

## ILLAWABRA.

*(From the Illawarra Mercury of Yesterday.)*

**BLACK'S BLANKET DAY.**—On Thursday, 1st April, we witnessed the distribution of blankets to the blacks at Wollongong. There were only about twenty-five of the original owners of the soil present, including gins and piccaninnies, the latter being of almost every shade from copper colour to "whitey-brown." Several kings and chiefs were present, and we are sure such a motley gathering of "crowned heads" for so humble a purpose, would have lowered the dignity of their royal brothers of other climes, could they have been present. Coome—a darkey whose advance in the adoption of the manners and customs of his civilized masters will be acknowledged when we state that he has taken kindly to boots, and was tried by the Bench a few days back for being drunk and disorderly—acted as marshall on the occasion. He assumed the most commanding manner in discharging his duties, ordering this one here and that one there in a style which, for pomposity, could not have been excelled if he had been dressed in scarlet and had a sword by his side. Having, after a great deal of pushing and yabbering, got the gentlemen and youths on one side and the ladies and girls on the other, immediately opposite the Court-house verandah, the Chief Constable called up each one by name, and gave, even to the little ones at their mothers' breasts, unto each a blanket of first-rate quality, which they received with a bow and a "thank you," as if it were not the price of one of the finest "jewels in the British Crown." This having been done, Dr. Ellis—a most polite and loyal darkey—induced the rest to "bail up" together, and then called upon them for three cheers for the Queen, which was given with a hearty vociferousness which could only be excelled by their conquerors, and was followed by three more for the Magistrates, and other three for Wollongong. The blacks then dispersed.

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**WESLEYAN.**—The Rev. James Watkins arrived on Friday morning, and at once entered on his duties as senior minister of the Wollongong Circuit by preaching in the morning in the Wesleyan Chapel. Mr. Watkins's future flock may glean "what manner of man" he is by the following notice of his departure from the Windsor Circuit, taken from Friday's *Herald*:—"The Rev. James Watkins.—A correspondent informs us that this reverend gentleman, who, during his residence in the Windsor Circuit, has laboured with much zeal and acceptance, left Windsor on Wednesday morning last for his new sphere of usefulness at Wollongong. His circuit extended from Emu Plains on the one hand to St. Alban's, on the M'Donald River, upon the other, to every part of which he made it his earnest endeavour to do justice. Pending his departure, testimonials of esteem and respect were forwarded to Mr. Watkins from all parts of the Circuit, and it must have been to him a source of peculiar gratification to find that his ministrations were so universally appreciated; the testimonial movement not being confined to the Wesleyan body alone, but joined in by pastors and people of nearly all Christian denominations in the district. His successor is the Rev. W. J. Davis, lately a missionary in the Friendly Islands."