



Lionel Rose and his bride, Jenny Oakes, outside the church after their wedding last December. (Photo by courtesy of the Herald and Weekly Times, Melbourne.)

THE AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINES

Continued from page 9.

A taboo on personal names: Is observed which must not be confused with the kinship avoidance of names. It belongs to the secret life, for names are usually taken from sacred Dreaming and totemic associations and therefore must not be bandied about. For everyday affairs kinship terms, subsection or section names, or nick-names are enough. There is also the fear in some parts that magical use could be made of the personal name to hurt its owner and so it is never mentioned, except in a whisper and then only in the presence of men of one's own group.

Marriage customs: Infant betrothal is the normal thing. This means that affection and attraction are not considered. Therefore, a great many "divorces" are common and it is usual to find that each woman has been, in her day, the wife of more than one man. The choice of marriage partners is narrow, even for men, while women have really no choice at all. Of course, such a system has to bend, and in bending, be careful not to snap. The Australian systems have succeeded in this in three ways—first by allowing alternate marriages which really enlarge the range of choice two or three times; second by making an institution of marriage of old men with young girls, and third by legalizing elopement and capture.