

XI, 3a, i

NATIVE SONGS

(Kwēla gen-ya)

Perth, Vasse, Gingin, etc.

(Some of these occur in the
general chapter of songs and
dances,

XI, 1a.)

Balbuk's Songs (Swan district)

The song of the boogur (sulky) janga (spirit) who is looking at himself in the river :-

Mōw māra ūlatha woorajee koolo.

Waugul and "spirit kangaroo" song

Song of the Waugul (snake) and spirit kangaroo who punished the boys for skinning and eating young mice, pretending they were kangaroos. The incident happened at Dowingerup. The waugul and kangaroo are singing their own praises :-

Dowingerup ga

Waugululla bag'in'eree kaan'gana ga

Kaanganup waug'ululla bag'in'er'ee ga

Dowingerup ga.

Sister's Song

Song of a young woman whose brother wished to spear her for some offence of which she was not guilty. She protested her innocence in the song and thus saved her life, for when her brother heard the song he put his spear in the ground again :-

Geejee woolgar da-rin-ya mar'an'gun'ya

Doo'jer'in'ya meer'aba meer'eeyuga wēn-gun

Walgarinya meeraba ko-ry yennee.

II

Meeree wool'gar da-rin-ya mar-an-gunya

Doojerinya meeraba meereeyuga wēn-gun

Walgarinya meeraba kō-ry yennee.

Translation :-

Look at his handful of spears, he wants to spear me with them. I am not guilty, don't spear me, put your spears back again.

Challenge Song

Swan district, Balbuk

Song of a yungar who wants to fight someone. He walks up and down in front of the camp, with his spears and his meero in readiness, and is boasting that he can spear all his relations. Any of them who likes can try and geejee him.

Yung'arung'in moor'urda bur'ree era wan'ganing

Yung'arung'in geejee meera burree erda wan'ganing.

Song to the Janga

Amongst the Southern tribes, when a relative is buried, the natives return to their camp, and as soon as darkness comes on they perform a corroboree to the janga or spirit of the dead man, asking him to go over the sea and not to look back at them as he goes nor come back to tease them at night when they go for water, but to go away for ever.

Janga win'gar, dan'ga win'gar

Danga wingar, janga wingar

Ngoba wingar, ee'rung'a

Ngal'burda wa'dy

Nyoo, nyoo, nyoo, nyoo.

Manja boming Song

This song is sung when making "babbin", "koobong" or "friend" at Manja boming time (manja = fire stick, boming = hitting or striking.)

When the native made a woman his "babbin", he first brought a firestick which he exchanged with her, taking one from her in return. He then tied a cockatoo's feather to the point of his spear and going behind his yoga babbin he rested the spear first on her right shoulder then on her left, singing. The song refers to the babbin-making and mentions the gifts prepared for the babbin.

Manja manja wer'ree kut'tijo oon'an

Man'ja manja wer'ree kuttijo oon'an

Ngyja boor'da ngab'buninja

Manja bookaneeja yookurnba ngatha

Manja manja werree kuttijo oonan, etc.

Vasse Songs (Baabur and Nyilgee)

Song of the waters (gabbytch = fresh, running water)

The following song is one of the longest and most varied amongst the Southern natives, and refers to the triumphal march, so to speak, of the fresh flood waters towards the sea. The gabbytch thus sings as it rushes towards the sea :-

Demma-la-goomba-la
In the old old times (demma = grandparents, goomber =
great, big)

Nganya geeta nyinjanning
Me now they're kissing
Kora nyinjanning, geeta nyinjanning
Again kissing, now kissing
Kearo nyinjanning
Again kissing
Dorduk-a-ngundeering
In deep holes lying
Kowan burrongin
Laughing (or calling) I carry it
Bookala ngundeering
On the backs (of the ranges) lying
Kowan burrongin
Balgooga ngundeering
On the blackboy tops lying
Kowan burrongin
Milgural ngundeering
In the "cups" of the leaves lying
Kowan burrongin
Battaka ngundeering
In the rushes lying
Kowan burrongin
Woordukul ngundeering
On the tree branches lying
Kowan burrongin
Boorna ka ngundeering
In the trunks of the trees lying
Kowan burrongin
Laughing I carry it
Yorluka ngundeering
In the paper bark lying
Kowan burrongin, kowa dabbating
Laughing I carry it, laughing and tumbling.

Then the wadarn (sea) thunders back :-

Nyinnin demmala goombala yarndee?
What did the "old times" do to you?
Moonbalong kora ngoondinyinna
Swimming, again lying down (you)
Bwil-ee-ree deeriginya nyeeree
(On the top of the) foam and the froth and white feathers
Moonbalong kora ngoondinyinna
Swimming again lying down (you).

Then the gabbytch retorts as he rushes into the sea:-

Boka jarong wat-ty-yenning
(Your) cloak (I) tear and (I) go through you.

Southern Song (Bibulman woman)

The following words were sung by a woman whose husband was taken prisoner for some offence, was conveyed to King George's Sound and kept in prison for some considerable time.

The wife thus bewails her desolation to her mother-in-law :-

Ngya ngunna demmardung
Geejena mel
Boorneen war-a-bin
Kin-joor-town

Translation :- Oh mother-in-law, my husband is gone. I straight look until I shut my eyes and I can't see anyone. My husband is gone to King George Town.

Jalgoo (or Wanna Wa) Song

Sung at the jalgoo corroboree, the principal feature of which was the promiscuous intercourse indulged in. No meaning can be ascertained for the words of this song :-

Song No. I

(Man's) single voice singing : Weel'bing' jarala
(Men's) chorus of voices : Ngya mar-da-la
ad lib.

Song No. II

Booyal ngoonda booyal yerdee
Mandoo kaning oorba

Song No. III

Weerabing by-ah! weerabing by-ah!
Weerabing by-ah' etc. etc.

Southern Song (Vasse)

Women's Song

This song seems to be sung in derision by the women in camp. Have been unable as yet to find out its meaning :-

Minnijitta daran, daran ngow,
Ngoogappa daran daran ngow
Minnijitta nganya burrong, nganya burrong wonnongonya
Minnijitta daran ngow.

(See later version - Robin and Wagtail)

Baaburgurt's Song (Vasse)

Baaburgurt sang the following song, the subject being a woman on her way to Kooranup.

Allee nyungar jeeral ngean
Burdung dwarda dy-era guttuk
 Yaang, yaang, yaang,
Ngangan wijel berree, yaang, yaang, yaang,
Allee booyal nyungar ngean
Burdung dwerda dy-era guttuk
 Yaang, yaang, yaang,
Ngangan wij-el-berree,
 Yaang, yaang, yaang,
Yee-wow-ern wow-ern (end of song)

Translation :-

Who is that going to Kooranup with a hump on her back, and her hair dressed in dogs' tails? Who is that walking along southward, her hair dressed in dogs' tails, going to Kooranup? Who is that spirit? I don't know who she is, she is like a spirit. Oh bless her! (yaang), there she is, oh, her ugly shape!

Nyilgee's Song

This song was composed after the arrival of ships and native knowledge of them and the use of telescopes had been attained.

Captain on a rough sea
Captain on a rough sea
Captain on a rough sea
Eeta ngarunga ngarung nyee
Glad o mara we-ra gen-ining
Eeta ngarunga we-ra genining
Yuk nyee jeenanna wera genining
Yuk nyee kooranna we-ra genining
Eeta ngarunga ngarung nyee
Glad-o mara we-ra genining, etc.

Translation :-

Hear singing near the shore. I look with my glasses for land. It is only cloud. Who are these women dancing on one side and singing on the waves near the seashore and dancing with their faces turned from me, dancing hither and thither with averted faces? Are they Jeenanup women, Kooranup women?

Parting Song

Nvilgee's brother's song

The following song, composed after the arrival of the whites, was sung by a native who had visited his relatives at some distant place, and after a time, being desirous of returning to his own country and not liking to tell his friends that he wanted to go home, he sang as follows :-

(half English)

Dardar wantum me, dardar wantum me,
Dardar wantum me, dardar wantum me,
Boojoor my counteree ngora walla kuttijee
Boojoor my counteree dwonga walla kuttijee.

Translation :-

I want some pipeclay, I want some pipeclay, I am thinking of starting to my own camp. Thinking hard of going to my camp.

Baabur's Song

Baabur sang this song with an interlude of dancing :-

Mandeegur goojal beebul woonanga
Yaan-ee-anman, yaan-ee-an-man,
Yaan-ee-an-man yaan-ee-an-man
Yaan-ee-an-man yanman yaan.

Translation :

Two young girls watching the southern (beebul) man dancing this way, dancing this way, dancing this way.

Nvilgee's Song

Wallaby Song

Walya googarning my' jillan
Walya googarning my' jillan
Boojeree yungaree yungaree te-gennan
Boojeree yungaree yungaree te-gennan
Walya googarning my' jillan, etc.

Translation :

Wallaby running out and telling the squeaker to run along the ground, running, running, dancing. Hear them, running along making a noise, dancing.

Kooranup Song

The following song is highly interesting from its strong resemblance to the old nursery rhyme of the little woman who "had so many children".

Boola boolarla, boola boolarla,
Doona ngana jeeda walgarin
Nooba ngyja-ga boolarr'obin, ngyjaga boolarr'obin.

Translation -:

Oh Father and Mother I have so many children, so many, like birds, that I can't rear them up.

This is a Kooranup song. All Kooranup songs are bought by the tribes desiring to sing them from those tribes which composed them.

Dream Song

Nyilgee's Dream

Maangarla maangarla wandabal
Dowel gēn, gēn, gēn
Boordee boordee boordee boording.

"I dreamed I was dancing on the whale's back and balancing myself on one thigh. Yanjees (shaved sticks) were all round the whale, and made it like maman's grave, and I was running about on the whale praying to Maman to save me."

Below Gooyarreeagerrup (Yelberton's Station) the jalgoo was not known as such. A certain kind of wanna wa, without the special ornamental features of the jalgoo, used to be held south of the Vasse. At this wanna wa the following songs were sung, no meaning being attached to the words.

Wanna wa Song I

Yarrgo barrga beeta ngyang ngyung
(repeated over and over again).

Wanna Wa Song II

Jimbering baad, bawling baad
(repeated)

Manja Song (Baabur and Ngilyee)

When the manja (lighted firestick) is being passed from babbin to babbin (would this mean "I am making you free of my fire or home, and you are making me free of yours?") the following words are sung or recited, which do not seem to carry much meaning :-

Kala mooro gen wooree
Fire point (?) one tall.

The Song of the Wind to the Clouds

Geeja goorong karo boorda karo, dabbaning
Booka goorong karo boorda karo dabbaning
Booka goorong karo boorda karo (repeated)

Translation :-

(I am like a) spear going and coming back again, catching hold of your cloak and pulling it apart and coming back again, catching hold of your cloak and going and coming back again.

The Song accompanying the Stump-tailed iguana dance (yorna kening)

Ngannyboort yornan koordar koolleejoo
Ngannyboort yornan koordar koolleejoo

Translation :-

We go like the stump-tailed iguana, two together, two together, two together, etc.

Janga Song (Vasse)

Song of the janga nyungar who are in the clouds. Baabur states they can be heard singing and playing on their ky'lees.

Nganya yoolapun nya-pa
Murree kalboom murree kalboom.

I am up on top of the clouds and can see you and hit your fire,
hit your fire.

Other Manja songs (Vasse)

As the person holding the firestick approaches his babbin he sings the following words :-

Ingan mardal ingan mardal.

The woman whom he approaches returns the stick singing,

Wataget ngyj nagalal neeja burrong
Wataget ngyj warral neeja getting

Translation :

Take it away, I poor creature now carry (it)
Take it away I nasty now holding (?)

Baabur's Song

A Song of Exile

Baabur having been brought away from his country, Vasse, and located on the Government Reserve near Cannington, composed the following song :-

Boojera boojera naang? injal?
Country (my) country what? where?
Boojera kwella naang?
Country name what?
Nganya dwanga burt?
I understand not
Naang ee murnongul?
What (or where) all my people?
Marumba yooganin?
Moving? standing?
Kooroo weeriba ingarda?
Dancing round far away?
Marumba yookyn kooroo weeree weeriba
Moving? standing? dancing round and round?
Marumba yookyn (Talaroo) marumba yookyn
Moving? standing (name of a dance), moving, standing.

Song of a Janga

Composed on hearing the voice of a janga woman on her way to Kooranup :-

Yago meelandee kooler-a-wanga
Woman (saying) by and by (I hear the) echo of her voice
Nyee-an, nyee-an, ngaar-ree
Crying, crying (on the) seashore
Woordoodba noogeoling beebula
(I hear the) sound (of her voice) goodbye (?) beebulman
Wootaree ngaarree
Far away (on the) seashore.

Vasse Songs

Song of the Waves

Yowlera kwaj-an-bee bom-daneetch
Noise of the waves coming in shore knocking each other down
Yowlera kwaj-an-bee nganungeetch
Noise of the waves coming in shore waiting for the waves
going out
Weerila kwaj-an-bee nganungeetch
Sea breeze coming in shore waiting for the waves going out.

Song sung at the Burial of Mamman, Jalgoo time.

Ngya mardala wilbeen jarala, wow, wow, wow
Parent going away, never see you again, oh! oh! oh'.
Yē, yē, yē, yē, yooang gooroo marlinga
Yes, yes, yes, yes, "goodbye", moving backwards
Jooan gooroo arr, arr, arr, mordarala
Goodbye, going away.

This was the nearest approach to the meaning that Baabur could arrive at.

Gingin Songs (malyongin = singing)

Woolberr, Gingin native, informant.

Watarndee or Woodanboree;

Sea Song

Wardanga ra wardangara
The sea, the sea
Jilee jilee maaling corba
You hear it and cannot see it, cannot see the waves
Wardangara wardangara
The sea, the sea
Jilee jilee maaling corba, etc.
You hear it and cannot see it, cannot see the waves.

Wanna Wa Songs

Yabbaroo men's song :-

Yerra maroo, yerra maroo, yerra maroo
Yerra weebee, yerra weebee, yerra weebee, etc.

Gingin men's song :-

Wanoordoo ngoora beedee da
Call them all in
Kymera ngamoora roo (repeated ad lib)

"Women make ready"

Another song :-

Ngandee kooroo, ngandee kooroo,
Wardardee noo, wardardee noo.

Sung by the men at corroborees where women are the chief performers:

Bindee walgar nana walgar nana
Shaved sticks in the hair and bodies and legs painted in
white and wilgee,
Beebeelung ngarree mooree yarra
Breasts round shavings and red feathers
Yalgoorla burnala, beebeelung ngarree
Standing in a clear place, breasts nice and round
Mooree yarra yalgoorla burnala
Shavings and red feathers, standing in a clear place.

Woolberr's Song, sung at a yalloor dance:-

Koolee koolee ngatha wanyeen nanong oh
Walk quick walk quick I
Eeda beea nagoo meea meea goo
Singing.

The entire meaning of this song is unascertainable. It is sung at a yalloor kaa-ning, where the decorations of the men with wamoolo (swans down), wilgee, and yarrayarra (feathers) are praised. These yalloor kaaning were sometimes called Tooraroo kaaning. Exclamations of delight were uttered in a guttural voice, ow, ow, ow, during the progress of the dance.

Woolherr's Song

Yarloo yarloora, mya mya ba
Bark vessels? voice voice
Wardanba wandeerina
Sea
Bal woorda ngurra noo
He brother (?) coming in white
Karra binga manoo
Take that one away.

At the end of this song, sung at an ordinary kaaning, a guttural sound was made "wow, wow", accompanied with the stamping of both feet, first quickly, then slowly, finally ending up by turning the head from one side to the other, and ejaculating two deep guttural "wows".

Sung when the ngowa (native pheasant) lays her eggs (at Beeruk, summer, time) :-

Booyoo warba, booyoo warba
Smoke smoke
Kala ngarree dandara noo
Fire good (?) walking
Wowal yaloo karoo waryeedee
Lot of yungar coming, you see them?
Nyinna mungala, nyinna karoo waryeedee
Sitting eggs, sitting you see them?

While the Gingin natives sang this song they sat upon their haunches and gathering the grass and small brushwood into a loose heap they imitated the ngowa preparing her nest.

Namern Song (a place the other side of Dandaraga)

Boongoordee's Song, sung by Woolherr of Gingin

Boongoordee "sang" the increase of the kuljak (swan) and her eggs at a place called Namern the other side of Dandaraga. While the song was being sung, Boongoordee sent the kuljak two two to mate, lay eggs and bring forth young. Boongoordee sat down away from the lake while he "sang" the increase. Then messages were sent out to all the people north, south and east of Namern, and all the visitors assembled. They went out daily in detachments to kill the kuljak and get the eggs, and they remained until they had had enough and then they returned to their own camps.

Boongoordee's "charm" song

Wamooloo karda jigara jee
Swansdown middle don't touch
Nyoorgajee ngarree
Eggs all round
Wamooloo karda jigara jee
Wamooloo karda eedalyee ngarree
Swanadown middle feathers all round
Wamooloo karda bulgara ngarree
Swansdown middle covered up all round.

When the song was sung the eggs increased and the young swans came in thousands and thousands and mooran took them and jamin took them and maman and ngangan and koolungur and everyone had "koota ngoobarn", "bags full".

Nor'West Song sung by Gingin natives

Doordara kaaning (Nor'West Dance)

Boornararda kokojeena
Step and raise foot
Balung ngoorna
Raising their body
Jarja wanee
Raising and moving the body.

This song appears to have no intelligent meaning.

Beedawa Song, No. I

This song was sung when the boys returned to their "kaleep"
after initiation (beedawa). The boys are usually called "beedawa".

Beedawa yenna
Beedawa come
Moola joorgool y yenna
Noses pierced straight they come
wurra wurra yenna
? ? come

Beedawa Song, No. II

Ngoorda ngoo-inya be-a-na
Yoomboorna eegan_door'na
Mabarnoo koojara
Ngatha eerinjeeree yinana

Meaning of song not ascertainable.

Joobytch's Love Song, Guildford district

Jubytch married Yoolyeenan three weeks after her previous husband's death and sung her the following love song :-

Boorna inda malaree dargan oh
Malaree bom, bom, mareeng.

meaning of song not yet ascertained.

Magpie's Song (Joobaitech)

The long iguana is the magpie's uncle. When he buries himself during the wet season, the magpie looks for him, and not finding him makes the following lament in recitative.

Winjal 'nkangan bardi yuat ne-jal-ga bokul
Where (is) my uncle gone, never can find there
Burda watt yuging
By and by gone or alive.

Magpie's lament :

Diro diro wangale lennoy yalbing
Kotha wanga le lennoy
Diro diro wangale lennoy yalbing
Kotha wangale lennoy
Diro diro wangale lennoy yalbing, etc.

The Walja and Manytch (Eaglehawk and Cockatoo) Jubytch

The eaglehawk and cockatoo are taunting each other, animadverting upon each other's food, nesting place etc. The eaglehawk tells the cockatoo he only eats nice clean meat, young kangaroo; the cockatoo tells the eaglehawk that it is rotten meat he eats and nothing else and the eaglehawk says his meat is nice and clean, not dirty like the roots the cockatoo eats.

Cockatoo's Song

Ngyjee 'n'kaanung maa'nung 'n'kaanung maa'nung
I from mother and father, from mother and father
nganung nganna yoorda boort boorla yoorda boort
eating eating roll in the dust plenty roll in the dust plenty
boorlala yugating nganung nganna yugating yoorda
(and am) warm inside eating eating warm inside roll
boort boorla yoorda boort boorlala yugating
in the dust plenty roll in the dust plenty, warm inside
(or standing)
Jedda, jingong, julal, jogat, taa boojur
Sp. of roots, mouth full of earth
werritch yugating yugating
always standing standing ?(yuga = to stand)

The Eaglehawk's Reply to the Cockatoo

Ngyjee nganeep yongaring
I young kangaroos (eat)

Yongar mata, wara mata,
Male kangaroo legs, female kangaroo legs,

Karrung burditch nganung nganna yugating
Angry eating eating standing

Yandar dal yuging ngannaba yandardal yugating
On a branch standing eating, on a branch standing.

The Cockatoo's Reply

Nginnee kebal gungong burndok boming
You rain and wind come beating down

Kebal gungong burndok boming
Rain and wind beating down

Burndok boming, burndok boming
Beating down, beating down.

Wanna Wa Song (Guildford, Jubytch's song)

Murra murrā murra murrā
murra murrāā
Thomber by-āā thomber by-āā
thomber byāā

No meaning to this song.

Bunbury kening (corroboree)

Gurra murrana wimbar wimbar
Gurra murrana wimbar wimbar
Gurra murrana wimbar wimbar
Yaga lilil yaga lilil yaga lilil yaga lilil
Yaga lilil yaga lilil yaga lilil yaga lilil
Gurra, etc.

When the end of these songs is reached, "Karrgo, karrgo, karrgo" is called out in a high speaking voice.

Joobyteh's Wanna Wa Song

Jooreetch (a summer bird) made the sea with his generative organ.

"Finish" song while making the figures of shavings :

Ngarderee weebe barongoo warda
Ee ow ee ow (this in a whisper)
Mooloo kardeeree na
Warn'maroo eeja
Kookarn maroo eerilya

Wanna wa ground is wineetch and must be avoided for years, until a fire or something obliterates all sign of the wanna wa. If someone goes near the ground unwittingly, he will hear "ee ow ee ow" whispered.

Kararoo and kowiroo are somewhat similar in sound - they mean the same thing.

Boorrgoo
Kallungarree

Corroboree Song - Jubytch

Karo wulyar-ring mal-ling benna,
Woolja wulyaring burgo burgo
Mal-lee bungo bal'ing'unya wonitan
Ba-tha, bee-reet ngowil mungo
burda tisee tiraa jilling barna man-ner-
ogo wejee booga, tira jilling barna
man-ner-ogo. wejee booga, tisee tira-
jelling barna manner-ogo wejee booga.

In Grey's Journal (Vol. II, P. 307) the following song of one of the Perth tribe is published with its translation. The song is rhythmical, with a certain harmonious quality of syllables, such as most of the native chants possess.

Kajoo bardook
Warbungaloo
Warbungaloo
Kajoo bardook
Warbungaloo
Warbungaloo
Kajoo bardook
Warbungaloo
Warbungaloo
Warbungaloo

(repeated over and over again in the same order.)

Translation :

(Thy) hatchet (is) near (thee)
Warbunga oh
Warbunga oh
Thy hatchet is near thee
Warbunga oh
Warbunga oh.

Fortescue Tableland Song

Sung by a large assemblage of natives to very quick time.

Goo'doo'do'ar eh' goo'doo'do'ar

Goo'doo'do'ar maada bin'ny'ya

Eh' dandal a barrang

Billing oh'.

Another song sung by the Fortescue Tableland natives.
No meaning can be ascertained of either of these songs.

Ee wimbee aa

Ree-ban-aa

Annar raa

Goondoo kaa.

The following sample of "native poetry" (untranslated) was forwarded by a subscriber to the Perth Gazette of June 4, 1836 :

Billy-goat geerina
Corodger bierina
Conjon bongeerina
Mundarilow.

Mulganna Indina
Carra bigeerina
Geemarilow
Wiummarillee.