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NATIVE FIGHTS

A correspondent, who signs himself "C," and lately gave us some account of the coroborees of the Adelaide natives, forwards the following, as he says "at the request of King John," and begs its insertion in our columns: — On Monday last, a fight was to have taken place between the Moorundee, Encounter Bay and Adelaide natives. Great preparations were accordingly made. The young men were all in high glee—tattooed, oiled, and all ready for the coming amusement, but unfortunately they were disappointed; for, as they were marching to meet each other on the old Bay road, three horse-police very unceremoniously stopped them, and had every spear and shield on the ground, and broken up. The astonishment that this act produced, was truly remarkable — some looked quite aghast, others were confounded, and many for the moment, I dare say, doubted their senses, whether such a collection of beautiful uwindas and shields, kylahs and midlahs, were absolutely to be destroyed.

After this summary manner of settling old differences, whether right or wrong, the cry was "What for policemen do this? When white man fight in Adelaide, black fellow say nothing. When black fellow fight, policeman come break spears, break shields, break all; no good. What for you no stop in England?" "But what for you fight," I asked "What for? Me tell you," replied King John, "but no good tell you. You write in the paper and tell white man what for we fight. Before white man come, Murray black fellow never come here. Now white man come, Murray black fellow come too. Encounter Bay and Adelaide black fellow no like him. Me want them to go away. Let them sit down at the Murray, not here. This is not his country. What he do here? You tell Captain Grey to make Murray black fellow go away, no more fight then. Adelaide and Encounter Bay black fellow no want to fight; but Murray black too much saucy. Let him stop in his own country."

At the conclusion of this speech, all responded "very good." It seemed to be the sentiments of all, and it was the cause of their intended battle; and I think that either the Murray blacks ought to be sent away to their own country, or that a proper understanding be effected between the belligerent parties. Unless this is done, there will sure to be fights and affrays. Some such measure ought to be adopted for the general peace; for the manner in which their annual quarrels are quelled, is far from being satisfactory and permanent; they may destroy the spears and disperse the parties, and so effect a peace for a while, but this is not doing away with the evil. Spears can easily be made again, and their desire for revenge is but increased by disappointment. But independent of those considerations, I think it is but just that some attention should be paid to their grievances; for although trivial and unimportant as they appear to us, still in the eye of the natives, they are of the first importance, so much so, that force of arms can only settle the matter. And it would be more in accordance with their notions of right and wrong, were such a measure adopted, than the off-handed manner in which the police decide their differences; galloping up—peremptorily demanding and breaking their "all in all," and then threatening them into the bargain with the jail and manacles. This is not the way to raise our character in the estimation of the Aborigines—the reverse is the consequence—contempt and disgust. And, in conclusion, I would say, if we are desirous of establishing a right feeling between the natives themselves, let their complaints be listened to and redressed as far as possible; and let force alone be applied in cases of absolute necessity.

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