

Aboriginal Stone Implements.

Our representative called on Mr. W. W. Thorpe, Curator of the Ethnological Department of the Australian Museum, Sydney, to ask what there was in this district to interest that institution. We had heard that he was collecting here. He said he was prepared to explain anything that was not generally known and very kindly gave him the following notes:—

"During the last year a great number of local finds of aboriginal stone implements has been made, notably at Terrikiba, Merewether, etc., and the Director of the Museum, always on the look out for good material, sent me down some months ago to enquire into the local conditions. You remember the story of the two travellers in Central America who were chased by a buffalo—one took refuge in a tree, the other in a cave nearby. The man in the tree noticed his friend rushed out of the cave several times and as quickly ran back again. So he shouted to him, 'Why don't you stay put where you are put?' He replied, 'You don't know the local conditions. I came out because the bear inside made me.' Now, I found the local conditions much more pleasant than that. The local collectors helped me by suggesting sites and by occasionally giving a hand with the sugar bag of stones: so I was glad to be sent here again. Why everyone seems interested, from the landlord of my hotel, the Beauford, to the group of chinamen near Sandgate last Saturday, who, it appeared later,

only understood one English word—zoo. I found it a pleasure to watch their faces as they listened with rapt attention to my harangue as I enlarged on the aborigines flaking chert near the old corroboree ground. I felt I had won some great workers for this line of research. I was, however, disappointed at the reply of their spokesman, who jabbered volubly enough in Canton Chinese to his fellows, but could only keep repeating to me, 'Whaffor—Whaffor?' Perhaps he felt more than he could adequately express.

"However, I had a good hunting, as the Scouts say, and shall take away with me hundreds of specimens. You are fortunate in being placed in a district so full of these relics—to get the same number round Sydney would take many weeks of careful searching. My wonder is you have no local museum where such things could be exhibited.

"I am glad to say I have not been troubled during this trip with the pin-head type of collector who brings along road metal for native axes and broken beer jugs for pre-aboriginal pottery."

Our representative thanked Mr. W. W. Thorpe and expressed a hope that he would soon be back again with a lecture for the W.E.A. on "The Aborigine, His Tools, and How to Find Them."

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