

At Dr. Brook's they had the pleasure of meeting with Mr. Dawson, the first agent of the Australian Land Company, and the founder of Port Stephens, who is well acquainted with this colony, and has published a popular work in relation to it. He of course possessed much information, and among other opinions seemed to entertain the idea that no free colony can succeed, and that in all cases the first settlers of a new country ought to have the use of slave labour, in order to be successful. He argued that these only had realized fortunes; where they had been left to their own resources they had generally failed, and left it to their successors to reap the advantages of their labour. As evidence of this opinion he contrasted the settlements of New South Wales and Swan River. At the latter establishment it is well known that the first settlers have lost almost every thing, and have struggled with every difficulty, and that they now desire to have the advantages of convict labour. This remark, however, is not true as respects South Australia; and its general accuracy would undoubtedly much depend upon the location.

In their walks they came across a group of several blacks (natives) seated around a small fire; they were pointed out as the remnant of the tribes which about forty years ago wandered in freedom over the plains of the Hunter and around the borders of Lake Macquarie. Their appearance was wretched in the extreme: emaciated limbs, shapeless bodies, immense heads, deep-set glaring eyes, thickly-matted hair, and the whole begrimed with dirt and red paint, gave them an aspect hardly human. The dress (if such it could be called) of the women, was a loose ragged gown, and of the men, a strip of blanket wrapped round the middle, or a pair of tattered pantaloons, which but half performed their office.

Mr. Threlkeld's conveyance did not arrive, and not being able to get another, they determined to walk to Lake Macquarie, and for this purpose they resorted to the natives as guides, and by a great deal of coaxing and promises of bull (grog), their natural repugnance to make an exertion was overcome. An evidence of the pride which characterizes these natives was shown in this interview. One of them, whose *sobriquet* was Big-headed Blackboy, was stretched out before the fire, and no answer could be obtained from him, but a drawling repetition, in grunts of displeasure, of "Bel (not) me want to go." After promises and expostulations enough to overcome all patience, Mr. Hale, tired of his obstinacy and stupidity, touched him slightly with his foot, telling him to get up and listen. He immediately arose, and seizing his spear, which was lying near him, turned his side towards Mr. Hale, and stood looking at him askance, with an expres-