

Coal and Copper in Western Australia had been spread over the country through the medium of the SWAN RIVER NEWS. I suppose this was effected by means of the fund for the gratuitous distribution of the paper or with the assistance of the Western Australian Society; in either case it shews what is the correct application of these funds. They should, in my opinion, be reserved for such contingencies as this, and not applied to the indiscriminate circulation of a certain number of copies monthly. One hundred copies of your November or December number, circulated with judgment, would do infinitely more good than the regular monthly circulation of twenty copies for five years. It is the same with the funds of the Western Australian Society. How useless was the purpose to which they were at first applied—the insertion of advertisements in the papers, which are the very parts of a paper that everyone suspects most. How much better would it be for the colony that accounts of its real progress—not dreams of what it *might* be made—should be thus publicly diffused.

I am Sir, your obedient servant,
G. F. J.

[We so entirely agree with our correspondent, that we only have one observation to make. The wide circulation of the glorious intelligence published by us in November and December was effected at our own expense, assisted by a small application of the Gratuitous Distribution Fund only, no money being in hand for such purposes on behalf of the Western Australian Society.—ED. S. R. N.]

THE LANGUAGE, &c. OF THE ABORIGINES.

To the Editor of the Swan River News.

SIR,—Fully alive, I trust, to the interest attached to both, I am not disposed to look upon either the past or the present with disregard. I am not inclined to rail at the utilitarian spirit of the age, and fly from it into the dim atmosphere of musty records of the past, nor, in my respect for it, to treat with indifference the subject of its gradual growth out of the remotest point of civilization. It is therefore that I am glad you have combined the higher tone of history with the useful one of business. Your articles on the Natives, on the History of the Press, Journals of the Exploring Expeditions, &c. show that you have a taste keenly alive to the interest which a new country presents to a mind not besotted with business: while your commercial articles evince an eye equally alive to the necessity of introducing trade to it. I am, therefore, induced to hope that a suggestion which I am about to make will be favorably received. Ere the aboriginal race which is passing away, (and which, mark me, must and

will pass away, despite the merciful efforts to save it)—ere this fading fragment of an almost unknown nation vanishes for ever, seize your opportunity of collecting and recording all the particulars of it that can be gathered from the hieroglyphics which remain to us. Endeavour to track the stream to its source, and discover whether the fountain from which it flowed was clearer—whether the present fragment is but a ruin of a nobler structure—degenerated from a more enlightened people who have passed away. Depend upon it, Sir, THE LIVING FACTS are being now expunged from the history of the world—the tribes that still linger in Western Australia are not destined to perpetuate their race! they will dwindle and diminish, and be lost, with all the curiosities of their history to the generations that come after us; they will “die and leave no sign.” We have, therefore, a duty imposed upon us of enrolling them on the tablets of history while we can yet observe them, and of enquiring into all their habits and their origin. A study of their language is the most likely to unscreeen this mystery to us, and I think, Sir, that a column or two on this subject is expected at your hands by more than myself. An analogy has, I believe, been discovered between the language of the North American Indians and that of Wales, and the origin of the native tongue of Van Diemen’s Land has been dimly traced to the ancient Greek.* Can no affinity be detected between the languages of our poor natives and some other nation? On behalf of all philosophical enquirers, I beseech your attention to this subject, and am, Sir, your most obedient Servant,

R. B. S.

[We are quite sensible of the importance of the enquiry urged upon us by “R. B. S.” and equally aware of the existence of the singular law of nature which dooms the Western Australian native race to extinction. We shall have some remarks to make on this subject (if we have sufficient room) next month, and invite any communications which may open the door to investigation.—ED. S. R. N.]

STEAM TO AUSTRALIA.—The following is a list of gentlemen marked as representing Western Australia, in the “London Committee for the Extension of Steam Navigation to Australia”:—Capt. Sir James Stirling, R.N.; Samuel Browning, Esq.;—Mangles, Esq.; H. T. Prinsep, Esq.; Louis Samson, Esq. There are twenty-seven other members of the Committee.

* The only similarity that we have ever heard of, is in the Aboriginal term for a woman “gin,” resembling the Greek word of the same meaning, “γυνή,” which appears to us to be a mere accidental coincidence.—ED. S. R. N.

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MR. SAMUEL BROWNING, in giving his evidence before the Committee on the Navigation Laws, took occasion to bring forward the particular merits of the Western Australian timber for ship-building, emphatically declaring there was "sufficient to build an entire navy." We understand that Sir Robert Peel was observed to be taking notes of his particulars of the Jarrah wood, during his examination. The reports which appeared in the public papers were so extremely incorrect that we do not copy them, but await the official publication of the evidence.

THE COLONISATION COMMISSIONERS AND THEIR "CIRCULAR."—We cannot but admire the cool impudence with which the readers of the *Colonization Circular* are told in the number just published, that the latest intelligence from Western Australia, received by the conductors of that publication is of the date of 1844! What is to be thought of a Government which knows nothing of its colonies more recent than three years back?

THE SWAN RIVER NEWS TRIBUTE TO IRELAND.

At the suggestion of an esteemed coadjutor in Ireland, we caused the following announcement to appear in the principal English, Scotch and Irish newspapers previously to the publication of our February number:—

'FAMINE IN IRELAND AND SCOTLAND!—The Proprietor of the SWAN RIVER NEWS, feeling that it is the duty of every class to devote its energies to the alleviation of the existing distress, and conceiving that the press should not be behind in this good work, has resolved on *handing over the entire profits of that publication for the ensuing month to the Fund now forming for the relief of the distressed Irish and Highlanders.* No. 38 of the SWAN RIVER NEWS, on February 1st, will contain a PROPOSAL FOR STOPPING THE PROGRESS OF THE FAMINE, and preventing its recurrence. It is hoped that the interest of this article will cause so large a sale that the proceeds, to be devoted to the Relief Fund, will be considerable. Six postage stamps, or a Sixpence, enclosed to EDWARD COLYER, 17, Fenchurch Street, London, will ensure a copy by return of post."

Although not very sanguine of the result, we had hoped that we might be able to draw the attention of parties having the control of the Relief Funds to the opportunity which was opened to them of establishing the now destitute peasantry in a land where want would no longer stare them in the face, but we were not prepared for the indifference with which the announcement was received, and which rendered the suggestion of our friend less effective than it might have been. Notwithstanding the pains taken to publish the announcement, the number of applications from Ireland was *two*, while, as usual, England responded with a more open hand. *So much for Ireland!* The result is, that after de-

fraying the ordinary expenses of the paper, printing an extra edition, and paying the large costs of advertising, &c., a paltry contribution only remains to the Relief Fund. However our Irish friends must accept the will for the deed: we were the first to propose a tribute from the press and since then, one journal, *Bell's Life in London*, has raised between £400 and £500. We hope our example will be followed, and may better success attend future attempts of the kind.

THE GOVERNOR'S HEALTH.

We are extremely gratified by having it in our power to state this month, from private information, that the health of His Excellency Governor Clarke, which has been so uncertain ever since his departure from England, is now completely restored. We are sure our readers will be rejoiced to hear this intelligence, and it affords us the highest gratification to announce it, as, from the indications we have already had of his zeal and activity and devotion to the interests of the Colony, we are convinced that the services of such a Governor are peculiarly wanted at such a crisis as the present.

LATEST INTELLIGENCE FROM WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

DURING the past month there has been no arrival from Western Australia, with the exception of a private letter which we believe has been received by way of Hobart Town, of a rather late date. We may now almost daily expect intelligence—probably the next Indian mail may bring letters; or the first wool ship of the season, which would, most likely, leave the colony in January, may be looked for towards the close of the present month. The next dispatches will be most important as they must convey to us some farther and more definite news relating to the vital subject of mineral researches. Should the news be of a nature to demand it, we shall not hesitate in forwarding it to our Subscribers in the shape of a "Supplement Extraordinary," at whatever period it may arrive, notice of which will be given through the medium of the daily papers, to which we shall at once dispatch it. We hope next month to be at liberty to communicate to our readers some circumstances of which we have been put in possession calculated to have a material influence on the prospects of the colony. At present we must be excused if we are compelled to withhold the details, and to state, on general terms, that all we hear induces us to believe that better days are dawning upon us.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

WHALING.—An anonymous correspondent who writes to us respecting the paragraph which appeared in our last, is informed that Messrs. Habgood and Robert Viveash are the parties alluded to. Their share of the profits will be much less than he calculates; each of the boat's crew is entitled to a "lay" or share of 150th part of the proceeds; while the steersman and head boatman receives from a 20th to a 50th part. The number of men engaged in the capture was probably twenty; and, beyond this, there are the charges for provisions, gear, freight, and insurance, home, &c. &c. to be deducted.

AMIENS COLONIE.—If our correspondent be really possessed of information as "secret" as he states, he will not find us niggardly in our remuneration, but it must be important and well authenticated.

EPSILON.—The matter contained in the letter, in addition to being libellous, is, as we happen to know, untrue.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

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