



people," and it says "he quickly demolished the strongholds and the seven walled cities of Srukta and other Asuras," and he is invoked "to repair to the cities inhabited by the Rakshasas." "He demolished the hundred ancient cities of Sambara," who was an Asura king; "the wealthy Rakshases" are spoken of, and their "seven towns and ninety forts." All this proving how civilized and prosperous the inhabitants of India were long before the Aryas went there.

(To be continued.)

FOLKLORE OF THE AUSTRALIAN BLACKS.

By R. H. MATHEWS, L.S.

(Continued.)

3.—The Journey to Kurriilwan.

A man named Yoo-nee-a-ra, the chief of a Kamilaroi tribe whose *taorai* comprised the district around Kunopia, on the Boomi River, New South Wales, once decided upon going away towards the setting sun, where the present home of their ancestor, Byama, is supposed to be situated, at a place called Kurriilwan. He journeyed on, carrying his weapons with him, and gaining his living by hunting as he went. After he had have travelled several days, still going on towards the sunset, he came to a place which was inhabited by a tribe of blackfellows who had the body of a man, and the legs and feet of an emu. They were called Dhinnabarrada, owing to their forked feet, and never went about singly, but in little mobs, and subsisted upon grubs. Their chief occupation was making boomerangs out of the gidgyertree, the wood of which has a strong scent.

It is said of the Dhinnabarrada that if they succeed in touching a man's feet they will be transformed into emu's feet, like their own. When these people saw Yooneeara they approached him, evidently intent upon touching his pedal extremities. Yooneeara, having heard that there were no bandicoots in that part of the country, had brought a live one with him in his dilly bag. When the Dhinnabarrada were very close to him, he liberated the bandicoot, and it ran away through the grass. All the Dhinnabarrada people ran after this strange, unknown animal, and Yooneeara took advantage of this opportunity to make good his escape.

The headman passed safely through the country of the Dhinnabarrada, and came to a large plain where he met a tribe called Dheeyabry. These people were half man and half roley-poley. When they were facing you they looked like men, but when they turned their backs they resembled roley-poleys. The Dheeyabry asked the traveller where he was going, and he answered them:—"To see Byama." They invited him to stay and rest himself, and tried to dissuade him from going any farther, but he still went on. He could hear the Dheeyabry men calling after him to come back, but he did not heed their warning.

After a while he came to a place where the March

flies and mosquitoes were very numerous, and much larger than he had ever seen them before. He beat them off his body and limbs as best he could with a bush which he carried in his hand. These insects tormented him so much that he did not know what to do; and, almost driven to despair, he sat down on the ground near a waterhole, and made a fire. He then debated with himself whether he would go on or turn back. He considered different ways of protecting himself from these pests, and at last decided to strip a sheet of bark the length of himself, and large enough to go all round his body. He cut two holes in the bark opposite where his eyes would be, and then tied bushes round his ankles and round his head, and doubled the sheet of bark around his body. He now went on, and got through this fly-infested country, when he took his armour of bark off and put it in a waterhole to keep it soft, so that he could use it again on his return journey.

He next came to a place where there were a number of clear waterholes, in which he could see some small men walking about under the water. They kept continually calling out to each other, "Thalammea? Thalammea?" which in the Kamilaroi language means "Where are you?" These men were catching fish, which they threw out on to the bank.

Our traveller went on, and after a time came to a camp where there were two old gins called Ngammoomillamilla, on account of their remarkable teats. These women were of great stature, and had no men with them. They subsisted on yams and the lizards known as "shingle-backs." They used a very small smouldering fire, so that no one could find their camping place at night. For this reason they were also called Weebullabulla.

Some distance further on Yooneeara came to the edge of a large boggy marsh, called Kolliworogla, which seemed to stop further progress. After making a careful examination of the shore, looking for a crossing place, he saw what appeared to be a very long log, the barrel of a fallen tree, lying across the swamp, and almost embedded in the mire. He ventured on along this log, which was very narrow, until he got clear of the boggy ground. By and bye he came to a place where there was a large rock, under one side of which was a hollowed out place like a cave, in which he could see Byama lying down apparently asleep. He was an old man of colossal proportions, much larger than the blackfellows of the present time. Byallaburragan, one of Byama's daughters, was sitting at a fire in front of the cave, roasting a carpet snake on the coals, and gave the traveller some food. The country all round the rock containing Byama's abode was covered with tall green trees, all leaning towards the rock and containing the nests of various birds. There was plenty of grass and saltbush growing everywhere, through which the traveller could see game of different kinds running about. A little way in front of the cave a stream of water ran along in a hollow channel, and at a short distance down this watercourse was a deep lagoon, with rocky banks at one end and reeds at the other, covered with swans, ducks, and other waterfowl.

The visitor, after having refreshed himself, and had a short rest at Byallaburagan's fire, started homewards, and again went through the same places and saw the same people as he had passed on the journey out. Shortly after his return to his own *taorai*,¹ he took ill and died, probably the result of the sorcery of some of the queer people he had seen by the way. This is why no future blackfellows can be induced to undertake another journey to the land of Kurrilwan.

4.—The Kurrea and the Warrior.

On the main road from Kunopia to Goondiwindi, on the New South Wales side of the Barwon River, is a large sheet of water several miles long, known as Boobera Lagoon. Some parts of this lagoon are very deep, and the natives aver that at one particular place it is bottomless. In this deeper portion the Kurrea, a snake-like monster of enormous proportions, has his abode. He belongs to the group *Kupathin*, and his wife is the daughter of the bumble tree, of the group *Dilbi*. The Kurrea cannot travel on the dry land, so that when he wishes to go out of the lagoon he commences forming a channel by tearing up the ground on the bank, and in this manner allowing the water to flow after him and bear him along. He is very dexterous at this work, and can float himself anywhere he wants to go. The black point out many hollow channels around Boobera, which are now dry except in time of floods, which they believe have been formed by the Kurrea in ancient times.

If any blackfellow ever went into that part of Boobera Lagoon to swim, or sat on the bank fishing, or paddled out in their canoes in pursuit of waterfowl, the Kurrea was sure to come upon them and devour them. It was a serious loss to the people to be thus deprived of all the fish, mussels, ducks, swans and other animals, which formed part of their daily food in this portion of their hunting grounds.

Long ago a headman named Toolalla, of Noona on the Barwon, who was a great warrior, decided upon trying to kill the Kurrea, and rid his people of their enemy. This chief stood upon the southern bank of the lagoon, some distance below where Boobera head station is now built on the opposite side, armed with the best of his weapons, and watched for the Kurrea. He had not to wait long before the monster saw him, and immediately swam towards him. The Noona warrior threw several spears and clubs with good aim, and with all his force, but they took no effect upon his antagonist. When he had used all his weapons to no purpose, he turned and fled across the plain. The Kurrea gave chase, forming a channel in his usual manner, winding about like a huge snake, and travelling at a great pace.

He was gaining rapidly on Toolalla, who was running for his life, but, fortunately, there was a bumble tree growing on the edge of the plain, and he made strenuous efforts to reach it, because he knew it

was the mother-in-law of his opponent, who dare not therefore approach it (a). When the Kurrea saw that Toolalla had reached the bumble tree, he at once ceased his pursuit, and excavating a small water-hole to enable him to turn his body round, he went back to the lagoon along the channel he had made during the encounter.

There is a tradition among these blacks that in former times their forefathers occasionally found huge bones, believed to be those of Kurreas, in the banks of deep, dry watercourses. It is supposed that when the water dried up the Kurreas, having no other means of locomotion, perished of thirst. The natives say that the children of these Kurreas take various forms, one of which is the gowarkee, which resembles a gigantic emu with black feathers and red legs. It is said that they inhabit the swampy country, near Kurrilwan, the present home of Byama.

5.—Thoorkook and Byama's Sons.

There were two brothers named Byama, and both were married; each brother's wife had a son, and both the boys were named Wee roombrall'. One day these two boys, who had voices just like the sound of a bull-roarer (b), were left together at a rocky place till their parents came back from hunting. The rocks at this spot were embedded in the ground and enclosed a large oval or circular space, like the *kackaroo* ring at the keeparra ceremony. Thoorkook, a bad man, who had some animosity towards the brothers Byama, had some large and savage dogs, and when the little boys were alone, these dogs came and killed them both. When Byama and his brother, with their wives and the rest of the people, returned to the circle and found the boys dead, there was great wailing, which was continued nearly all night at the camp.

Next day Byama and his brother changed themselves into kangaroos—big strong fellows—and went in sight of Thoorkook's camp, and hopped away. The dogs followed them; one dog was faster than the rest, and when he got a long way ahead of the others, the two big kangaroos turned upon him and killed him, and threw him into a waterhole. Then they hopped away again, and got another dog separated from the rest, and killed him also, until all the dogs were destroyed in this manner. Then the two kangaroos changed themselves back into men again, and went and killed Thoorkook, and changed him into a *mopoke* (c), who can only go about at night. The mothers of the two boys who were killed were always crying for them, and Byama changed them into curlews (*wee loowack'y*). At night, when curlews are heard screeching around the camp, it is the mothers crying for their children.

After that the two brothers Byama were out hunting one day. The younger brother went up a

(a) It is a fixed and well-known law among the aborigines that a man cannot speak to or go near his wife's mother.

(b) "Bullroarers used by the Australian Aborigines."—*Journ. Anthr. p. Inst.*, XXVII., 52-60, Plate VI.

(c) *Mopoke* is the native name of a nocturnal bird, somewhat larger than the owl, which it resembles.

¹ *Tvorai* is a Kamilaroi word signifying country or district.

tree, and was cutting out a grub, when a chip from his tomahawk went whizzing through the air, making a noise like a bullroarer, and fell near the elder brother, who was on the ground. He at once noticed that the noise made by the falling chip resembled the voice of the boys killed by Thoorkook's dogs. When the younger Byama descended from the tree, his brother suggested that they should go hunting in different directions during the remainder of the day. The elder brother being thus left alone, he cut a thin piece of wood like the chip, and tied a string to it, and on swinging it round it made the same whizzing noise. When they both met before going home to the camp, the elder Byama showed his brother the instrument he had made, and stood out in an open space, and swung it round his head, and it gave out the voice of the little boys who had been killed. The two brothers, who were leaders of their tribe, then decided that all the boys who should be born in the future must be shown this instrument to make them remember the boys who had lost their lives by Thoorkook's dogs. It must never be seen by women, but they may be permitted to hear it during the ceremonial of the Keeparra.

6.—The Wareenggary and Karambal.

On the Clarence River there once lived seven young women who were sisters, named Wareenggary; they were members of the Bunjellung tribe, and belonged to the Wirrakan division (a). They were very clever, and had yamsticks, in the ends of which were inserted charms, which protected the girls from their enemies. Every day they went out hunting for carpet snakes, and always carried their yamsticks with them on these occasions. A young fellow named Karambal, of the same tribe, and of the division Womboong (b) became enamoured of one of these young women, and followed within sight of them every day, but they did not favour his suit. He watched for an opportunity, and at length came suddenly upon one of the sisters who had strayed a little way from the rest, and had not her yamstick with her, and carried her off, taking her to his own camp. Her companions became very angry, and held a consultation as to what was best to be done to release their sister from Karambal, who was of the wrong division for her to marry, being in fact her tribal brother.

The eldest sister proposed sending a fierce storm of wind to blow up the trees by the roots, and tumble them upon Karambal and kill him. The other girls were afraid that their sister might also lose her life by the falling trees, and one of them made another proposal, that they should all go away to the west, where they knew the Winter lived, and bring the frost and chilly winds, and in this manner punish Karambal for what he had done. Accordingly, they went away and

brought the Winter, and on the place where Karambal was camped with their sister they made the cold so exceptionally severe that he was almost perished with the frost. The girl whom he had captured did not feel this terrible cold, because her sisters had managed to send her, by a secret messenger, the charmed yamstick she formerly carried when out hunting with them. In a short time Karambal was glad enough to let Wareenggary return to her own people, who were very much rejoiced to get her back again amongst them. They then consulted amongst themselves, and determined to go away towards the east, in quest of the summer, so as to melt the frost and ice. They did not wish to impose any further hardship upon their tribe than was necessary, their only object being to rescue their sister from her captor.

After this trouble the Wareenggary resolved to leave the earth altogether, but before doing so they went into the mountains, and made springs at the heads of all the rivers, so that their people might always have plenty of water throughout their hunting grounds. The seven sisters then went up into the sky, where the constellation known as the Pleiades still represents their camp. They come into view every Summer, bringing pleasant warm weather for the benefit of their tribe, after which they go away gradually towards the west, where they disappear. They then send the Winter to warn their kinsmen not to carry off a woman of the wrong totemic division, but to select their wives in accordance with the tribal laws.

Soon after the departure of the Wareenggary from the earth the young man, Karambal, looked about for another sweetheart, and this time he was determined to comply with the marriage rules of his people. After a while he was smitten by the charms of a young woman who belonged to the Kooran (c) division, being that from which he could lawfully select a wife. She was, unfortunately, already united to another man, named Bullabogabun, a great warrior. Karambal succeeded in inducing her to leave her husband, and go away with him. When Bullabogabun discovered that his wife had eloped, he followed her tracks to the camp of Karambal. The latter, in order to escape the wrath of Bullabogabun, climbed up into a very large and tall pine tree growing near his camp, but his pursuer observed him hidden among the topmost branches. Bullabogabun then gathered all the wood he could find for some distance around, and piled it into an immense heap against the butt of the tree, and set fire to it. The fire raged with great fury, burning the pine tree into cinders. The flame reached high into the air, carrying Karambal with it, and deposited him in a part of the sky near the Wareenggary, where he became the star Aldebaran (Alpha Tauri), in order that he might follow the sisters continually, the same as he had done in his youth.

(a) See my paper on "The Totemic Divisions of Australian Tribes"—*Jour. Roy. Soc. N.S.Wales*, Vol. XXXI., p. 169.

(b) *Loc. cit.*, p. 169.

(c) *Jour. Roy. Soc. N.S.Wales*, XXXI., p. 169.