirely naked during these ceremonies, but now civilisation has so far modified their customs, even in the Jeraeil, that they wore their trousers, and some of them their shirts also. The line of men came rapidly forward from the bush in a series of short runs, following and imitating the actions of their leader, who came on in a serpentine course, shouting "Huh! Huh!" beating the ground in time with his strips of bark, first on the one side and then on the other. After every fifteen or twenty paces the men stopped, and, raising their strips of bark, set up a loud shout of "Yeh!" (Hurrah!)

As soon as the men appeared the women began to beat their rugs, the mothers kept time by stamping their yam-sticks on the ground, and the seated rows of Tutnurring and Krauun swayed in perfect unison alternately to right and left. The men, having run in a winding course once or twice past the boys, formed a

¹ These staves should properly have been "yam-sticks," but these implements are no longer used by the Kurnai, flour having replaced the former food of roots or tubers. The bunches of leaves which play a part in these ceremonies are called "Jerling" = branches, boughs, or twigs. Hence Jeraeil, which may be translated "leafy," or "having leaves or twigs." It is analogous to the Murring word "Kuringal," which may be translated "of the forest," or "foresty." Eil, al, or gal, are adjectival terminations.

² Both in the Kurnai and in the Murring tribes the use of charcoal powder belongs to these ceremonies and to sorcery. Among the Kurnai the Bunjil-Barn, *i.e.*, wizards who killed by the Barn (*Casuarina suberosa*), rubbed themselves all over with charcoal powder when at their incantations. See "Kamilaroi and Kurnai," p. 252.

semicircle in front and near them; and, kneeling down, struck the ground violently with their bark strips, shouting "Huh! Huh! Yeh!" This continued some little time, and then the men walked off to the camp after having stripped off their disguising costumes.

This preliminary ceremony ended the proceedings for the day. The Jeraeil has now commenced, and by it the initiated men have claimed the boys from their mothers, and have shown their intention of making men of them.

3. "*Laying the boys down to sleep.*"—This second stage in the ceremonies commenced at a little before sundown on the following day. In the afternoon the men had prepared the place in which, as they said, the Tutnurring were to be "laid down to sleep." A curved screen of boughs had been made, about three feet in height, twenty-five feet wide across the opening, and ten feet deep. The space thus partly enclosed was filled about six inches deep with freshly plucked eucalyptus twigs so as to form a couch.

The same ceremonies were now repeated that had been gone through on the previous evening. At their termination the men retired into the bush to prepare for the next ceremony. The boys were placed standing in a row with their faces toward the camp, the Kraun being in another row behind them, and behind them again were the mothers. It was now strongly impressed upon the boys by the Bullawang in charge of them that, when the men returned, and offered rods to them, or threw rods on them, they were on no account to touch them, but must let them fall unheeded to the ground, otherwise the Jeraeil would have to be recommenced from the beginning. The reason of this caution is that the rods, which are offered to the boys, are afterwards gathered up by the women, and this would be unlawful for them to do if any of the Tutnurring had touched them with their hands. From the commencement of the Jeraeil there is an increasing separation of the Tutnurring from the women, until they are mutually tabooed after the "sleeping" ceremony. For either then to touch the other would be something very like pollution, and would, as the Kurnai believe, be followed by serious bodily illness to one or both.

After a short time of wailing, we heard in the distance a curious rattling sound accompanying the words "Ya! Wa! Ya! Wa!"¹ At intervals there was a pause, followed by shouts of "Yeh!" The men came in view, led by the old headman, slowly marching in line. Each man held a bundle of thin rods, called Téddeleng, in each hand, which he struck together to the words

¹ No meaning can be given for these words. I was told in reference to them "Our fathers always said and did thus to make the boys into men."

“Ya! Wa!” Several men carried other bundles slung round their necks to supply the women and the Kraun, who join in this ceremony. Having marched round the two rows of Tutnurring and Kraun, they then passed between the two rows, and encircled the boys, thus severing them finally from the Kraun, and from their mothers. As they halted, each presented his bundle to one of the boys, and then proceeded to launch the rods one by one into the air over them, so that a continual shower fell on the Tutnurring, and thence to the ground, where they were carefully collected by the Kraun.

This part of the ceremony marks, as I have said, the separation of the boys from the women from this time forward until the novice has been readmitted by the old men into the community; but, even then, the young man does not stand on his former footing. He no longer lives in the same camp with his parents and sisters, but in the camp of the Brewit, or young men. So strict is the rule as to the rods that, had a Tutnurring touched one of them, the Kraun would have dropped all those they had collected, and would have returned to the camp with all the women present. The Jeraeil would have had to be recommenced from the beginning, and the boy who had caused this serious break in the ceremonies would have been severely punished. Probably in the olden times he would have been speared.

The Kraun having collected the rods re-formed their line behind the motionless Tutnurring, and the Bullawangs formed a third line facing them. There were three of these to each boy. The Bullawang is the Tutnurring’s “own,” or “tribal” mother’s brother’s son, and belongs to that local group of the tribe with which the Tutnurring’s father’s group intermarried. These Bullawangs had been selected after careful consideration, the old women taking a prominent part in the genealogical discussion which occurred; for, owing to the diminution of the tribe, it was necessary to trace out “group-relations,” as there were not enough “own relations” to supply the required number of Bullawangs to each boy. I heard the old Gweraeil Rukut ask two of the boys which part their “mother’s father” belonged to; and it was by this knowledge of the locality and of the individual that the particular Bullawang was allotted.

With loud shouts of “Huh!” and the rustling of bunches of leaves, each group of three Bullawangs raised their boy several times high in the air, he extending his arms towards the sky as far as possible.¹ The women now raised and shook their leaf-

¹ I was much struck by the similarity of this raising the hands towards the sky, to the pointing upwards of the Murring at their Kuringal; but I could not learn that it had any reference to Mūgan ngaura, who is the equivalent of the Murring Dáramúlún.

topped sticks, and the men their handfuls of leaves, over the boys. Immediately following this the Bullawangs were raised into the air, each one by his fellows, and with his face turned towards his own country. As each one was raised aloft the men crowded round rustling boughs and with loud shouts of "Huh!"

The last scene of this part now took place. It is considered most important that it be carefully carried out according to the ancestral rules. The Tutnurring are to be laid to sleep as boys in order to be awakened as men.

Each one was led by three old men to the enclosure wherein the couch of leaves had been prepared, and was there carefully laid down with exclamations of "He! Nga!"¹ The novices were laid on their backs side by side, with their arms crossed on their breasts. Each had a bundle of twigs under his head for a pillow. The old men now carefully and completely covered them with rugs, a few leaves having been first sprinkled over their naked bodies. They were so completely covered up from head to foot that not a glimpse of any one of them was visible, nor could they see anything.

A large fire was then lighted at their feet, and the women made another at the back of the highest part of the bough screen. While this was being done, the old men were admonishing the boys as to their conduct while lying down. They were neither to move nor to speak. If one of them wanted anything he was to signify this to his Bullawang by chirping like an Emu-wren (Yeerung²). They were finally reminded that, from this time forth, they were no longer to consort with children, but to behave themselves as men. Moreover they were carefully to listen to and remember the instructions of their Bullawangs.

These boys were now said to be put to sleep. In the olden days, and, indeed, at all times when time was of no object, this part of the Jeraeil would have continued without intermission till morning. But on this occasion, as time was short,³ the proceedings only continued till about midnight, in view of the ceremonies which had to take place next day.

The two fires having been lighted, and the Tutnurring formally instructed, the important proceedings commenced. Two Bullawangs crouched down at the boys' heads, in order to be ready if their aid were required. I was amused at this time and during

¹ "He!" may be translated here "Well," or "Good." The aspirate has a nasal sound which cannot be represented in writing. "He!" is also used affirmatively, as we use the sound "Hm!" Nga = yes.

² Yeerung, the totem of the Kurnai males, as Djeetgun is that of the females.

³ This was because I could not remain beyond a certain date, and also because the beginning of the Jeraeil had been delayed by the late arrival of some of the Kurnai. As it was, the Jeraeil extended over five days. In olden times it would have taken two or three weeks.

the night in watching the men, and listening to what they said to any one of the boys who, wanting something, uttered the chirp of the Emu-wren. The Bullawang had first to stoop down and ask the boys in the neighbourhood whence the chirp came, "Is it you? Is it you?" until he questioned the right one, when an affirmative chirp replied. Then he had to find out what the boy wanted, which he could only do by a series of questions, the boys not being allowed to speak. Several times he was completely posed; and, after a number of ineffectual queries, such as "Are you too hot?" "Is there a stick sticking into you?" "Do you want to be moved?" "Do you want to drink?"—he had to wait, and scratch his head, in the hope of thinking of the right question.

The ceremony commenced by the Gweraeil Rukut standing up at her fire with a bundle of rods in each hand, and slowly beating them together to the words "Ya! Wa!" and "Yeh!" at intervals. All the women joined in, and the headman, with all the men, followed suit at their fire. After this had gone on for perhaps a quarter of an hour the old woman moved off, and marched round the enclosure to the tune of "Ya! Wa!" followed by the women, and these followed by the men. This went on for hours, the only sounds being the soft tramp of the people perambulating the enclosure, the regular rattling of the rods, and the monotonous utterance—I cannot call it chaunt—of the words "Ya! Wa! Yeh!" This was sometimes varied by the words "Yeerung!" and "Kaiung!"¹ instead of "Ya!" and "Wa!" but the expression of exultation "Yeh!" was in all cases used at intervals. Anything more monotonous than this part of the ceremony I cannot conceive; but the Kurnai seemed to derive great satisfaction from it, and to think it very powerful in infusing manly virtues into the boys. It is supposed to have the effect of putting them to some kind of magic sleep, not like the ordinary sleep of mankind, from which they may waken into manhood.

About midnight the old woman gave the signal for rest by ceasing her march, and subsiding into her opossum rug by her fire. The women all followed her example, the men lay down round their fire, and all were soon asleep. Just before dawn the old headman woke, and called out to the Gweraeil Rukut to rouse the women. Very soon the proceedings recommenced just where they left off the night before. The slow marching round to the monotonous beating of the rods, and the cries of "Yeerung! Yeerung! Yeh!" went on for about half an hour, when

¹ Kaiung is the women's apron, which in the old times was worn by the Kraun after this ceremony until she married, when it was discarded. I believe that Djeetgun, the female totem, the "women's sister," ought also to have been invoked during the marching round. I noticed its omission, but neglected at the time to inquire the reason, and I have not since had a chance of so doing.

the women ceased, leaving the men standing in a crowd at the feet of the prostrate motionless Tutnurring, still beating their rods to the same old song, and invoking Yeerung, the "men's brother" for the last time.

The Tutnurring had been put to sleep the night before as boys; they were now to be awakened from their sleep as men. In order that this should be done in a proper manner, the old headman and the doctor¹ took it in hand.

The woman left the Jeraeil ground and went to the camp; for the ceremonies which are now held are those at which it is unlawful for the women or the uninitiated to be present. At these, the women are told, Tundun himself comes down to make the boys into men; and they are assured, and so far as I know they believe, that were they to be present, or even to see or hear what goes on, he would kill them. So strong is this feeling against the women knowing anything of the secret rites that, even now, after nearly half a century of occupation of Gippsland by the white men, one of the headmen said to me, "If a woman were to see these things, or hear what we tell the boys, I would kill her." Whether this would now be really done I cannot say—perhaps not—but it might be, and I am certain that at the time the old man meant what he said.

The two headmen, and the Mulla-mullung, who, by virtue of his office, had, in addition to the charcoal powder, a band of white drawn across his face from ear to ear, now began to uncover the Tutnurring at one end of the row. He seemed to be in a deep sleep: and the old men raising him up into a sitting posture, made curious grunting noises, for the purpose, as one of them told me afterwards, of wakening him. He, being placed sitting on the couch of leaves in front of the fire, had his blanket drawn over his shoulders and head like a hood. In this manner all the boys were roused up, and seated in a row, having then additional rugs drawn over them all so as to screen them from the cold. These boys, having lived so much among the whites, were thought by the old men to have departed too much from the good old ancestral virtues, and it was therefore necessary that the white man's influence should, if possible, be counteracted. It was thought that the lads had become selfish, and no longer willing to share that which they obtained by their own exertions, or had given to them, with their friends.

¹ The doctor is Múlla-mullúng. In this tribe the functions of the medicine-man were divided into those of the Mulla-mullung (doctor) and the Birra-ark (bard, seer, and spirit-medium). The former bewitched people, or healed them of the bewitchments of others. The latter communicated with the ghosts, and learned from them the corroboree songs (Günyerü). He was as harmless as the Mulla-mullung was mischievous. The last Birra-ark was shot in the troublous times of the settlement of Gippsland.

The boys being all seated in a row, at each end of which was one of the headmen, the doctor proceeded to exercise his magical functions. He stooped over the first boy, and, muttering some words which I could not catch, he kneaded the lad's stomach with his hands. This he did to each one successively, and by it the Kurnai supposed the "greediness" of the youth would be expelled.

It is at this time that the Tutnurring are invested with the belt of manhood,¹ the kilt,² the armlets,³ forehead band,⁴ nose-peg,⁵ necklace,⁶ in fact with the full male dress.

From this time the youths are constantly supervised and instructed by two of the Bullawangs, all of whom take this duty in turn. A camp is formed in which the Tutnurring sit, or sleep, and which they are not allowed to leave unless accompanied by a Bullawang.⁷ This part of the ceremonies being satisfactorily concluded, the men went away to their camps to get their breakfasts, to rest and to sleep, or to go out hunting till the afternoon.

During the morning an incident occurred which was very significant of the profound feeling of secrecy in regard to the central mysteries which is felt by the Kurnai. One of the headmen came to me, and intimated that the old men, before proceeding further, desired to be satisfied that I had in very deed been fully initiated by the Bräjerak black fellows in their Kūringal.⁸ I caused them all to come to me in the recesses of a thick scrub, far from the possibility of a woman's presence, and I there exhibited to them the bullroarer which had been used at the Bräjerak initiations, previously attended by me, and which I had brought back with me.⁹ I also fully satisfied them that I had witnessed all the ceremonies of the Kuringal. It was remarkable that, long as the Kurnai had known me, and intimately as I had known some of them, especially the headman Tūlaba, these special secrets of the tribe had been kept carefully concealed from me by all but two, one of whom was now dead, and the other absent from the Jeraeil, ostensibly through sickness

¹ Bārun.

² Bridda-briddda.

³ Pibōro.

⁴ Jimbrin.

⁵ Gūmbart.

⁶ Tākawai.

⁷ So strictly are the novices looked after and drilled, even as to the manner in which they are to sit in their camp, "covered with their blankets like men, and not behaving like boys," that an old man of the now almost extinct Woiwörung tribe of the Yarra River, who attended this Jeraeil with me, after seeing this going on all day, said confidentially to me, "This one all the same like it Lockup."

⁸ All alien blacks are called by the Kurnai, Brajerak, *i.e.*, wild men.

⁹ After I had shown them the Murring bullroarer, I also produced the smaller one of two which are used by a Queensland tribe. They at once pointed out to me, after inspecting it, that there ought to be another, and a larger one; and they seemed much pleased when I informed them that they were correct in their surmise, and that I had both.

but really by reason of his consciousness of tribal treachery, and fear of the consequences if it were brought home to him. The old men were very urgent to know what "wicked man"¹ had betrayed to me the secrets of the Jeraeil, and especially of the Tundun; but they were silenced, if not satisfied, when I said that the man who first told me was dead.

4. "*Showing the Grandfather.*"²—This is the cryptic phrase used to describe the central mystery, which in reality means the exhibition to the novices of the Tundun, and the revelation to them of the ancestral beliefs. It is used, for instance, by the Bullawangs to their charges, as in telling them "This afternoon we will take you, and show your grandfather to you."

The Kurnai have two bullroarers, a larger one called "Tundun," or "the man," and a smaller one called "Rukut Tundun," the woman, or wife of Tundun. The larger one is also called "Grandfather" Weintwin, or Mük-brögan.³ In this the Kurnai differ from the Murring, who have only one bullroarer, but they agree with several other Australian tribes. I think, but I cannot be sure, that where two bullroarers are used, it indicates ceremonies in which the women take a great part, whereas in tribes where there is only one, as the Murring, the women are totally excluded.

While the novices were thus under tutelage during the day following the sleeping ceremony, and while most of the men were out hunting, the headmen and several others went away to prepare for the great ceremony of the grandfather.⁴ When they were ready, about an hour before sunset, word was brought to the Bullawangs, who took their charges to the appointed place, under the pretext "Let us go for a walk. You must be tired with sitting there all day."

On reaching the place, which was at the edge of an extensive and dense scrub of Tea-tree (*Melaleuca*), with a little open plain of some fifty acres in front, the novices were halted, and made to kneel down in a row, with their blankets drawn closely over their heads so as to prevent their seeing anything. One of the Bullawangs knelt before each, and another stood behind. The principal headman stood near holding his throwing-stick in his hand. This being arranged satisfactorily, the ceremony commenced. The second headman emerged from the scrub at

¹ Dindin = bad, wicked.

² Weintwin = father's father, or father's father's brother.

³ All those who are initiated at the same Jeraeil are Brogan, or Comrade, to each other. Muk-Brogan is the Arch-Brogan, if I may so put it.

⁴ The spot chosen was, as I afterwards ascertained, over 2,000 paces distant from the camp of the Tutnurring. While sitting there talking to the Bullawangs, I several times heard the peculiar screech of the "woman Tundun," when the men who were making them tried one to see if it was satisfactory.

about a hundred and fifty yards distance, holding his bullroarer, a "man Tundun," in his hand, which he commenced to whirl round, making a dull sounding roar. The man immediately following him had a "woman tundun;" and in this way sixteen men came slowly forward, each one, as he came into the open, whirling his instrument and adding to the roaring and screeching din. By the time the last man had marched out into the clear ground the leader had gained a point on the opposite side of the kneeling Tutnurrings, and the performers then halted in a semi-circle, and produced a finale of discordant sounds. When this ceased, the headman ordered the novices to stand up, and raise their faces towards the sky. Then, pointing upwards with his throwing-stick, the blanket was pulled off the head of each boy by his Bullawang, and the eyes of all the novices being directed to the uplifted throwing-stick, the headman said, "Look there! Look there! Look there!" successively pointing first to the sky, then lower, and finally to the Tundun men. Two old men now immediately ran from one novice to the other, saying in an earnest manner, "You must never tell this. You must not tell your mother, nor your sister, nor any one who is not Jeraeil."¹ The old headman then, in an impressive manner, revealed to the novices the ancestral beliefs, which I condense as follows:—

Long ago there was a great Being, called Mungan-ngaur,² who lived on the earth, and who taught the Kurnai of that time to make implements, nets, canoes, weapons—in fact all the arts they know. He also gave them the names they bear.³ Mungan-ngaur had a son named Tundun, who was married, and who is the direct ancestor—the Weintwin, or father's father—of the Kurnai. Mungan-ngaur instituted the Jeraeil, which was conducted by Tundun, who made the instruments which bear the names of himself and of his wife.

Some tribal traitor impiously revealed the secrets of the Jeraeil to women, and thereby brought down the anger of Mungan upon the Kurnai. He sent fire,⁴ which filled the whole

¹ In the olden times spears were held pointed at the novices at this juncture to emphasise the threats that were made, should they reveal the mysteries unlawfully.

² Mungan = father, ngaur = our. He has no other name among the Kurnai. In other tribes the Great Supreme Being, besides being called "father," has a name, e.g., Bunjil, Baiäme, Dáramulún.

³ In other tribes, for instance, the Dieri, the Woiworong, and the Murring, the Supreme Being is said to have given them, or ordered them to assume, their "animal names" (totems). In the Kurnai tribes, in which the totems, with the exception of the general male and female Yeerung and Djeetgun, have become extinct, this origin of the names is assigned to what, in default of a more appropriate term, I may call their "personal names"—such as Tulaba, Tankowillin, &c. These names have descended in the agnatic line from unknown times, but not necessarily from father to son.

⁴ Mungan's fire is the Aurora Australis; hence the fear of it shown by the

space between earth and sky. Men went mad with fear, and speared one another, fathers killing their children, husbands their wives, and brethren each other. Then the sea rushed over the land, and nearly all mankind were drowned. Those who survived became the ancestors of the Kurnai. Some of them turned into animals, birds, reptiles, fishes; and Tundun and his wife became porpoises.¹ Mungan left the earth, and ascended to the sky, where he still remains.

From that time, say the Kurnai, the knowledge of the Jeraeil and its mysteries has been handed down from father to son, together with the penalty for unlawfully revealing them, and for breaking the ordinance of Mungan—namely destruction by his fire, or death at the hands of the men to whom his laws have been transmitted.

The novices, having been thus properly instructed, were told to take the tundun in hand and to sound it, which they did with evident reluctance and apprehension.

Before the return to the camp what is called the "opossum game" was played. A young tree was cut down, and trimmed of its branches so as to form a pole about twenty feet long, and perhaps six inches thick at the lower end. This was placed in a hole dug in the ground, a large bunch of leaves being tied to the upper end. It represented a tree, and was held in position by as many men as could get at it, grasping it with one hand, and holding in the other a bundle of leafy twigs. Up this pole one after the other the Bullawangs climbed, touching it only with their hands and feet, imitating the actions of opossums, while the men below rustled their bunches of leaves and shouted "Huh!" This was supposed to represent an opossum hunt. It is interesting as being the only "animal game" in the Jeraeil, and it seems to be introduced without any reason or connection with the other ceremonies. It is, however, noteworthy that the Kurnai say it is done "to amuse the boys," and this is the reason given by the Murring for the performance of their numerous animal games and dances, which, like this one, take place immediately following the "central mystery." I regard this "opossum game" as most probably a survival from a time when the Kurnai had a class-system with numerous totems.

The men all now returned to their camps, and the Tutnurring

Kurnai, and their practice of exercising it by means of the "dead hand." See "On some Australian Beliefs," p. 5, "Journ. Anthropol. Inst.," November, 1883.

¹ These transformed people are called the Mük-Kurnai. The word Muk implies superiority. Thus Lē-en = good, Muk-leen = most good, excellent. The Muk-Kurnai, the ancestors of the Kurnai, are the "eminent men." I suspect that in these we are near a possible explanation of the origin of totems.

The coast Murring also have a deluge legend, which, *inter alia*, recounts how an eminent man of former times became a porpoise.

to theirs under the charge of the Bullawangs. It was evident, however, that the novices were no longer under such strict supervision as before, they being now in the ranks of men though only so recently admitted.

At about eight o'clock in the evening the Bullawangs took their charges, each carrying a Tundun, for the purpose, as they put it, of "frightening the women." The women and children are always told that, at the secret parts of the Jeraeil, Tundun himself comes down to "make the boys into men."¹ The hideous sounds which the uninitiated may chance to hear from a distance they are told is Tundun's voice, and they are warned not to leave their camp while he is about, lest he should kill them with his spears.

This "frightening the women" by the Bullawangs and the newly-initiated youths is done by walking slowly round the encampment at a distance such that there is no chance of their being seen, or their movements through bushes and over logs being heard by the women and children. They swing their bullroarers as they go. Tundun is thus supposed by the women and children to be walking round the camp before returning to the place whence he came. At the Jeraeil I am describing the novices thoroughly entered into the fun of frightening the women; and, having got over their awe of the bullroarers, they made an outrageous noise with them. The moment the roaring and screeching sounds were heard, there was a terrible clamour of cries and screams from the women and children, to the delight of the novices, who now in their turn aided in mystifying the uninitiated. It sometimes happens that, during this nocturnal perambulation, one of the bullroarers becomes detached from its string, and is thus lost. If, perchance, it is afterwards picked up by a woman or a child, their curiosity is satisfied by the statement that it is a "paddle belonging to Tundun," which he is supposed to have dropped in returning home. The shape of the bullroarer is much that of the little bark paddle which the Kurnai use when sitting down in their canoes.

5. "*Giving the boys some Frogs.*"—After the revelation of the central mysteries of the Jeraeil, the novices, being now enrolled among the men, are not kept with such strictness as before. They are allowed to go out in company with their Bullawangs

¹ Such tales as this, I doubt not, are everywhere told to the women. In the Omeo, Maneroo, and coast tribes, Daramulun is said to come down and himself to knock out the boy's tooth. In a Queensland tribe the old wizards are said to swallow the boys, and bring them up again as young men. Mr. Cameron has told me that in the tribes about the junction of the Murrumbidgee and Murray rivers, the novice is said to be met by some supernatural being who kills the boy, and brings him back again to life. No doubt in all ages such yarns have been told to outsiders about the Mysteries,—such as the Mason's "Frying-pan."

to seek for such animals as are permitted them for food; and this occasion is improved by their mentors, who deliver a peripatetic lecture on their lawful and their forbidden foods. When in camp the instruction continues generally as to the duties now devolving upon them by reason of their having reached manhood. I may now, as at a convenient time, notice what these rules of conduct are—the principal ones at least, for to enumerate them all would require an essay on the tribal and social life of the Kurnai. The youths are instructed—

1. To listen to, and obey the old men.
2. To share everything they have with their friends.
3. To live peaceably with their friends.
4. Not to interfere with girls or married women.
5. To obey the food restrictions, until they are released from them by the old men.

Some of the rules which I heard impressed upon the Tutnurring are curious. They were not to use the right hand for anything, unless told to do so by the Bullawang. A breach of this rule, they were informed, would certainly cause Gūmil—that is to say, some magical substance, such as Būlk¹—to get into the offending member, which would require the doctor to extract it. They were cautioned not to go near an euceinte woman, nor to let a woman's shadow fall across them, nor to permit a woman to make bread² for them, under the certainty that such acts would cause them to become "thin, lazy, and stupid." But a woman might cook an opossum for the novice, provided it were a male, and the entrails had been extracted before she touched it.

The rules as to food animals are as follows:—The novice may not eat the female of any animal, nor the emu, nor the porcupine; but he may eat the males of the common opossum, the ringtail opossum, the rock wallaby, the small scrub wallaby, the bush-rat, the bandicoot, the rabbit-rat,³ the brushtail,⁴ and the flying mouse. He becomes free of the flesh of the forbidden animals by degrees. This freedom is given him by one of the old men suddenly and unexpectedly, smearing some of the cooked fat over his face.⁵ In what manner the

¹ As to Bulk, see "Kamilaroi and Kurnai," p. 251.

² This prohibition as to bread has been transferred from the prohibition as to the *dura* which was formerly much used, and which was cooked by baking in the ashes.

³ *Perameles lagotis*.

⁴ *Phascogale penicillata*.

⁵ One of the men attending this Jeraeil had never yet been made free of some food animal, I forget which, but it was one the eating of which, for some reason or other, he believed would be injurious to him. Being very strong and active, and always on his guard, he had managed to escape whenever the old men had tried to smear his face with its fat.

Tutnurring become free to eat the flesh of the "old man kangaroo" I shall presently show.

The next stage after "Showing the Grandfather" is called "Giving the Tutnurring some Frogs." This is a cryptic way of referring, under the name of "Frogs," which are swamp-dwellers, to the Dūra,¹ a food plant which grows abundantly in the lagoons and swamps of Gippsland. In this ceremony the women again take a prominent part. But the novices are now with the men, and not, as at first, together with the Kraun, under the direction of their mothers.

In preparation for this ceremony the women have gathered some of the rhizomes of the Dura, and baked them in the ashes as usual when preparing them for food. The Tutnurring having been painted by their guardians, each one with two bands of red ochre down each side of the nose, were told to "come and eat some frogs." They were taken to the open space in the Jeraeil ground, and there placed in a row, the Bullawangs and other men being grouped behind them, holding branches in their hands. The women then came from the main camp, bringing with them the Kraun whom they placed in a row facing the novices, but about a hundred and fifty yards distant from them. The mothers and the other women stood behind. Each Kraun held in her hands a pole about ten feet long, at the end of which was tied a bunch of the cooked rhizomes of the Dura. They shouted "Come here, and we will give you your food." Each novice had been placed fronting his Kraun, and being instructed what to do, ran forward, seized the Dura, and throwing it down on the ground, ran back to the Jeraeil camp at the top of his speed. The men, who had raised shouts of "Huh!" and rustled their boughs, opened their ranks to let the Tutnurring through, and then followed them shouting to the camp. One of the Bullawangs, who had been told off for the purpose, gathered up the Dura, and brought it to the Jeraeil ground, where it was divided, and eaten by all present. The women returned to their camp.

6. "*Seeing the Ghosts.*"—At this stage the Tutnurring are told to "come and see the ghost."² For this ceremony it is necessary to procure a large "old man kangaroo;" at the Jeraeil which I am describing two days were fruitlessly spent by almost all the men ranging over miles of country in search of the wanted *Brangula jira*.³ I found out afterwards that all the "old men" had been shot for their skins by a party of kangaroo hunters (white men) who had been encamped for some time at a place near by. The

¹ *Trypha angustifolia*, Linn.

² Mrart = ghost. See "Kamilaroi and Kurnai," p. 246.

³ Brángŭla = male, Jira = kangaroo.

Jeraeil therefore came to a standstill, until one genius suggested that a male wallaby should be substituted. The old men having approved, the difficulty was got over. This "Brangula," having been shot and roasted, was cut up, and the pieces were laid on the top of a large fallen tree at a little distance from, but within hearing of, the camp, where the novices were still under the careful tuition of their guardians. When all was prepared, the men began to shout, as if driving game, to beat the logs and tree stems with clubs and tomahawk heads, and in fact to represent a "kangaroo drive." The Tutnurring being carefully shrouded in their blankets, were told to come and see where "the ghosts had caught a kangaroo." On reaching the spot where the men were still imitating the driving of game, the novices were placed in a row close to the log on which the game was displayed. The noise now ceased, and the headman, holding his throwing-stick pointing to the sky, told them to look up; and their blankets being thrown off, he pointed successively three times to the sky, to the horizon, and to the meat on the log, saying "Look there! Look there! Look there!"

The novices were now seated on the log, each one having a pile of meat beside him. The headman gave some of this to them, and the rest was eaten up by the other men.

In this way the youths were made for ever free of the flesh of the kangaroo. It was explained to me that this ceremony is a most important one; for, were it not carried out, the youth would never be able lawfully to eat the flesh of the male kangaroo, as necessary qualification can be acquired no otherwise than by eating the flesh in common with all the men who are present at the Jeraeil.

7. *The Water Ceremony.*—After the "ghosts" had killed and eaten their kangaroo, the novices retired in company with their Bullawangs and some other men. All the rest of the people also left the camp, and went by another route to the place where the final ceremony was to take place. This ceremony is public; and not only are the women present, but the novices who after it become Jeraeil and no longer Tutnurring, stop in the young men's camp¹ for the day, or until their guardians are ready to take them away.

This final rite, which is the termination of the Jeraeil, was on the banks of a rather deep dry creek, running through the level country near the Thomson River. The mothers of the novices stood in the bed of the dry creek, each having a vessel full of water before her on the ground. The novices had encamped

¹ The young men (Brewit) and the married men who have not their wives with them, always encamp together at some distance from the camps of the married men.

the night before some miles away down the river, and now being led by their Bullawangs, followed up the winding bed of the creek in single file, and out of sight, until within a hundred yards of where the mothers stood. As they came up, each woman stooped to drink, and her son splashed the water over her with a stick which he held in his hand. She, appearing enraged, filled her mouth with water several times, and spirted it over his face and head. The novices then walked off to the young men's camp, and the women went to their own. One of them was crying at the loss of her son.

Though the "Water Ceremony" ends the Jeraeil, it does not terminate the probation which the youths have to undergo. They must spend a time, which may be of months' duration, away from their friends under the charge of their Bullawangs in the bush. In short, they must remain away gaining their own living, learning lessons of self-control and being instructed in the manly duties of the Kurnai, until the old men are satisfied that they are sufficiently broken in to obedience, and may be trusted to return to the community. In the present instance the old men had determined at the Jeraeil that the novices should remain at least a month away, for the reason that, as they expressed it, having been so much with the whites, the lads had "gone wild." However, I have heard since that they relented, and permitted the youths to return at an earlier date. Under the strict rules of the olden time this would not have been the case. An old man said to me, "It is not much use forbidding them to eat things. They can get plenty of food—the Jeraeil has nothing to do with beef and damper."

Notes suggested by a comparison of the Kurnai Jeraeil with the Kuringal of the Murring.

It was very interesting to note the similarities and the differences between the Jeraeil and those initiation ceremonies of which the Kuringal is the type. The Jeraeil is held for the purpose of endowing the youths of the tribe with the privileges of manhood, and of laying upon them its duties. This is the case with the Kuringal also; and in the Kurnai tribe, as in the Murring, it is the local organisation which not only conducts the ceremonies, but also calls the assembly. As far as I can learn, it has always been the case with the Kurnai that the Jeraeil has been called together either by one of the two clans which occupy the north-eastern half of the country, or by one of the two which occupy the south-western half. In other words, leaving out of the account the unqualified Krauatun clan—one moiety of the tribe has invited the other to attend. Moreover,

each moiety has initiated the youths of the other. This was the case with the Coast Murring also. But, on comparing the Būrbung of the Wirádjeri tribe (New South Wales) a distinction becomes evident, not in principle but in detail, consequent upon the complete social organisation into class-divisions and totems which that tribe still has in addition to its local organisation and which is more or less decadent in both the Kurnai and the Murring. The Burbung, as I have elsewhere stated, was called together by that totem to which the principal headman belonged. On this view we see that the primary class-division to which the totem in question belongs is, in fact, the moiety of the community which in this case calls together the entire community for the initiation; and it is the second moiety—that is to say, the other primary class-division—which attends. Finally, in this case, the initiation is carried out by the men who represent the local organisation, and it only requires the class and totemic divisions to die out for the local organisation prominently, and indeed necessarily, to take the control of all tribal affairs.

The Jeraeil and the Kuringal resemble each other in being intended to impress upon the youths a sense of responsibility; as *men*, to implant in them by means of impressive ceremonies the feeling of obedience to the old men, and to the tribal moral code of which they are the depositories, and to ensure that, before the youth is permitted to take his place in the community, join in the councils, and marry, he shall be possessed of those qualifications which will enable him to act for the common welfare, and not only to support himself and a wife and family, but also to contribute a fair share to the general stock of food, to which his relatives are entitled in common with himself.

The differences between the Jeraeil and the Kuringal are mainly in the details by which the principles underlying the initiation ceremonies are worked out. With the Kurnai, the headman was not, as with the Coast Murring, almost necessarily the head wizard also. Indeed, as I have already noted, the Kurnai Wizard was either, as the Birra-ark, a harmless bard, seer, and spirit medium, or as the Mulla-mullung, a disease-producing or a healing doctor; but in neither character was he necessarily the headman. This may perhaps go to explain why the Kurnai Jeraeil is wanting in those remarkable magic dances and performances which are so marked a feature in the Kuringal of the Murring.

Both ceremonies mark the separation of the youth from his mother's control. With the Kurnai it is true the women take part in the ceremonies, with the exception of the "central mysteries;" but the renunciation by the boy of the companion-

ship of his sister, and of his mother who is with her at the Dura rite, together with the renunciation by the mother of her former control over her son by the Water Ceremony, shows very clearly what has been the intention of those who originally constructed the ceremonies.

In all the initiations the intention of the food rules seems clear to me. The novice is placed, while surrounded with plenty, in a position of actual scarcity; and his feelings of self-restraint and of self-reliance are called forth under the stimulus of future reward, and the dread of supernatural punishments of whose reality he has not the faintest doubt.

I doubt if there is any rule of conduct under which the novice is placed which is not directly intended to some end beneficial to the community, or believed to be so. The rule as to keeping far from even the shadow of a woman, is clearly intended to prevent, by supernatural terrors, any interference with women, which, as "Love laughs at locksmiths," the old men knew well not even the dread of the spear or the waddy would suffice to prevent.¹

Perhaps the most interesting comparison between the Jeraeil and the initiations of those tribes which I treated in my former paper, arises out of the secret beliefs which are imparted to the young men on these occasions. The attributes and powers of Mungan-ngaur are precisely those of Daramulun, and of Baiame, who also are called "our Father" by the tribes believing in them. The attributes of these Supreme beings are those of unbounded power, including, of course, the most potent magic, which is imparted by them to the wizards; the power of "doing anything and going everywhere," and of seeing all that is done by the tribesmen. Correlated with these is the power and the will to punish for breaches of the tribal laws. In all these instances the Great Father of the tribe, who was once on earth, and now lives in the sky, is rather the beneficent father, and the kindly, though severe, headman of the whole tribe—of men on earth and of "ghosts" in the sky—than the malevolent wizard, such as are other of the supernatural beings believed in by the Australian blacks.² It is also very interesting, and perhaps indicative of great antiquity, that this identical belief forms part of the central mysteries of the initiations of a tribe so isolated as the Kurnai, as well as of those of tribes which had free communication one with another. It must be remembered that none participated in the Jeraeil but Kurnai.

¹ An additional motive for these rules is evidently the advantage which the old men reap from them.

² When I wrote of Brewin in my paper on "Some Australian Beliefs" (p. 10), I was not aware of the doctrines as to Mungan-ngaur. These the Kurnai carefully concealed from me until I learnt them at the Jeraeil.

Decadence of Initiation Ceremonies in other Victorian Tribes.

When writing formerly of the Australian initiations, I said that I had been able to obtain very little information as to those of the tribes of the western and northern parts of Victoria. Since then, however, I have been to some extent more successful, and I have subjoined the main facts for comparison with the Jeraeil and the Kuringal.

Two old men, who were not Kurnai, accompanied me to the Jeraeil, and were permitted to witness the ceremonies, though not actually to take part in them, one of them being the "tribal mother's brother" of a Kurnai man. One of them is of the Woiworung tribe of the Yarra River, and the other belongs to the Thāgun-wörung¹ of the Upper Campaspe. These men, after witnessing the Jeraeil, gave me a description of the analogous ceremonies in their own tribes, and in those also which once occupied the Western Port district between Melbourne and Gippsland.²

In the Woiworung country the ceremony was called Jibauk. When a boy was about ten or twelve years of age—when his whiskers began to grow—his parents, or his relatives, or the people in the camp, would think it only decent and proper that he should no longer run about naked. On some day, which had been fixed, his Gūritch, or his Kangūn,³ would tell him that he must be made Jibauk. The boy, being covered up with a rug drawn over his head, was taken from the camp for some little distance to the place where he was to be "made a young man." But, before this time, his parents sent him to live in the "young men's camp." On his arrival at the Jibauk camp, he and the other boys who were to be made young men were prepared by their Guritch. A bough-yard, or breakwind, was made at a distance of some three hundred yards from the main camp, and a large fire was lighted in front of it. The boy being naked was clothed with as many of the men's belts and kilts as could be collected in the camp—so many sometimes that he was completely covered with a mass of them from the waist down. His hair was then cut quite close, excepting a ridge left like a cockscomb across his head from front to back. His head, face, neck, and shoulders were plastered with a thick coat of mud. A band of white pipeclay was painted across his face from ear to

¹ Thagun=no. In this dialect the extreme frequency of the sound *th*, as in "the," gives it, when spoken, a curious lisping sound. It is, however, only a variation of Woiworung.

² According to these men, the ceremonies which they described as Jibauk were common to the tribes living between Melbourne, Geelong, Bacchus Marsh, Castlemaine, Sandhurst, Murchison, and Benalla.

³ Guritch=sister's husband, or wife's brother. Kangūn=mother's brother.

ear, and another from his belt at the back, over his head, down the face and chest to the belt in front. He carried a bag slung round his neck, and in it he had a live opossum which he had caught, and from which he had plucked the fur as if for cooking. He never moved away from the Jibauk place without this bag containing the opossum and a fire-stick. When the opossum died, he had to go away and catch another to replace it. The Jibauks were not allowed any clothing other than the kilts, and they slept round the fire by the bough enclosure. All the young men of the encampment, together with the guardians of the Jibauk, kept them company. The lads obtained their food by going the rounds of the camps in company with the Guritch; and, opening their bags, they said to the people they called upon, "Have you anything to put in here?" The food thus procured was all they got, and it was not much.

When the boy's hair had grown about two inches in length his probation was over. The Jibauk camp was now shifted on successive days nearer and nearer to the main camp, until it was quite close. During this time each Guritch had been preparing an opossum rug, which he now gave to the boy under his charge; who, being dressed in the full male costume, was led by his guardian to the married men's camps successively, where he was received with expressions of rejoicing. The Jibauk was thus introduced to the community in the character of a man. Several evenings of singing and dancing finished the ceremony.

The Jibauk was not during this time specially instructed in the tribal laws and beliefs, because this was done previously by the father, or father's brother,¹ but he was told what animals he might or might not eat. The forbidden food included emu, black duck, musk duck, flying tuan, iguana, porcupine. He might eat the common opossum, the ringtail opossum, bandicoot, wallaby, kangaroo, wombat, native bear, swan, teal, and all fish. From time to time the young man was made free of the forbidden food by having a piece of the cooked meat given him to eat.²

In the Western Port district the equivalent of the Jibauk was called *Tálangún*. All that was done was this: The boy was taken by some of the men, who dressed him in the male attire, and he was made free of the forbidden food animals as soon as the men could catch them. There were no other ceremonies of initiation of any kind.

These statements were made to me by the two old men

¹ See "Notes on some Australian Beliefs," p. 9. "Journ. Anthropol. Inst.," November, 1883.

² Sometimes the meat was handed to him on the point of a stick.

before mentioned, the survivors of the Melbourne and the Campaspe tribes.¹ I found them to be trustworthy in statements which I could check by other information, and I think that their accounts of the Jibauk and Talangun may be relied upon. The fact that in the Western Port district, the bull-roarer, which is elsewhere regarded with reverential awe, was a child's plaything, seems to be strong corroboration of the statement that the tribes there had no secret rites of initiation.²

The only further information which I have hitherto been able to obtain as to the initiation of any other Victorian tribe relates to the Wótjo-bálluk of the Lower Wimmera River.³ This tribe, which, together with other allied tribes, formed what I may call a "nation," extended over a great part of North Western Victoria, but not quite as far as the Murray River. The Wotjo-balluk, according to the information given me by two men independently of each other, had no ceremonies of initiation beyond what I am about to describe. The boy, at the age of puberty, was "caught," as both my informants put it, by his Ganitch,⁴ who took him to his own camp. He there seated him before a large fire, tied kangaroo sinews tightly round his upper arm, and rubbed him all over with grease and red ochre. He then dressed him in full male costume. For several months the boy was kept and instructed by his Ganitch, who also during this time waited upon him in everything, providing him with food, and even carrying him on his shoulders when he went from the camp.

The absence of initiation ceremonies in this tribe is brought into view by the fact that some of the men of that section of the tribe to which my oldest informant belonged intermarried with the Murray River tribes, and occasionally attended their initiations. My informant, who belonged to near Lake Hindmarsh, gave me an account of the Pürpung (initiation) of the Tātāthi tribe, which he had attended, and which was substantially the same as the Kuringal already described by me.

Judging from my present information, it seems that Umbara, the bard of the Coast Murring, was right when, spreading his hands out as describing the course of the Murray River, he said "On this side (the right hand) the Kuringal goes all the way,

¹ Berak, the Woiworing man, remembered seeing Buckley, the "wild white man," before Port Philip was settled.

² In reading Buckley's narrative, as recorded by Morgan, I have felt surprise that there should be no mention of ceremonies such as the Jeraeil or Kuringal. This appeared to me remarkable, because Buckley, as the reincarnated Murrangurk, would be one of the initiated. The account of the Jibauk, now given by Berak, suggests that the tribes with whom Buckley lived did not, any more than the Woiworing, possess secret ceremonies of initiation.

³ Wotjo = man, balluk = people.

⁴ Ganitch = sister's husband, or wife's brother.

but on this side (the left hand) there is *nothing*." Compared with the highly dramatic and impressive ceremonies of the Kuringal (or Burbung) those of the Jeraeil are poor in effect, while the Yarra, Campaspe, and Wimmera tribes seem to have possessed no more than the remains of former more complete ceremonies. The opinion which I have formed, after considering all the evidence now before me, is that the tribes in Victoria had in a great measure lost the initiation ceremonies, and that the Kurnai Jeraeil was in a state of decay. That such ceremonies may be totally lost is proved by the fact that the Krauatun clan of the Kurnai neither has any of its own, nor participates in those of the other Kurnai clans.

Thus far, I am not able to offer any satisfactory reason for the loss of such ceremonies. Looking at that part of the Australian field covered by the tribes dealt with in this paper, and in my former memoir on the Kuringal of the Murring, the temptation is strong to attribute it to the advance into agnation and the consequent decay of the class divisions. The Victorian tribes, as a whole, were in this advanced state, while those on the northern side of the Murray River had still a vigorous social organisation in classes with uterine descent. But, taking a wider view of the whole field of evidence, this suggestion loses its strength; for I find that initiation ceremonies of very full character occur in Queensland among tribes who have marked agnatic features with (as far as I can yet ascertain) a total absence of class-divisions and totems.

DISCUSSION.

Mrs. CAREY-HOBSON remarked that the "*Bull-roarer*" of Australia seemed to her to have its representative in the instrument called "*Nodiwu*" in use among the Amakosa Kafirs of South Africa. She was not able to discover that it held any significant place in the rites of initiation, but she had, while riding in Kaffirland, seen in the near distance a party of whitened "*Abak-wéta*," and distinctly noticed that one of them was creating a loud buzzing noise by rapidly whirling some small instrument above his head, and this she took to be identical with the *Nodiwu*.
