

CORAKI MAN JOINS IN TALKS ON EDUCATION

Coraki citizen Jim Morgan took part with professors, lecturers and other educationists in a discussion on the education of aborigines in N.S.W. at Armidale High School in September.

The principal address to the meeting of the New Education Fellowship was given by Mr. J. W. Warburton, senior lecturer in the Department of Adult Education, and for several years president of the Association for the Assimilation of Aborigines.

According to the *Armidale Express*, Mr. Morgan told the meeting he was at school on a reserve until the third grade when he was sent out to work on a farm by the old Protection Board.

"I was fortunate because the people I went to work for were very fine and spoke beautiful English", said Mr. Morgan.

"But when they were discussing topics in the newspaper I found I could not understand much of what they were saying," he said. "That gave me the idea 'I will have to go and study'."

English had always had a fascination for him, he went on, but it was not until he was 24 that he came across an advertisement about teaching English through the post.

The correspondence teacher guided him along, and took him through Shakespeare's plays, Charles Dickens's books, and other classics.

"I was in a new world", he said. Wherever he went after that he started discussing the books and plays he had read.

"White people used to tell me, 'You must have had a pretty good education', and I used to tell them I was almost completely self-taught", he said.

Favoured Hostels

Mr. Morgan's solution of the problems associated with the education of aborigine children was to get them into hostels wherever possible. There they could mix with others, talk with them, and emulate their way of life.

Mr. Warburton commented amid laughter in which Mr. Morgan also joined, "Your solution is just to do away with schools altogether, Jim!"

Mr. Warburton reviewed the work—and lack of it—in providing education in some form or other for aborigines from the earliest days of the colony. The

work had been slow, starting from the 1800 attitude expressed by Turnbull in his *Voyage Round the World*—"These aboriginal inhabitants of this distant region are indeed beyond comparison with the most barbarous on the surface of the globe". Turnbull, however, also observed that they were quick-witted enough in some of their dealings with the convicts and added, "The aborigine is by no means unequal to him in the exchange of abuse!"

Mr. Warburton referred to the puzzle of their capacity, their shyness, and distrust by aborigines of the white people who had taken their land.

His conclusion was that adequate education for aborigines today needed special infant schools on the stations with specially trained teachers and a special curriculum, an extension of the pre-school kindergarten in all areas with the numbers to justify them, and an extension of the hostel system.

Professor J. H. Bell, Mr. G. Fraser, Mr. Morgan and others took part in a brisk discussion afterwards.

The speaker was thanked by Professor Richardson, head of the Department of Education at the University.

Mr. G. W. Muir was in the chair.

"My boomerang will come back", says chubby young Michael Dennis, of Walgett

