

Dancing of the Wargaiti People (cont'd)

He had grey hair and had composed many songs himself. In his hands he had two small sticks of wood, about twelve inches long, one and a half inches wide, and an inch thick. By altering the pressure of his hands and their position he could raise or lower the pitch of the notes caused by beating the sticks together. The deep throbbing of the didgery doo and the beating of the sticks were the call to the dancers.

As the sun set they came streaming on to the corroboree ground, calling "Wah" and "Hee" with heads flung back. They wore only loin-cloths or 2nagas² as they are called, and their bodies were painted with pipe-clay in many arresting designs. First came the hunting dance with a great dancer, Mosik, performing the leading role. At intervals he made a wide flung gesture with his arm, threw back his head and uttered a long drawn "Ah-eeh". It was an expression of great pleasure in the hunt and the posture of the body was very beautiful.

Throughout this dance the men carried both long and short spears, the right foot beat the ground with staccato rhythm while the bodies and arms performed other movements. At last, with bodies swaying slightly, the dancers regrouped for the next dance, which was based on the rescue of an airman after five days in a mangrove swamp. I'll tell you more of this in next week's article.

CRICKET NOTES

It is proposed to stage the long awaited White Staff v Natives match this Saturday afternoon, weather permitting.

Intending players are asked to hand in their names to either Mr. Jenson or Mr. Waite by Friday afternoon.

Play will commence at 2.30 p.m. sharp.