which, perhaps thinking it had done enough in printing Mr. Smyth’s work, declined the offer.

So much for the printer’s embarrassment, and it may be asked, What has been done in this matter in New South Wales? This is a question not easily to answer, but the best work on this point by any part of Australia appears to be the Australian Grammar of the Rev. L. E. Threlkeld, printed at the Herald Office so far back as 1834; and there is a second edition, of the same author. In 1866 the government printed, in excellent style, the Rev. W. Ridley’s scholarly work on the Kamilaroi, Diburl, and Toruwal dialects, the last-named being the language of the now extinct tribes of Sydney and Botany districts. The government was so satisfied with Mr. Ridley’s work that it published a second edition, after the first had run through a large number of sheets. However, one might ask, has the use of the Aboriginal blacks received some attention at the hands of the Rev. G. Taplin and others.

Still, the work which has been done both by private and public effort, up to the present time, in all these colonies, falls far short of what is required for a complete treatment, or even of an aboriginal tongue as that time is of supreme importance in this matter, there can be no harm in revising the question of their preservation for scientific purposes. The present situation of the Aborigines in Australia is covered itself with honour by sending troops to serve with Wolfeley. There remains for it now to every tribe to meet the science of the scientific world by a national undertaking of high import and comparatively little cost by taking measures to collect all it is now possible to gather of the disappearing aboriginal languages. There can be small doubt that the governments of the other colonies would offer every facility, and perhaps would be glad to share in a work of such a character. The urgency for early action is obvious. Not only are the tribes dying out, but unwritten language is subject to such rapid alteration as to materially change its vocabulary and structure in a single generation. Especially is this the case among mountain and woodland tribes, such as the Australian aborigines mostly are. It is clear that a well-trained individual could accomplish a work like that of reducing to writing the languages of the still existing tribes in the various colonies; but if the government were to entertain the suggestion, made in the first instance by Prof. Max Müller, of preserving the dialects while it is possible to do so, it would not be difficult to carry it out on a well-considered plan.

I am conscious that, in venturing to make the foregoing observations, I may be accused of the aboriginal languages but freely, and that the proposal to initiate a national and scientific undertaking would meet with more attention if it came from an agency more properly called to think, when I look round at the rapid material progress of this prosperous colony, that there must be at least a section of the people who would welcome such a movement as that contemplated, and who would prefer to see New South Wales take the lead in so very natural and laudable an enterprise. It has been well for these colonies to show the older nations that they can send forth athletes and soldiers able to hold their own with all comers, and a marked example of the success of our educational efforts; but it will be more conducive to that honourable repute a young nation should aspire to if the Australian people show their willingness to add something to the world’s common stock of knowledge, as they may, by rendering available for the purposes of comparative philology and allied science the linguistic treasures which still lie around them.

"JOHN W. ROGERS."