



## **THE NATIVES' STANDPOINT.**

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### **A Word About Globe-Trotters.**

Australia has lately suffered many things from globe-trotters. The general object of these visitors appears to be to prove that the new race of native-born Australians, whose uprising has lately broadened the possibilities of ethnological study, are not promising to achieve the record which might reasonably be expected from the grandsons and granddaughters of John Bull and his wife.

Although from the Australian standpoint the superficial criticisms which we have had to endure are entirely unwarranted, it is well that native-born Australians should be criticised occasionally, because they are usually too self-conscious and super sensitive to blame. This helps to explain why recent articles by Air D. Christie Murray (whom we know), in the "Contemporary," and certain sketches in another magazine by Mr Francis Adams (whom we know not), have caused in Australia some sensation — much wagging of tongue, and much scratching of pen.

The two contributions have, however, been read with widely different feelings. What Mr Adams calls his ideas are so ludicrously extravagant that one can only laugh at them as at a burlesque. Those alleged ideas, whose alias is absurdity, have

been read here in the same way as we read a romance by Jules Verne (who once wrote an equally fanciful book on Australia). Verne's scientific speculations bear about the same relationship to ascertained scientific facts that Mr Adam's sketches hold to the realities of Australian life.

Australians, therefore, do not consider it worthwhile to treat Mr Adams seriously. They rather estimate him as an hysterical gentleman, with highly tense nerves, who requires a gentle aperient.

A different feeling is aroused by Mr Murray. He apparently tried to make some use of his unfortunately very limited opportunities for observation, and Australians who met him, and were charmed by the bonhomie and courtesy of the man whose literary work had long before entertained and instructed them, never suggested that the numerous errors of his articles were anything else than misconceptions almost entirely excusable in the circumstances.

A gentleman who should visit London, Edinburgh, Dublin, and Cardiff would not be overloaded with knowledge enabling him to write a minute analysis of the social and political conditions of Great Britain. Although Australians would accept, with becoming respect, Mr Murray's opinions upon literature and pictorial and dramatic art, it appeared clearly evident whilst he was here that he knew little or nothing of social problems, Nevertheless, he had apparently an open mind, and honestly wished to get information: the rather melancholy result is probably chiefly his misfortune.

It indicates that he has been "stuffed" by those mischievous fellows whose mission in life seems to be to lie in wait at the chief hotels and load up tourists with general information, which, when it is discharged abroad, is very surprising news to Australians. The Australian who plays practical jokes upon the credulous globe-trotter should be arraigned as a traitor.

An "Edinburgh Reviewer" (Sydney Smith), nearly 100 years ago, said that the Australian kangaroo covered a mile in five hops. The Australian kangaroo of to-day covers about 50

yards in five hops; and unless the more recent marsupial, like the London society young man of modern times, has degenerated in his bopping capacity, the "Edinburgh Reviewer" must have been wrong. Sydney Smith, however, had more excuse than later critics for his misunderstandings: information about Australia was not then so easily obtainable, Upon the whole, Australia may well pray to be saved, not only from imported convicts, rabbits, stoats, weasels, sparrows, thistles, and snails, but also from the visitations of globe-trotters, especially globe-trotters with a high and mighty tone, who peer at us from a pedestal when here, and patronise us loftily in their books after they have left us.

Not often is Australia discussed in the English press from the Australian standpoint, because it has been difficult for an Australian to get a hearing in the literature of the Old World. I do not claim to speak in any representative capacity, out, although I am not a blackfellow, I was born in Australia, bred in Australia, and educated in Australia. I have travelled extensively throughout Australasia, and have witnessed Australian life in all its aspects. I have been, and am still, honoured with high official position in the Australian Natives' Association (the only distinctively national institution in the colonies), and, therefore, I ought to know something of Australian realities and of Australian aspirations.

### **Our Associations.**

"The Australian Natives' Association and separation" have been coupled in the most unexpected fashion. If Mr Murray had been an advertising agent travelling in the interests of "the Sydney Bulletin," one of the youngest and most robust of our comic papers, he could not more strenuously have trumpeted its praises. The influence of that lively periodical it is not necessary to discuss here. Sufficient be the statement that Mr Murray's heretical teachings are rather incomprehensible to Australians.

We had never suspected that when we put a copy of the "Bulletin" into our pocket we were secreting a Republican bombshell upon our persons. The most curious thing in Mr Murray's criticism is that he should have bracketed that

paper and the Australian Natives' Association together as plotters against the Throne, its majesty, and its puissance. The Republican "Sydney Bulletin" has been as persistent in its hostility to the Australian Natives' Association as is the Imperialistic "Argus," of Melbourne.

In everything else the papers differ. Can it be that the Association represents the happy medium between undesirable extremes? From which source of literary inspiration could Mr Murray have taken his extraordinary ideas of the Association? To one or the other he must have been indebted, because there is no record that he made a personal study of what he rightly calls "this powerful Association" (about one-quarter of the legislators in, at least, two Colonies are its members) at the head quarters of the institution, the chief of whose aims, combined with the purposes of a friendly benefit society, is the appreciation in exchange for the old depreciation of everything Australian.

The Association raised the cry of "Australia for the Australians," but they never interpreted "Australians" to mean merely Australian born.

It had become the fashion to belittle everything Australian. Our wealthier men boasted, when they gave a dinner to their friends, that there was nothing "Colonial" upon their tables. Colonial wine was sour; Colonial ale was watery; Colonial cheese was rancid; Colonial preserved fruits were pulpy; Colonial waiters were clumsy; the Colonial sun had a sickly glare; the Colonial firmament was an exceedingly poor and shockingly burlesqued copy of the dear old original heavens canopying the dear old Mother Country!

For a long time people said that the glorious British Constitution would be undermined — that justice would be impossible on account of local prejudices if the Australian law courts were presided over by judges who had served their articles in Australia.

What applied to law applied to every other profession and occupation; no position of responsibility must be filled by an Australian, using the word in the wider sense which I have indicated, But now great changes have occurred.

Australian patriotism has been aroused, Instead of speaking of our national productions with shamefacedness and confusion of countenance, we begin to boast of them; and even in such matters as public banquets, the ambition is to supply the tables entirely with local products!

Nearly all positions of prominence amongst us (excepting the chief managements of the State railways and the principal military posts), are filled either by native-born Australians or by acclimatised men who received their special training in Australia. The continued existence of the fallacy that no bishop can be manufactured in the Colonies was recently shown in Queensland where a mighty hubbub arose amongst the more conservative sect, because a local clergyman had actually received a bishopric; but that fallacy will soon be crushed out of life, as many others have been, by the force of public opinion.

So, inevitably, the demand of the right of popular election of our own Governors, even if we should elect prominent Englishmen, is only a question of a little time. As the law administered by our courts is as sound as ever it was (and sound it will continue to be when we have our own final Court of Appeal) ; as our religion is as untainted in the new condition of things as it was in the old ; as our love for England is almost as strong now as when Batman landed on the shores of Hobson's Bay, so would that love be undiminished if we had no personally appointed vicegerent of the Queen.

### **“The Native Hates England!”**

Although the Australian Natives Association has done much to promote Australian patriotism, Mr Murray is too complimentary to the average "Colonial" when he says, “The Native-born Australian loves his country passionately.”

It was to correct, not only the outside depreciation of things Australian, but the trepid unfaith of Australians in their own resources, that the Australian Natives Association was established.

Why, whilst Mr Murray was introducing so many insignificant trifles, did he not remark upon the universal fashion in all circles of Australia, of calling England "Home," even amongst Australians of the third generation Mr Murray was

clearly- only advancing a speculative theory when he wrote, "Contact with the Australian Natives' Association will hurt and astonish the English visitor beyond all measure," because of the hatred shown towards England.

He seems to have had an idea that the meetings of the Australian Natives' Association are a sanguinary sort of saturnalia, where hideous dummies labelled "John Bull", are knocked on the head with truncheons for practice' sake, and where human blood is drunk in token of the time when the Australian native shall be able to quaff direct from the life-springs of the Royal Family alter some great anarchistic battle.

What astounding nonsense it all is, to be sure! Do our critics know that we are sons and daughters, of grandsons and granddaughters of Englishmen and Englishwomen, and not Aboriginal blacks and lubras?

In connection with his notes upon the Australian Natives' Association and separation, Mr Murray speaks of having seen, men keeping their seats in serious, persistent silence when the Queen's health has been drunk. What sort of company did he keep? I have attended some hundreds of banquets arranged by the Australian Natives' Association and by other interests in all parts of Australia, and I have never once seen that done.

The toast of "The Queen" has been honoured as the toast of any other lady would be, not merely because the subject, cause she was a woman. In Australia, the idea of a divinity hedging a king is almost universally regarded as obsolete.

Still, in the only case ever reported in South Australia (or elsewhere so far as I know) which would justify the statement of Mr Murray, the man who refused to drink the Queen's health was not a member of the Australian Natives' Association ; not even qualified to be a member thereof and not of Australian birth, but only a comparatively recent importation from England.

"Australians hate England !" And this after our foolish but well-intentioned enterprise— albeit there was something 'of the advertisement in it — in sending troops to the Soudan when we thought

England might appreciate the aid we gave ; this, when as a notable fact the English visitor of position receives infinitely more attention in all the colonies than the Australian visitor of even greater renown — for there be many eminent men under the Southern Cross.

Australians do not hate England. Many of them are Republican at heart, and those have no active wish to upset Monarchy, they conscientiously object to the Royal system of Great Britain; and if its continuance depended upon a plebiscite amongst them, any Royal dynasty would hang upon a very slender thread. But to distrust a system of Royalty and to hate England are very different things.

Should you wonder greatly at the personal aspect of this matter when you reflect upon the numerous and highly coloured stories which come to us, without losing strength in their transit, of the alleged extravagances and. excesses of certain highly placed individuals?