DEES CORTOPIUM VOYSAGEGELA EN

The Language in Common Use 3000

AMONGSPETHE

ABORIGINES OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

WITH COPIOUS MEANINGS.

EMBODYING MUCH INTERESTING INFORMATION REGARDING

THE HABITS, MANNERS, AND CUSTOMS OF THE NATIVES

AND THE

NATURAL HISTORY OF THE COUNTRY

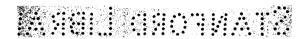
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PREFACE.

THERE are few situations more unpleasant than when two individuals are suddenly and unexpectedly brought into collision neither of whom is acquainted with one word of the language of the other. Amongst civilised people so situated, there are certain conventional forms of gesture or expression which are generally understood and received as indications of amity. But when it happens that one of the individuals is in a state of mere savage nature knowing nothing of the habits and usages of civilised life, and perhaps never having even heard of any other people than his own, the situation of both becomes critical and embarrassing. It was in this predicament that the early settlers of Western Australia found themselves, on their first taking possession of then lands in that colony. The aborigines, suspicious of treachery even amongst themselves, and naturally realous of the intrusion of strangers, viewed with esconshment and alarm the arrival of persons differing in colour and appearance from anything they had hitherto findrane alike of the nature, the power, and the

intentions of this new people, and possessed of some vague idea of their being spirits, or reappearances of the dead, the natives were restrained, probably by superstitious awe alone, from attempting to repel the colonists at once by direct and open hostility. On the part of the settlers generally there existed the most friendly disposition toward the aborigines, which was evinced on every suitable opportunity, by the offer of bread, accompanied by the imitation of eating, with an assurance that it was "very good." And thus this term, "very good," was almost the first English phrase used, and became the name by which bread was, for a long time, generally known amongst the natives of Western Australia. In the course of time, curiosity, and a desire to establish and maintain a good understanding with them, induced many persons to endeavour to learn something of their language; and lists of such words as had been ascertained from time to time were formed by several individuals, but nothing on the subject was published, till, in the year 1833, a person who assumed the name of Lyon gave in the newspapers of the day some account of the structure of the language, and a list of nearly five hundred words. His vocabulary, though containing many inaccuracies and much that was fanciful, yet was deserving of praise, as being the first attempt to reduce to writing a language that was still comparatively unknown. In the mean time, Mr. Francis Armstrong, who

had bestowed much attention on the aborigines, and who spoke the language with a fluency nearly equal to their own, was appointed to the office of interpreter, and was thenceforth generally employed as a recognised medium of mutual communication in all public matters, whether of explanation, negotiation, examination, or prosecution. At length, in the year 1838, that able and talented officer, Lieutenant (now Captain) G. Grey, Governor of South Australia, whilst resting from his labours of exploring the country, turned his attention to this subject, in compliance with the spirit of the instructions under which he was acting, and compiled a vocabulary, which was published in the colony in the shape of a pamphlet. This was subsequently republished in London, with the addition of some words, chiefly peculiar to the locality of King George's Sound. These will be found marked with the letters (K.G.S.), as those contributed by the Messrs. Bussel, of the Vasse River settlement, have been marked with the word (Vasse). To him we are certainly indebted for the first publication of anything approaching to a correct list of the words of this Australian dialect; and any future attempts of the same nature can only be considered as a more expanded form of his original work. Without that vocabulary it is probable that the present would not have been undertaken. This vocabulary is founded upon that of Captain Grey, but is in a much enlarged

form, and upon a more comprehensive plan; embracing, also, such additions and alterations as have been the natural result of longer time, greater experience, and a more familiar acquaintance with the language. In the first place, it contains several hundred additional words, inclusive of such tenses of the verbs as have been accurately ascertained (for although the three known tenses are tolerably regular, they are not invariably so). In the next place, the meanings are in general given in a more copious form, and whenever a word has required or admitted of it, the opportunity has been taken of giving an account of everything interesting in the habits, manners, and customs of the aborigines, and in the English and Australian part has been added, which, it was considered, would be of great assistance to such as desire to ascertain any word in the language.

This work owes much of its present form to the industry and attention of Mr. Symmons, one of the protectors of the aborigines, with some assistance from a friend whose name I am not at liberty to mention; but mainly through the means of the interpreter, Mr. Armstrong, with such aid as a long residence in the country, and constant communication with the natives, both in a public and private capacity, enabled me to impart, and such attention as the leisure of a sea-voyage permitted me to bestow. I have been requested to

undertake the task of editing and publishing it in England, in order to avoid the expense and difficulty which would have attended the printing of it in the colony.

The sounds of the letters are adopted from the orthography recommended in the Journal of the Royal Geographical Society. The consonants are to be sounded as in English, except that G is invariably hard; the vowels, for the most part, as in the following English words: -- A, as in father, except when it has the short mark (ă) over it, or at the end of a word, when it is to be pronounced as in the first syllable of mamma; E. as in there, whether at the beginning, middle, or end of a word; I, as in fatigue; O, as in old; Ow, as in cow, now; U, as in rude. With Y some liberty has been taken; it is used both as a consonant and a vowel. With its consonant form there is no difficulty; it is to be pronounced as in you, your, yoke. As a vowel it must invariably be sounded long, as in my, thy; and this sound in the middle of a word, after a consonant, is to be given to it unless separated from the preceding letter by a hyphen, when it becomes a consonant itself, as, for example, Gyn, one. Y is here a long vowel; but in Gyn-yang (once) the y of the first syllable is a long vowel, and of the second is a consonant; - the same as in Byl-yi (a small leaf); By-yu (the Zamia fruit). The nasal sound, Ng, is of such frequent occurrence in the Australian language, as to have rendered its introduction viii PREFACE.

necessary as a distinct and separate letter (if such an expression may be used) in every vocabulary which has been atttempted of any of its dialects. It is placed at the end of words beginning with N; its sound is that of Ng in ring, wing. In some few words h will be found interposed between two r's, as in Marh-ra (the hand), Warh-rang (three). When this is the case, the first r is to be aspirated. This is an attempt to explain in letters a sound which hearing and practice alone can enable any one to understand and acquire. This obscure indistinct sound, as well as the frequent occurrence of the Nasal Ng, and a faint similarity in some of the pronouns with those of the Malabar language, have been remarked as affording a slight clue by which a distant relationship might be traced between the Western Australians, and the natives of the south-east districts of the peninsula of India. may be necessary to explain, that when any word is said to belong to the North, South, or other dialects, this is to be understood with reference to Perth as a centre. The words contained in this Vocabulary are those in most common use in the vicinity of the Swan River and the adjacent districts; some of which may be found to be localised, but most of them are used under some form or modification by all the aborigines residing within the limits of Moore River to the north, the Avon to the east, the sea to the west, and King George's Sound to the south. The characteristic peculiarity of the King George's Sound dialect is to shorten the words by cutting off the final syllable, especially where it ends in a vowel. as Kat, for Katta-Kal, for Kalla, which gives the language a short, abrupt sound. "An-va twonga gwabba." in the Perth dialect (I hear well), is "An twonk gwap" at King George's Sound. Whilst, on the other hand, the tribes that have been met with two hundred miles north of Fremantle appear to lengthen out the words by adding a syllable to the end of them, which gives their language a more soft and musical sound; as, " Mallo nginnow." in the Perth dialect (sit in the shade), is with them. "Malloka nginnowka." To the eastward the sound of E is often used where O is used at Perth; Kot-ve, a bone, becomes Kwetje to the East, and Kwetj at King George's Sound. So Kole becomes Kwele and Kwel. And very generally O is used for U; Gort for Gurt, the heart; Goya for Guya, a frog. E is often substituted for OW in many districts; as, Yuke for Yugow (to be); Wanke for Wangow (to speak). About King George's Sound, also, the word Gur, according to Captain Grey, is used as an affix to many of the marhs. This appears analogo is to the word Kolo (if, indeed, it be not an indistinct pronunciation of the same with the final syllable cut off), which is used in all Swan River districts as an occasional or optional Description: as, Dtabbat (to fall down) is often sounded Dtabbat kolo (to move falling down) Darbow (to stoop); Darbow kolo (to move stooping) Murrijo (to walk); Murrijo kolo (to move walking): that, probably, it may be found, on attentive examination, that Kolo, Gulut, Gulbang, Gulbat, all expressing motion, and Gur, also, are but various modifications of the same radical word.

There is another variety of pronunciation which occa sions a difference in sound that is more apparent that real; namely, the sound of B for P, and P for B; the sound of D for T, and T for D; of G for K, and K for G. These letters, respectively, are in so many instance used indiscriminately, or interchangeably, that it is fre quently difficult to distinguish which sound predomi nates, even in the same district; but the predominant sound varies in different districts; as, Barduk, Parduk Gatta, Katta; Tabba, Dappa: which last word may be heard occasionally in all the different forms; Dappa Dabba, Tabba, or Tappa. But, bearing in mind these differences of dialect, and varieties of pronunciation which necessarily belong to any widely-spread unwritten language, and making due allowance for those local terms which must be introduced into different districts as applicable to peculiarities of situation, soil, climate, occupation, food, and natural products, I have no hesitation in affirming, that as far as any tribes have been met and conversed with by the colonists, namely, from

hundred miles east of King George's Sound up to hundred miles north of Fremantle, comprising a bace of above six hundred miles of coast, the language radically and essentially the same. And there is much reason to suppose that this remark would not be confined those limits only, but might be applied, in a great gree, to the pure and uncorrupted language of the thole island. Many of the words and phrases of the becase on the eastern and southern sides of Australia, given in Collins's work, in Threlkeld's Grammar, and several short vocabularies, are identical with those sed on the Western side. And in a list of words given Flinders' Voyage, as used by the natives on the northat coast at Endeavour River, the term for the eye is the same as that at Swan River. Whilst this Meation was in the press, the work of Captain Grey in the course of which he has treated of this bject at considerable length, and adduced several arguthe confirmatory of the same opinion.

because it is doubtful if the rules by which it is the even yet sufficiently known to be laid a with confidence,—if, indeed, there are any so far land amongst themselves as to be considered in
None are likely to bestow much attention upon except those who have an interest in compensation of the personally with the natives, in which way

any peculiarities of structure may be easily acquired. A sentence of the Western Australian dialect would run much in this way, if rendered with perfectly literal accuracy:—"I to-day, at sunrise, in forest walking, male kangaroo far off saw; I stealthily creep, near, near; male kangaroo eats, head down low; I rapidly spear throw—heart strike—through and through penetrate. Male kangaroo dead falls; good—yes; it is true; I good throw—good very." The grammatical construction appears to be inartificial and elementary, as might naturally be expected amongst so rude a people, and wholly free from that startling complexity of form (especially as regards the verbs) which has been attributed to the Sidney language in Threlkeld's Grammar.

It seems, indeed, scarcely credible that the most artificial forms of speech should belong to the very rudest state of society; and that the least civilised people in the world should have refinements of phrase, and niceties of expression, which were wholly unknown to the most polished nations of classical antiquity.

A work of the nature of this Vocabulary may be of great service in a variety of ways. To those who have relatives in the colony, it will show something of the manners and language of the people, and the nature of the country where their friends reside. To the emigrant it will give such preparatory information as may smooth many of the difficulties in his way. It will enable the

actual settler to communicate more freely with the natives, and thus to acquire and extend an influence amongst them, and frequently to gain important information regarding the localities and resources of the country. To the philologist, it affords an opportunity for the examination of a new form of speech, or a comparison with other dialects of the same tongue. philosopher, it offers the interesting study of a new and, as yet, unsophisticated people-and, perhaps, the only people now existing on the earth, in a completely uncivilised and savage state; whilst to the missionary, who devotes himself to the task of enlightening and converting this simple and primitive race, it will afford great facility in his labours, and place him at once upon a vantage-ground which he might otherwise lose much time in attaining. That it may be found conducive to each and all of these objects, is the ardent wish of

GEORGE FLETCHER MOORE.

DESCRIPTIVE VOCABULARY.

N.B. The terms Northern, Southern, or other Dialects refer to Poith as a centre. V. Vesse; K.G.S., King George's Sound; denote that the word is edienty used in that locality.

AL

A, long, as in Father; a, short, or a, at the end of a word as the first a in Mamma. See Preface.

AB, or Ar.—An abbreviation of Abbin. A particle which, when affixed to words, expresses to be, or to become; as Djulap, Bugorap, Garrangab, to become bad, or a cham-

pion, or angry.

Abba—A word of friendly salutation with the natives about Augusta, accompanied by the act of rubbing the breast with the hand, and spitting at the same time. This was, perhaps, at first a superstitious ceremony on their part, to avert any evil consequences which might ensue from holding communication with beings whom they probably, at that time, considered to be preternatural. There does not appear to be any established mode of salutation customary among themselves. To hold up the open hands is used now by the white and black people as a sign of amity; but this is chiefly to show that the hand is unarmed, or the disposition friendly. Green boughs were presented to the settlers at York, by the natives, on the occasion of their first interview.

Abbin—Getting; becoming. Gwabbăbbin, becoming good;
Durdakabbin, getting well, recovering from sickness.

Adjo, pers. pron.—I, an imperfect pronunciation of Ngadjo.

ADJUL-I will. See Ngadjul.

Ak, or Ok—Of; an affix denoting possession—as Winatak Gatta, the head of Winat.

ALLIJA, or ALLI, pron .- It; that is it.

В

edges of lakes in the summer season. It is a very remarkable fact in the history of mankind, that a people should be found now to exist, without any means of heating water, or cooking liquid food; or, in short, without any culinary utensil or device of any sort. Their only mode of cooking was to put the food into the fire, or roast it in the embers or hot ashes; small fish or frogs being sometimes first wrapped in a piece of paper-tree bark. Such was their state when we came among them. They are now extremely fond of soup and tea.

Kallangkallang, adj.—Burning hot; from Kalla, fire, and Ang, of.

Kallang, verb—Pres. part., Kallangwin; past tense, Kallangägga. To collect sticks for a fire.

KALLAR, adj .- Deadly ; mortal.

KALLARAK, adj .- Hot; warm.

Kallardtan, verb-To wound mortally.

Kallili, subst.—Formica maxima. The lion-ant, nearly an inch and a half long, having very sharp mandibles, and a formidable sting, which produces very acute pain.

Kallip, adj.—Denoting a knowledge of localities; familiar acquaintance with a range of country, or with individuals. Also used to express property in land; as Ngan-na Kallip, my land.

Kal-ya, subst.—Chorizema cordifolia. A plant.

Kal-yagal, adv.—Always; ever; continually.

Камак, subst.—A small kind of Kuruba, found in the York district.

Kambar, subst.—Incisores, or cutting-teeth of the large kangaroo; one of these is sometimes inserted into the end of the Miro, or spear-throwing board, for the purpose of scraping anything with, as the points of the spears, &c.

Kambart-A niece. See Gambart.

Кăммаjăr, adj.—Green.

KANANGUR, adj.—(K.G.S.) Adorned; shining.

KANBA, subst.—The wing of a bird; gill of a fish.

KANBARRA, subst.-Scolopendra, a centipede. Although nu-

merous they are not dreaded. I have not heard of any person suffering from their bite.

KANBIGUR, subst .- (K.G.S.) The eyelash.

KANDI, verb-To creep; to sidle along; to steal on game.

KANDAL-YĂNG, adj.—Heavy.

KÄNDANG, verb-Pres. part., Kändangwin; past tense, Kandang-ăgga. To vomit; to spew.

KANGAL—The east; or, more properly, the spot of sun-rising, as it varies with the sun throughout the year.

Kangarong-a, subst.—(Used on the Murray and Serpentine rivers, south of Perth.) Female kangaroo. Probably the proper sound is Yangorgnanga, from Yangor, a Kangaroo, and Ngangan, mother. Mother of kangaroo.

KANGE, adj .- (K.G.S.) Straight.

KANG-INNAK, subst.—Halcyon sanctus. Species of kingfisher. This bird has been seen in the interior, in districts where neither lakes nor rivers were found.

KANGUN, subst.—Uncle; father-in-law.

KANGUR, subst.—(K.G.S.) A species of fly; also a native dance.

KÄNNAH, interject.—Is it so? Eh? Verily? Do you understand? An interrogative particle, used at the end of a sentence requiring assent or reply to a remark. The only mode of asking a question is to affirm or assume a fact, then add Kannah? Is it so, or not? from Ka, or.

KÄNNAHJIL, interjec.—A more intensitive form of expression than the preceding, indicating, Is it true? Do you really speak the truth?

Kinnamit, subst.—Hirundo. The swallow. Very like the English house-swallow. It builds in hollow trees, or sometimes now under the eaves of houses.

Kanning-The south.

KAPBUR, subst.—Jacksonia Sternbergiana. One of the dullest and most melancholy foliaged trees in Australia. It has an unpleasant smell in burning, from which it is frequently called stinkwood, as in Africa also. Horses, sheep, and goats eat the leaves with avidity.

KARA, subst .- A spider. Some kinds spin a very strong silk-

the colony; and also Moresby's flat-topped range, which is supposed to be of the red sandstone of the coal formation, and promises to be a valuable district when examined.

KATTANGIRANG, subst .- A small species of lizard.

KATTE, verb .- (North dialect.) To carry; to fetch.

Kattidjin; past tense, Kattidjin; past tense, Kattidjaga; to know; to understand; to hear. This word seems to be compounded of Katta, the head; and Ijow, to put.

Kattidjballar, verb.—To conceal information. Literally, to know secretly.

Kattidjmurdoinăn, verb—To mind; to fix your attention upon.

KATTIK-(K.G.S.) Night.

KATTIN-(K.G.S.) A few.

KATTYL, verb .- To delay.

KIDDAL, subst .- A species of cricket insect. Grilla.

KI-ILGUR, subst.—(K.G.S.) A small species of hawk.

KI-IN—(K.G.S.) The dead.

KIJJIBRUN, subst.—A water-fowl; a species of Coot.

KILKILLÄNG-As Nalgo Kilkillang; setting the teeth on edge.

KILLAL, subst. - Formica maxima; lion-ant.

Killin, subst.—The pudenda.

KILUNG, subst.—(K.G.S.) The fresh-water tortoise.

K-NUDE, subst.—A species of casuarina.

Kobbălăk, subst.—Pregnancy.

Kobbălo, sūbst.—Stomach; belly.

KOBBALOBAKKAN.YUGOW, verb...To want. (See Gurdu.) To hunger for a thing.

KOBBĂLO-BU-YIRGĂDĂK, subst.—A sorcerer. Boylya Gadăk.
Compounded of Kobbalo, stomach; Buyi, a stone; and
Gadak, possessing. Seemingly answering to our stony
or hard-hearted person.

KOBART, subst.—A species of spear-wood found in the swamps.

KOBAT KOBATÄNÄN, verb—To decoy. Compounded of Kue, the sound they utter when calling at a distance to each other; and Bado, to go.

KOL

counc, adv.—In ambush, as watching for game.

ceang-nginnow, verb-To lie in ambush.

LOGYN, subst .- Any edible bulb.

ECKAD Ang, subst.—Or Wal-yu-my. Jacksonia prostrata. A shrub much frequented by Bandicoots and Wallobys.

KORAL-YANG, subst.—(North-east word.) Feathers; or a tuft of feathers worn as an ornament.

KOKANWIN, adj .- Festering.

KOKARDAR, adj .- (K.G.S.) High; lofty.

Kororo, subst.—A small fish with very large eyes.

Kolbang, verb—Pres. part., Kolbangwin; past tense, Kolbang-aga; to move; to proceed; to go forward.

Kolbardo, verb.—To depart; to go. Compounded of Kolo (which see), and Bardo, to go.

Kolbogo, subst. — Mesembryanthemum equilateralis; the Hottentot fig-plant. The inner part of the fruit is eaten by the natives. It has a salt sweetish taste.

Kolbogo Măngara, subst.—Compound of Kolbogo, the Hottentot fig, and Măngara, hair. The leaves of the Hottentot fig-plant. In the early days of the settlement, when garden vegetables were scarce, these were split up, and dressed like French beans by some, and used at table.

Kole, subst.—A name. Names are conferred upon the children which have reference to some remarkable incident occurring at the time of the birth, or which are descriptive of some particular locality, or commemorative of some event, or sight, or sound, and are intended to be indicative rather of the feelings or actions of the parent, than prophetic of the future character of the child. These names are readily exchanged with other individuals as a mark of friendship, and frequently become so entirely superseded by the adopted appellation, that the original name is scarcely remembered, and the meaning of it is often entirely forgotten.

Kolil, subst.—Melaleuca. Colonially, tea-tree, or paper-bark tree. The first of these names is derived from its resemblance to a tree in the other Australian colonies, AFTERNOON, late in the-Garbala.

AGAIN—Garro; as Garro Yual, to return, to come back again.

AGED—Guragor.

Agent (means of doing anything), always used as an affix—Middi.

Ago, any time-Karamb.

Ago, long time-Gorah.

Ago, little time-Gori; Epal.

AGREEING WITH-Gurdu-gyn-yul.

Ah !--Năh.

AIM, to miss the-Wilyan.

ALARM-Dărnăvăn.

Albatross-Diomedia Chlororhyncha-Wulwul.

ALIGHT, to, as a bird.—Gargan.

ALIVE-Dordak; Wining (N.E. dialect.)

ALIVE, green as applied to trees-Won-gin.

ALL-Băndăng; Mundang.

ALLIED TO, by marriage-Noy-yang.

ALONE-Dombart.

Also-Gudjir; Wer.

ALTER, to-Wallak-ijow; Minytwallakijow.

ALWAYS-Dowir ; Kalyagal.

Ambush, to lie in-Kogang-nginnow.

AMICABLE-Nagăl.

Among-Kardagor.

Amongst—Mănda.

Amuse, to-Djubu-barrang.

And—Gudjir; Wer.

Anger-Garrang.

Angry, to be—Gurdu-djul; Gärräng-gädäk.

Angular-Danda (Upper Swan word).

Ankle-Bilga; Jinnardo; Murantch.

Anoint, to-Năbbow.

Another-Waumma.

Ant (small species)-Budjin.

Ant (small species)—Bulolo; Kardagut; Kurrut; Kwalak.

Ant, white-Molada.

Ant, white, nest of-Molytch.

Ant, Lion-Formica maxima-Killal; Kallili.

Anxious, for any thing-Gurdak.

APART-Wallakwallak; Kortda.

APERTURE-Bunăn.

Arise-Irap.

ARISE, to-Irabin.

ARM. right-Ngunman.

Arm, left-D-yuro; N-yardo; D-yurangitch.

ARM, upper, from shoulder to elbow-Wango.

ARM, lower, from elbow to wrist-Marga.

ARM-PIT-Ngal-ya.

Arms, to carry in the .- Munang.

ARRANGE, to-Gwabbanijow.

ARRANGE THE FIRE, to-Dukun.

As, like as-Jin; Winnirak.

ASCEND, to-Dendang.

Ashes-Dalba.

Ask, to-Wan-ga djinnang.

Assault, to-Ballajan.

Associate with, to-Gambarn bardo.

ASTRAY (to go astray)-Barrabardo.

At once—Gwytch; Ilak ilak.

ATTACK, to—Ballajan.
ATTENTIVE—Met.

ATTENTIVE—Met.

Aunt—Mängat.

Avoid, to, by shifting on one side—Gwelgannow.

Avoxet-Recurvirostris rubricollis-Yajingurong.

AUTUMN-Burnur; Burnuro.

Away (Begone)-Watto.

Away, to send-Dtallangiritch.

Awkward-Yanbi.

Awry-Ngallin.

B.

BABY-Burdilyap; Turnit.

Back, the Bogal; Gong-go; Ngarra.

Back of the Neck-Nang-ga.

BACKBONE-Bogal; Kot-ye.

BACKBONE, extremity of—Os coccygis; Mundo; Moro-