16,000, and there was no reason to suspect their authenticity. The Finns were especially interesting, from their presumed connexion with the brachycephalic populations of Europe; the historical evidence, though defective, seemed to show that they extended much further than at present.

The following letter was read from Mr. Murray, of Sydney:—

Sydney, New South Wales, April 20, 1867.

Sir,—Observing a notice of some "Ancient British Sculptured Rocks" in the third volume of the *Anthropological Review*, 1865, p. 293, it has occurred to me that there is some similarity between the figures given therein, and those which appear on an "aboriginal tomb tablet" which has been sent from this colony to the Paris Exhibition. I have had no opportunity of comparing them, as the volume I refer to has only just reached me, and I speak merely from recollection of the carvings on the tablet; but it occurs to me that the matter may not be unworthy of attention on the part of the Anthropological Society, and I trust you will, in consequence, pardon me for intruding upon you. The tablet is marked as No. 428 in the Catalogue of our exhibits, a copy of which I send you. The sculptures, I observe, are supposed to be of pre-historic antiquity, and of sepulchral character; and if the similarity exists, it will be interesting to contemplate in it another instance of man's disposition, all over the world, to act under like circumstances in a like manner. It is possible that the social condition of the sculptors of those remote ages may not have been much in advance of that of the Australian aborigines of the present day. It has been a practice among the latter to place inscriptions, or rather rude marks, on trees in memory of the dead who were buried near: I have known it in many cases.

I also observed in a former volume of the same *Review*, that a question has been raised in your society as to the fecundity of Australian half-castes. Count Strzelecki, author of *A Physical Description of New South Wales*, was the first to raise a doubt upon this subject. But my experience, extending over very many years, leads me to believe that these people would, under equally favourable circumstances, be as prolific as any others. Count Strzelecki says, that the Australian aboriginal female will not bear a child to an aboriginal black man after having had one by a white man. I have, however, known nothing, in a long course of observation of the native races, to warrant this opinion; on the contrary, I have seen several black children who were born after their mothers had had children by white men. Nor does the race deteriorate by the cross. Among the half-castes may be seen as fine models of the human form as any that are commonly to be met with in the colony. That they are not more numerous is not the result of any inherent infirmity in themselves; it proceeds from other causes incident to their peculiar condition in life. The old blacks in the southern districts of New South Wales, and I believe throughout the colony,—although for this I cannot vouch from my own knowledge,—used, up to a certain period, systematically to destroy all the half-caste boys as they approached the

age of puberty. In 1839, I had occasion, as a magistrate, to investigate a case of this kind on the Murrumbidgee river, in the county of Murray. The blacks had assembled in the neighbourhood in large numbers,—they had *corrobberees*,—several half-caste boys were seen with them; they retired for a few days to a rugged, hilly, lonely country some few miles off; they returned, after an absence of some days, without these half-caste boys. A stockman gave me information, on oath, to the effect that he had come across their bodies burning in a bough-yard, which the assembled tribes had made near their late encampment; that there were eleven fires burning, and one body in each. I went the same evening to see whether any of the boys had been spared, but could find none. I asked several of the men, whom I knew well, what had become of them, but could get no information from them. I went next day with a party of police to examine the locality where it was stated these murders had taken place. We found a rude square enclosure, roughly made with boughs, and within it eleven separate heaps of ashes, each containing burned, or the remnants of burned, human bones. I did all in my power to prosecute the case to the utmost, but could procure no evidence inculpating any particular individuals. The case thus broke down; but the blacks, hearing of the investigation which was taking place, fled to the mountains, and did not return to that part of the country for fully two years.

These practices may account, in part at all events, for the paucity of half-caste men in the colony. Several are to be met with who in early youth attached themselves to the stations of the settlers, and remain in their service as stockmen or horse-breakers. I never saw an adult half-caste man living in their ordinary state with the aborigines. Half-caste women are commonly to be seen among them, but they too are subject to the destructive influences which are gradually exterminating the "autochthones" of Australia.

I endeavoured, after the incidents just related, to ascertain why the blacks destroyed half-caste boys; but all I could learn was that fears were entertained of their superior influence when they would have grown to manhood. A woman who had lost a well-grown son on this occasion—he was one of the eleven—was in great grief, and exclaimed to me several times, "Cawbawn me sorry massa, cawbawn me sorry; black-fellow always like that—black-fellow always like that." This woman had then with her a black child, a pure aboriginal, which she bore subsequently to the birth of the half-caste she had lost.

But notwithstanding such cases as this, namely the destruction of the half-caste boys when they reach the age of puberty—and others indicating a cruel disposition, I cannot regard the Australian aborigines otherwise than as naturally a mild, gentle, affectionate, kind-hearted race. I could tell many a story within my own experience in illustration of the correctness of this opinion. In cases of public note I need but refer to the conduct of the wild tribes Captain Sturt met on his voyage down the Murrumbidgee in 1828; to that of Jacky Jacky towards poor Kennedy in 1848; and to the treatment of Mr. King, the sole survivor of Bourke's party in 1860:—"They appeared

to feel great compassion for me when they understood that I was alone on the creek, and gave me plenty to eat. * * * They were very anxious, however, to know where Mr. Burke lay, and one day when we were fishing in the water-holes close by, I took them to the spot. On seeing his remains the whole party wept bitterly, and covered them with bushes. After this they were much kinder to me than before." —(*Vide* King's narrative.)

I have known a son kill his father, and the circumstance was referred to at the time as a convincing proof of the natural and innate ferocity of the Australian savage. The case occurred fully a quarter of a century ago, but I did not then regard it in this light, nor do I now. The Australian aboriginal soon "melts into sorrow," soon "maddens to crime." When a man of any note among them is killed by the enemy, great is the grief, the humiliation, the mortification, of the tribe he belonged to, and great the triumph and the rejoicing of the enemy. In this case "Billatee," the father, was a very old man; he had been a great warrior, and many had fallen by his hand; his enemies had vowed his death, and he had had some very narrow escapes—one then very recently. His son "Timati" was always kind and attentive to the old man—he was himself one of the most prominent men in the tribe. His father's infirmities were increasing daily; he was in constant anxiety lest their enemies should succeed, and enjoy the great triumph of killing him, and to prevent it, killed him himself. The feeling which led him to this was akin to that attributed to the dying Douglas in the ballad—

"Earl Percy sees my fall."

His sole object was to prevent his falling a victim to his enemies. But the tribe did not understand such casuistry. The "lex talionis" is their law. They formed a great hunting party a few days after for the purpose of spearing him, and they did spear him.

Nor have the aborigines in their collisions with the colonists been one whit more cruel than the colonists have been to them on the out-stations. It is a sad day for the savage when he comes in contact with the "outsiders" of our civilisation; and in this respect Australia has many a dark tale to tell.

Nor can I, after ample observation during a period of fully five-and-thirty years, regard the aborigines as by any means so low in the scale of intelligence as they are generally represented to be. I have lately seen, in the *Morning Post* of the 13th of February, a statement by Mr. Crawfurd to the effect that they are different from and inferior to all other races of mankind. If this is the case, all other races of mankind must be more highly endowed than I, for one, ever thought they were. Mr. Carlyle says her Majesty's subjects, who are spread all over the world, and include every race, "consist of so many millions, mostly fools." Mr. Carlyle is a very profound thinker.

A friend of mine, in my presence, once addressed an aboriginal in English, but the latter did not understand him. "Ah," said my friend, "you are a stupid fellow." "Well," said the black, "why do you not speak to me in my own language." He then addressed the gentleman in the aboriginal tongue, and as he did not understand him, retorted,

"Now *you* are a stupid fellow." At a large party, many years ago, at Regentville, the residence of Sir John Jamieson, about forty miles from Sydney, one of the guests gave a coat to one of the native blacks. He put it on and strutted about in it, apparently regardless of the state of his nether parts, which had no covering. One of the party asked him what his gin would say when she saw him in that fine coat. He answered immediately, "She'll say, what for massa not give it trousers too." I had this from Sir Richard Bourke, then governor, who was present.

Were it not for the length to which this letter has already extended, and my unwillingness to intrude further upon you, I would state some circumstances which induce me to form a very different opinion of the Australian aboriginal from that expressed by Mr. Crawfurd, but I may have the honour of addressing you on the subject at another time.

The interest I feel in the success of the Anthropological Society must serve as my excuse for addressing you at all. The tombs tablet to which I have referred, and two caps of clay—No. 422 of the catalogue—worn by aboriginal widows in mourning—shall be quite at your service after the exhibition for your society's museum if you should desire at all to have them. I will write on the subject in due time, to Captain Mayne (118 Cannon Street) agent for the government of this colony in London, and a commissioner representing it at the exhibition.

I likewise beg your acceptance of a volume descriptive of the Australian dialects, which has been printed at my instance for the exhibition. Philology ought to form part of anthropological science, and the work for this reason may be of some interest in your society. But my impression is that it can only be interesting in a philological point of view. In the grammatical part there may be much that is questionable. I have the honour to be, Sir, very faithfully yours,

Dr. James Hunt, F.S.A., F.R.S.L., T. A. Murray.
President of the Anthropological Society, etc., etc.

P.S.—Some of the fossils referred to in the enclosed extract from the *Sydney Herald* may be worth careful examination.

The Director said that the Council were exceedingly sorry that no earlier opportunity had occurred of communicating this important letter to the Society.

Mr. A. L. Lewis said that the discovery of the inscribed tablet was one of great importance. It was curious that the inscriptions found on dolmens on the Morbihan were exactly similar to the forms of the tattooings on the New Zealanders; in like manner Dr. Seemann had found inscriptions on Central American monuments similar to those in Northumberland.

Dr. Bell cited some equally curious instances of correlation.

The Director said that everyone present must have been deeply interested in the paper. The opinions of Count Strzelecki on super-fecundation was a most important point. He had never before heard of the practice of destroying half-caste boys. This was an important

matter for future investigation. As to Mr. Crawfurd's generalisations, they were obviously worthless after the statements of Mr. Murray, who was unquestionably the more competent judge of the two. It was evident that Mr. Murray took a warm interest in the Society, and would prove one of our most valuable local secretaries.

A report, of which the following is an abstract, was then read by Mr. Groom Napier, Local Secretary for Bristol, upon two unusually gifted Mulatresses:—

Mr. NAPIER thought it desirable to bring these two remarkable cases before the society, as illustrations of the exceptional characteristics of half-breeds. These had enjoyed the benefits of European education, which, in other cases under his notice, had not resulted in useful or elevated characters. The first was a daughter of a white by a pure negress. She was successfully educated, from fourteen years of age to twenty-eight, in Scotland, as a dress and staymaker. She suffered from home sickness, and returned to Tobago, a very exceptional circumstance in negro races, in whom family ties are universally spurned. In this case the very reverse took place; and she faithfully performed to her parent the duties of a daughter and fellow creature. To those who had educated her she ever remained attached and grateful, in this exhibiting some of the few good qualities to be found in the negro race.

In the second case, the mulatress was the product of a white planter through a full black girl. There was considerable intelligence manifested, and the child was educated in England from about her fourth year. Before the age of six she was able to read, and soon after to write. Self-confidence was soon exhibited; and at eight she was sent to school, where she remained at intervals until she was sixteen years of age, and then became a governess. As in other instances of negro peculiarities, music was strongly exhibited; and she is now organist of a parish church, and capable of conducting concerts. The religious sentiments are considerably brought out; and she is extravagant of her pecuniary resources,—a correlation not unfrequently found to exist in such circumstances. A low money-value has hence been assigned to her services, and she has met with little encouragement. Persons inferior to her in everything but colour have been preferred to her, and this in a country where, in the eye of the law, all shades are equally blended.

Her mind, Mr. Napier stated, was not original; her powers of assimilation were great, and there was considerable pride in her disposition, evidently a result of the negro afflatus. Her dignity was of more importance to her than the interests of her best friends. Her conduct exhibited great powers of resistance, and she was very contrary. In features she closely approximated to pure negro.

In contrast to these two instances of noble characters, he would give a few of the reverse from his own notes, which were far more common. A. N., a white planter, had a large coloured family. The eldest son was sent home to England at an early age, and placed in the family of a medical man at Cambridge. He graduated, and afterwards took

a degree in medicine, showing great capacity for languages and science. He was taken into partnership, at the age of twenty-eight, by the surgeon who had brought him up. On finding himself his own master, he entered into dissipated habits, neglected the practice, and at last, after eighteen months trial, his partner had to get rid of him to prevent absolute ruin. He died at thirty, worn out with disease. He was the son of a quadroon. His brothers, C. and M., showing less intelligence, were apprenticed to trades in this country, and hundreds of pounds were spent in establishing them in business when they had received good educations. They dissipated their means, and after having been a burden to their friends for some years, they died miserable or disappeared. Their brother A., having had a European education, was sent back to the West Indies. He might have had a large business as a plumber, and have made a good income; but he was so indolent and irregular in his work that, after many trials, few planters would employ him. Being quiet and inoffensive, he was considered the best of the family.

Of two sisters, who also received good educations, one married a respectable English merchant, and went out to the East Indies. The second married an English officer, but soon eloped, and afterwards led an abandoned life. She was remarkable for beauty.

Two young men, likewise children of quadroons, were sent to England for education. The first, named M., after being carefully educated, was apprenticed to a merchant. He went to the West Indies at the age of twenty-one. He showed good abilities, and some aptitude for business, and being prudent and anxious to make money, he went on steadily. He made a successful marriage, and after a while retired with a fair income. His character, although frequently quoted among his acquaintances as that of a model coloured man, does not appear to much advantage when contrasted with any but the most inferior Europeans. He is vain and proud; passionately addicted to display and frippery, having the manners of a French hairdresser or man-milliner,—shallow in thought, and low in his moral standard, but with sufficient prudence to prevent him from outraging the usages of society. Like coloured men in general, he is more than half a woman, without the tenderness and chasteness which become the better examples of European females. Coloured women, on the contrary, have the strong passions which in Europe are characteristic of the male sex, with an amount of tact and cunning not often seen in the Teutonic race.

The other example of a respectable coloured man who received a European education, in the first outset of his career forged an acceptance and decamped, leaving his father and family in great distress. He had inspired much confidence, and had every prospect of attaining wealth and honour; for he was treated as a son. Enlisting in the army as a private, he distinguished himself for his bravery, and returned at last, crowned with honours, to marry an heiress, and settle down into an idle and useless member of society.

He had collected about forty instances of coloured people, whose histories he had known or ascertained, who received every advantage

of good European educations. Of men, there were not more than one out of thirteen who really could be called creditable members of society. But of twenty-nine women, eleven might be considered tolerable, and two exemplary; but the remainder were loose characters.

The moral characters of coloured persons are so weak, that even great advantages of good example, and every inducement of interest, are insufficient to maintain them in a straight course. With women, this is less seen: they are not so much called on to act for themselves; manliness is not required, and they are more completely under the thumb of society, add to which, they are more acute and spirited than their brothers.

He would give one more instance of the false pride of the coloured race. A mother, possessed of good means, sent her illegitimate daughter to England for education, and when this was accomplished, came to England to fetch her. The daughter would not speak to her, which so affected the poor mother that she was half-witted ever afterwards.

Knowing that the Hon. James Kirk, of Tobago, had resided there forty-two years, and is a careful and practical naturalist, he asked him some questions about these people, and received the following answers. He said that mulattoes and mulatresses less frequently cohabited, from motives of pride or convenience, than with either of the paternal races, and that the number of children proceeding therefrom was smaller; but that they were perfectly fertile among themselves, and laughed at the idea of their becoming extinct from lack of fecundity. He thought the moral character of mulattoes inferior to that of either black or white races; for he had a very bad opinion of the morals of all West Indian coloured people. Thus, a man might be convicted of a notorious crime, and be imprisoned for years, and on his release be received into society with acclamation. He thought that some negroes were capable of acquiring a great amount of knowledge; but even the most intelligent were prone to use their learning for unworthy purposes, such as imitating the handwriting of a kind master for the purpose of fraud. Mr. Keans, the Master in Chancery for the Island of Tobago, gave him the same information. A low state of morality was apt to prevail especially amongst the Dissenters, even when very zealous in the promulgation of their creed, and liberal in the support of their ministers, or in contributing to the building of chapels; for instance, several black brothers preferred their neighbours' wives to their own. The black and coloured people of Tobago have been mostly peaceably disposed; the few insurrections known having been induced from Barbadoes or other neighbouring islands. A plot was discovered in due time, some years ago, which had for its object the massacre of the adult male white population, and the appropriation, by lottery, of the white females among the blacks. Mr. Kirk considered the negro but a savage,—a friend when excited, and little to be depended on even in his best moments. He thought men of the Governor Eyre stamp could alone successfully deal with negroes in revolt. He mentioned, however, in extenuation of the negro character, that his own overseer, in whom he has had great confidence for many years, was a pure negro. Mr. Kirk gave him an account of