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WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

REPORT

OF THE

Royal Commissioner

APPOINTED TO

Investigate, Report, and Advise upon
matters in relation to the Con-
dition and Treatment of
Aborigines.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by His Excellency's Command

[FOURTH SESSION OF THE FIFTEENTH PARLIAMENT.]

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REPORT of the Royal Commissioner appointed to Investigate, Report, and Advise upon matters in relation to the condition and treatment of Aborigines.

To His Excellency the Honourable Sir James Mitchell, Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, Lieutenant-Governor in and over the State of Western Australia and its Dependencies in the Commonwealth of Australia.

May it please Your Excellency:

On the 22nd day of February, 1934, I received Your Excellency's Commission to investigate, report, and advise upon the following matters:—

1. The social and economic conditions of aboriginals and persons of aboriginal origin, with special reference to—
 - (a) the inclusion or exclusion of different classes of persons of aboriginal origin in or from native camps;
 - (b) proximity of native camps to towns;
 - (c) physical well-being of aboriginals, and any suggested measures for amelioration;
 - (d) disease amongst aboriginals and measures for their treatment;
 - (e) native settlements;
 - (f) employment of aboriginals and persons of aboriginal origin;
 - (g) missions;
 - (h) trial of aboriginal offenders.
2. Laws relating to aboriginals and persons of aboriginal origin and suggested amendments.
3. The administration of the Aborigines Department generally.
4. Allegations which have appeared in the Press since the 1st day of July, 1930, relative to the ill-treatment of aboriginals in Western Australia.

I commenced my investigation on the 12th day of March, 1934.

In framing my report I am concerned to place my views before Your Excellency in such a manner that a subject so vast and so many-sided as that embodied in the terms of reference may be dealt with as exhaustively and at the same time as briefly as in the circumstances is possible. The term "Aborigines," however, as it is understood under existing administration, embraces so many classes, each class presenting a distinct problem in itself, that it is impossible to deal with any of the matters referred to me in terms applicable to aborigines as a whole.

It will be understood that the conditions of life amongst the natives in the far North of the State differ in some respects even from those which obtain in the North-West. In both those areas problems are encountered which do not arise in the more closely settled districts of the South; it follows that in considering the various matters submitted to me I have arrived at conclusions in many cases not capable of

general application, but appropriate, in my view, to the native as he may be affected by locality or conditions of living.

It will be further appreciated that during my inquiries I have listened to views most divergent in nature, and in many cases my conclusions have been formed as a result of my own observation. I have not followed the precedent set by many Royal Commissions of supporting my findings by frequent references in my report to the notes of evidence, because I think in a matter of the kind before me more can be gained from personal inspection and observation than from listening to views—many of which are academic to a degree.

Having travelled in the course of my investigations a distance of some 14,000 miles, having seen the Western Australian aboriginal in every condition of life, from the bush native, who has seldom seen a white man, to the half-caste child attending a Government school in a large town, the conclusion is irresistible that the great problem confronting the community to day is that of the half-caste. While it appears beyond doubt, from opinions expressed generally throughout the State, that the full-blooded aborigines are decreasing in number, it is very certain that the half-castes are multiplying rapidly.

As to the number of natives in the State, it has been impossible for me to estimate this in any way, but, taking the Departmental figures as being as accurate an estimate as it would be possible to obtain, there would appear to be 29,021 natives throughout the State. Of these, 10,000 are included as "bush natives." The remainder are to be found as set out in the following statement:—

Kimberleys, including Broome ..	10,015
North-West, not including Carnarvon ..	2,497
Murchison and North to Carnarvon ..	1,497
South of Geraldton	5,012
	19,021

Of this number it is estimated that 15,130 are full blood aborigines and 3,891 are half-castes or lighter in colour. It may be noted that in 1905 the estimated number of half-castes was 900.

The problem of the half-castes may be easier of solution by reason of the fact that they are not scattered to any very great extent over the State, but are to be found chiefly in the Southern portion; it is true that they are to be found in certain num-

bers in the North and that the town of Broome has an undesirably large half-caste population. That town requires and will receive special reference in this report. With those exceptions the comparative proximity of half-castes to the capital city may render less difficult the task of caring for and training them—a task which must in my opinion be undertaken without delay.

As throughout my report reference will be made to a suggested new organisation embracing the appointment of Divisional Protectors, I mention the matter here, as otherwise my meaning might not be made clear until attention is given to my remarks on Clause (3) of the Terms of Reference which appear at a much later stage in my report.

The Terms of Reference being so comprehensive in nature, to deal at greater length with the subject by way of introduction, would of necessity, involve later repetition, and I propose, therefore, now to express my views on the various matters submitted to me.

1.—*The social and economic conditions of aboriginals and persons of aboriginal origin.*

In the North (or Kimberley Division of the State) the natives, except where living in their natural state in the unsettled areas, are chiefly to be found either on pastoral properties or Government Stations, or at Missions. Later, Government Stations and Missions will be discussed under separate headings and at this stage will be referred to only in so far as the subject of this clause applies to them. There are a few town natives and they will be dealt with under another clause. In the case of natives on pastoral properties (cattle and sheep stations) they experience conditions which, as nearly as possible, approach their natural life. They certainly have a place in the country to which they belong—an important consideration from the point of view of the native: their work takes an appropriate form—in the bush amongst stock. The question of medical attention will be discussed later, but in the main they want for nothing: they are well fed and clothed and the huts in which they live, made of bush material, bags or sometimes flattened petrol tins, are suitable to their needs; anything more elaborate would not be appreciated by them—indeed, they would not be used. On one station—in the Northern Territory certainly, but just over the border—the owner had built substantial huts of timber and iron for the natives. They were not used, except in the very rainy season; their own huts can be made weather-proof and they want nothing better. I have seen numbers of these station camps, and have seen no sign of unhappiness in the natives. During the day the men work on the run, the women—or some of them—are employed in or about the homestead. The old or infirm and children, where they exist, are kept by the station. At an early age the children begin a training which makes them useful. At one station on the Fitzroy River 95 natives are being provided for by the owners. Of that number 58 do some form of work; the others are too old or too young. Bearing in mind the number who do nothing, it is not a cheap form of labour, but it suits the pastoralist who by looking after the old people, keeps the young people on the property and has labour available when it is needed. It would be difficult if not impossible, to obtain white labour when such labour is required only during a portion

of the year. As it is, in the wet season, when little work is being done, the natives go on their "walk-about" and are back again on the station when needed—sometimes indeed long before. It is a life of freedom, in that the native is under no obligation to remain on the station if he desires to go elsewhere. He has no such desire—he is in the country to which he belongs and, given fair treatment—which in my view he undoubtedly is—he wants nothing better. In the Kimberleys the native is not paid and, bearing in mind the experience of one district of the North-West, it appears to be of no great disadvantage to the native: he has not acquired, and I doubt if (generally speaking) he ever will acquire, any real sense of property: he will give away anything he has, and, as he has never had any money, and would not recognise it if he saw it, he is not being deprived of anything. One could not, even with extreme imagination, visualise a native of the Kimberleys settled on his own property: of what other use would money be to him? He and his dependants are fed and clothed and cared for when sick—though more will be said of medical care later—and he wants for nothing. His tribal customs are not interfered with and, if an initiation ceremony should take place at a station, natives come from other parts and during their stay are fed by the owners. On some stations special occasions (e.g. the Christmas season) are celebrated by the holding of sports meetings, when prizes of razors, belts, combs, beads, fishing lines, tomahawks and leather pouches are given, and sweets are distributed among the children. I have inspected the stores of many stations, and the quality of the clothing and blankets for native use leaves nothing to be desired. From most points of view, if it were possible to employ every native in the Kimberleys on cattle or sheep stations, it would be a fortunate thing for the natives. But obviously it is not possible, and a great many of those not so employed are found either at the Government Stations or attached to Missions. At Moola Bulla, the largest Government Station in the Kimberleys (which will be discussed in greater detail later under the heading of Native Settlements), the natives are well cared for, but owing to the number of natives, it is impossible to keep them all employed continuously. They are all, however, employed at different times. It is a pity that all cannot be continually employed: the native is naturally lazy and it is wrong that he should be fed without giving something in return. However, one of the objects of Moola Bulla, as I understand them, was to check cattle killing by the natives on other properties, so the present system, from that point of view, may be justified. It is to be hoped that, with further development, all natives at Moola Bulla will be constantly employed, and that it may be used as a place of training for all natives who are in touch with the settlement. These remarks apply equally to Violet Valley Government Station, the main object in the establishment of which was to minimise cattle killing by natives, and to Munja Station. On Violet Valley Station practically no work is done by the natives. With the exception of improved medical services and more opportunity for training at Government Stations, there is little, I think, of importance which should be done to better the condition of the Kimberley natives. Those still in the bush are apparently able to look after themselves and, although there are some who will disagree with me, I am convinced that there is a

great deal in the saying of experienced people in the North that the more you leave a native alone the better it is for him. I think, in view of the possibility of the country north of the Leopold Ranges becoming more closely settled, that a further reserve should be proclaimed in this area, north of the existing reserve. This should be a permanent reserve exclusively for the use of aborigines (as indeed all native reserves should be), its purpose not to be altered except by Act of Parliament. It has been stated by some students of native life that reserves without institutions are valueless: I agree insofar as the half-castes are concerned and also in cases where the reserve is surrounded by settled country, but in the case of the aborigines of the far North—those who have not so far come into contact either with mission life or life on Government or privately owned stations—I think that the view of those who have lived the greater part of their lives amongst those natives is a sound view: preserve country for them where water and game are to be found for their use and leave them to their natural life.

If it is assumed, notwithstanding the present apparently appropriate life of the natives on stations, that the day will arrive when the blacks will find a place in a white civilisation, then much more should be done to fit them for such a position. If the assumption be well founded, the difficulties ahead of the administration are sufficient to cause great anxiety: a scheme of training must be evolved which will bring about the transition without hardship to the black: if the transition be possible by natural process, well and good: if it must be the outcome of intensive training and instruction, how are these to be undertaken? The number of blacks employed on stations in the Kimberleys cannot be far short of 2,000. They are probably to be found on 70 or 80 different stations. If their happiness is to continue, they must obviously be allowed to remain on those stations, and any attempt to remove them for more thorough training would be not only cruel but productive of no good result: it would be impossible to expect privately owned stations to be responsible for the necessary education and training of the blacks. So, for the present, further endeavour to train these station blacks to a higher degree of living seems impracticable.

I do not say that in years to come these people will not become ready subjects for advanced training. In the missions it can now be observed that some of the people provide good material on which to work. Older established missions in Queensland have experienced satisfactory results. My point is that while the natives are on the pastoral stations any scheme for bringing them under our code of civilisation will react to their disadvantage. Further reference will be made later to natives on Government Stations.

Much has been said by certain people before the Commission of the lack of freedom of the natives: extravagant expressions have been used—"forced labour" and "slavery" have been suggested: it may be justified in certain isolated cases. In the course of my travels I have not come across such cases. I repeat what I have said before, and it is my firm impression and considered opinion—the native employed on stations has a freedom which is given to few members of a civilised community: he is free to come and go as he chooses—but he prefers to

stay; he is happy because he is in the country to which he belongs; he is not overworked—because a native will not be overworked and I know of no means of persuading him to be; he has all, or nearly all, that is necessary for the amount of comfort he desires. There is an obligation on the employer who is granted a permit to provide him with food, clothing and medical attention: what obligation is there on the native on his side? If the non-payment of wages is evidence of slavery conditions, then in many cases the term is justified. I have attempted to show that the native is under no hardship by reason of such non-payment.

I have already mentioned that in the North few half-castes are to be found on the stations. That is a gratifying fact but one difficult of explanation: for it is regrettable that my investigations have satisfied me that in certain parts of the North intercourse between the white man and the aboriginal woman exists to a degree which is as amazing as it is undesirable. This is a matter of some delicacy to discuss, but it is right that it should be discussed. I have been told by men long resident in the Kimberleys that it is unwise to be familiar with natives, that the natives lose respect for the white man who fraternises with them: that principle—possibly a good one—is obviously disregarded when the desire for sexual intercourse is uppermost. I do not wish to be intolerant on such a subject: on the other hand, it is not for me to make excuses: as a social condition of the native woman it is deplorable. The law in its present form must be amended, and the amended law administered with the greatest severity in order to minimise, if not eradicate, this lamentable feature of the North. That it obtains to some extent also in certain districts of the North-West is apparent: here, however, there are fewer blacks and more white women and the practice may more easily be checked.

In direct relation to this matter seem to be the views expressed, when giving evidence before the Commission, by Doctor C. P. Bryan. He is not an advocate of miscegenation—the mingling of the blacks and whites by intermarriage—but he does predict that it will certainly proceed, "even if it only means the production of a few half-castes." I am relieved that Doctor Bryan is not an advocate of the policy. In the circumstances I am not called upon to join issue with him. Indeed I agree that whatever laws are introduced on the subject in an endeavour to check the increase, however successful those laws may be, they will not succeed in preventing completely the birth of half-castes. But it is encouraging to hear from Doctor Bryan that miscegenation has practically ceased in the United States, partly because of the stringent laws against it, but chiefly because of the public attitude against cohabitation of the whites and blacks. And in this State I am inclined to think that more can be done by public opinion than by laws. I have advocated the amending of existing legislation and the drastic administration of the law, but it is one thing to know the practice is going on—it is very often quite a different thing to prove it to the satisfaction of a Court. I am not concerned whether the person who cohabits with natives is degraded in nature or is a so-called gentleman. The cases cited from Africa of the scions of stately English homes and their harems, and of the very brave soldier who had 45 wives (he was apparently brave in other ventures than war), do not in-

fluence my mind in condonation of the practice. The cases were not quoted in order to condone the system. They were mentioned to emphasise the fact that white people living in native countries in time lose any feeling of repulsion for colour. I do not know that such feeling of repulsion has ever existed in this State; it certainly does not amongst those who have lived among blacks, and I hope it never will. On the other hand, if a feeling of repulsion against this practice of cohabiting with native women can properly be exhibited, then I think those who otherwise would have followed the lead may be deterred from contributing to the increase of half-castes.

Leaving the Kimberleys, and turning now to the North-West, ordinary living conditions of the natives are similar to those of the Kimberleys, though in some cases rather more pretentious habitations are found. I have mentioned, however, the fact that in the Kimberleys the native is not paid for his labour. That system, in so far as pastoral work is concerned, obtains as far South as Wallal, on the Ninety-Mile Beach. South of that, and generally throughout the Pilbara District, it is the usual practice to pay the natives employed on stations. The custom, which has apparently been in force for about 20 years, is universally condemned amongst the pastoralists, but all agree that it is now too late to alter the existing state of affairs. The objection to payment is based on the assertion made by many pastoralists that the native has no idea of the value of money, that he is an easy victim for unscrupulous itinerant hawkers and that it encourages him in his gambling desires, which are firmly fixed. He will, of course, gamble without money; for a game of cards he will, if losing, divest himself piece by piece of his clothing to enable him to continue the game; but, with money, his gambling instincts are aroused to the fullest extent. It may be that, with closer supervision and by taking a greater interest in this attribute of the native, his squandering habits might be checked. The fact remains, however, that as things are at present the money he earns is not of the slightest use to him. He has developed a character which is, to my mind, entirely artificial. His holiday—it seems wrong to use the word “pink-eye” for this native—calls for greater preparation than the “walk-about” of the Northern native. Instead of discarding his clothes and starting out with his spears to hunt game, it is often found that this North-Western native packs his suit case and, having padlocked the front door of his hut, gets into his turnout (in a few cases even a motor car) and sets out on a holiday vastly different from that of his former days. It is I think without doubt merely an imitation of the white man. It cannot be regarded as an indication that he is really trying to improve his method of living. If it were so, one would notice an improvement in other and more appropriate directions.

So far I have dealt only with the natives of the Northern part of the State. Those of the Murchison are of a different type; here closer settlement prevails and the natives, through long association with whites, are apparently more civilised than those to be found on many Northern and North-Western stations. In some cases they still live in their camps—in others they have more elaborate accommodation near the homesteads. They are cleaner in appear-

ance and better dressed; they speak English more correctly—pidgin English, fortunately, is not so often heard. Almost without exception those employed on stations—and there are not many natives in the Murchison district other than those so employed—are described as good station hands. But, of course, they need close supervision. The women with equal supervision make competent domestic servants, and on those stations where the natives have died out or are few in number the pastoralists feel their absence. The men are all paid wages and here, in contradistinction to the experience of the Pilbara district, the system works well. With very few exceptions, however, the natives do not save their money. They do not actually waste it; gambling is not noticeable to any extent; but they have an insatiable desire to spend their money. They buy dresses for their women and are attracted by the hawkers' wares. In this district the station owner or manager seems to take a greater interest in the financial transactions of the natives, and on many stations their buying is supervised. A few have complained that the native is apt to overdraw his wages account. In the great majority of cases, however, he is not allowed to do so. In those few instances where he is, the remedy is of course entirely with the owner. I think, if the same close supervision over the native's money were exercised in the Pilbara as obtains on the Murchison, the pastoralists of the former district would have less reason to complain of the system.

The natives of the Southern districts are dealt with in the next succeeding clause.

Some evidence has been given on the question of the native marriage customs and the desirability of preventing polygamy and the marriage of young girls with old men. In so far as bush natives are concerned, this is a matter which must of necessity be left to the natives themselves. In the case of those natives who are under some form of civilising influence, this question should be most carefully considered by those who desire reform.

I do not profess to understand the basic principle underlying native marriages. It is complicated but, I am led to believe, very definite and based on the law of kinship. To attempt to alter the system, without proper understanding of all it represents, would be, in my view, dangerous. It might possibly strike at the foundations of the natives' social life.

I express no definite opinion. I am content to quote from Dr. Elkin, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Sydney:—

Protectors, missionaries, and employers are well advised to leave these matters absolutely to native law and authority. If, in time, through the influence of white custom and Christian teaching, love rather than social customs tends to regulate marriage, that will be time enough for the old men with the assistance of white friends to modify their marriage law.

In dealing with the conditions of the blacks throughout the State it will be understood that my impressions are general. It has been impossible for me to make a complete investigation. Some places are so isolated that the time involved in visiting them would, I think, have been out of proportion in value to the result of the visit. Wongawol—150 miles east of Wiluna—is such a place. The departmental files, which were not seen by me until my return from the Murchison district, disclose that conditions there are

bad. As the reports from the Police and others are not denied by the Department, it may be taken that the conditions are as described. Those reports indicate the presence of eight young coloured children on the station—the fathers being neither aborigines nor half-castes. There is not sufficient evidence to enable a prosecution to be commenced against anyone. The question arises as to what should be done with the children. Unless the mothers are of a dissolute nature and unlikely to mend their ways, I should not care to part them from their children, but would rather see them sent with their children to the Mission at Mount Margaret, where at least the children will have a better chance than they have at present. These children are in a different position from those on the stations I have inspected. In the latter case, I advocated their being left alone, to receive the training which is appropriate to them and later to be usefully employed in the country to which they belong. To the Wongawol native "country" does not mean so much; moreover, Wongawol seems to call for some drastic action.

I have mentioned that the town of Broome is one which presents peculiar difficulties. One great disadvantage to the native population is the contact which takes place with Asiatics who in some numbers are always to be found in the town—in very large numbers during the lay-up season of the pearling fleet. These Asiatics associate with the half-caste native women in the town. This association enables the half-caste women—or many of them—to live a life of ease, if not of virtue. It has been suggested by the Sergeant of Police at Broome that housing accommodation should be provided for the half-castes—and full blood natives also—outside the town boundary, where they could be given proper supervision, and the Asiatics kept from their locality. I have already said that some of the half-castes of Broome lead decent lives. They may well be left where they are. The others in my opinion should be kept out of town, only allowed in on permit and the greatest supervision exercised over their reserve to prevent contact with white men and, of course, Asiatics.

The young half-caste men are, in the majority of cases, disinclined to work. One should not altogether blame the half-caste. Little interest has been taken in him after leaving school and he finds he is able to exist by doing a little casual work when, but not until, it becomes necessary. I have considered the possibility of these half-caste youths being employed with the pearling fleet if, happily, the pearling fleet should continue to operate. The views of the PEARLERS' COMMITTEE were conveyed to me by Mr. Norman, one of its members, and were as follows:—

The pearlery, fully realising the problem the unemployed half-caste population will become to Broome, are desirous of doing all they can to absorb as many as possible of their numbers. My Committee, therefore, suggests:—

1. That every encouragement be given by the Aborigines Department to these people to seek employment in the pearling industry.
2. That Missions be asked to co-operate with the Department.
3. That the young men could be engaged as apprentices for a term of three years, at a wage of 30s. per month for the first year, 40s. per month for the second year, and 50s. per month for the third year.

4. That for adults who have had previous experience a wage of £3 per month is sufficient.
5. That during the lay-up of each year the men be given one month's leave of absence without pay in order to visit their relatives and friends.

The wages suggested compare favourably with those at present operating with the indentured crew.

I should not go so far as to limit in all cases the employment to those boats where a white man is in charge; nor should I alter the existing legislation to enable Asiatics to obtain permits to employ. There are no doubt cases in which no harm would be occasioned by sending a half-caste to sea under a Japanese master. There are others where it would be objectionable. If work on the luggers is to be found for half-castes, it will be reduced to a minimum if a rigid condition is imposed that there shall be a white man in charge of each boat. I think it is a matter which should be left to the Divisional Protector, who, by his local knowledge, would be able to use his discretion wisely.

It seems so necessary to me that something should be done for these people. Little may be possible for those who have definitely adopted a life of indolence. If, in addition to doing no work, they become troublesome, then a place could be found for them in the "Palm Island" scheme which I shall suggest later under clause (e). I am thinking chiefly of those now at school and of those who have just finished. If left to their own devices then very certainly they will follow the example of their loafing elders. So long as they remain in Broome no other avenue of employment than that suggested seems open to them.

In the case of bush natives I have contented myself by saying they are apparently able to look after themselves. It was not possible for me to get any first hand information regarding the resources of their country. There is no reason to assume that in the Kimberleys there is a shortage of their natural food. In so far as the natives along the Canning Stock Route are concerned, Mr. Canning himself, who has been along the route on three occasions, the last being in 1930-1931, has told me in his evidence that the natives of this area looked as though they had sufficient food, and expressed the opinion that the country would support the natives very well.

In this clause I have dealt merely on general lines with the social and economic conditions of the natives. As the remaining clauses in the Terms of Reference bear direct relation to many aspects of such social and economic conditions, it will be found that these are discussed with greater particularity under their respective headings.

1. (a) *The inclusion or exclusion of different classes of persons of aboriginal origin in or from native camps.*

At first sight it would seem desirable that, for the future welfare of the half-caste or person of lighter colour, the native camps should contain only full blood aborigines. As I have already observed, there is a duty on the community to see that half-castes are placed in surroundings and given a training which will fit them later to take their place, if necessary, in a white civilisation. An easy method from one point of view would be to remove them when young from the influence of the aboriginal and form settle-

ments at which, on similar lines to those applied in the case of orphaned white children, they might receive the training above referred to. That method, however, does not appear practicable for application to all half-castes. The great objection in many cases is that they have parents, and there is beyond doubt in the native woman a great love for her child, whether that child's father be black or white. It may be said that it is the child we must think of, not the mother: that is true, but we must, I think, in common decency, seek some solution which will benefit the half-caste child but not inflict cruelty on that child's mother, unless indeed the mother, by her mode of living, is deserving of no consideration. Earlier I stated that the vast majority of half-castes is to be found in the Southern portion of the State, and in that area we have not to deal with the aboriginal woman of the class found in the North. The Southern woman, in many cases herself a half-caste, is more civilised through a greater degree of contact with whites, and more fitted to take her place in surroundings better than those of the native camps. So far as the South is concerned (and by that I mean generally the towns along the Great Southern Railway), I would say: Abolish the native camps which, without exception, are a disgrace, and provide settlements where the families may be taken, where the grown-up members of those families may be housed according to their needs and be usefully occupied either on the settlements or, at periods, at work on surrounding farms, and where the children may occupy quarters of their own, attend a school of their own, be taught such matters as hygiene and other elementary principles of a civilised life, and where, although not debarred altogether from seeing their parents, they may be gradually weaned from the aboriginal influence. At the present time, it may be said that, apart from the work being done by a few missionaries, the care of the half-caste child is hopelessly inefficient. It is a pathetic sight to see these children, in many cases so fair in complexion as to be scarcely distinguishable from white children, living in a hut worse by far than the kennel some people would provide for their dogs—whole families of 9 or 10 being huddled together in abject squalor, with no beds to lie on, no cooking or eating utensils worth the name, no proper facilities for washing, and dressed in clothes a tramp would despise, unless, by begging, they are able to obtain cast-off clothing from the whites in the district. All sleep together in one hut, no matter the age of the children, and intimate matters of sex relationship become, in the minds of the young, details of such minor importance that one is not surprised to find the girls at an early age having children of their own. It is no wonder that the parents of white children have objected to their boys and girls associating with the neglected half-caste at the State Schools. At one school only in the Great Southern district I saw half-caste children attending the State School; they were, considering their surroundings in the camp, clean and tidy in appearance and, up to a certain age, the white children mixed happily with them. The head teacher told me, however, that from the age of about 10 or 12, particularly in the case of girls, the other children would have nothing to do with them; they were left alone in the playground and after school returned to the wretched conditions of the camp. Apart from the altogether undesirable surroundings for children of

tender years, if, on reaching the age for leaving school, they have nothing better provided for them, then I say without hesitation that, at the present rate of increase, the time is not far distant when these half-castes, or a great majority of them, will become a positive menace to the community: the men useless and vicious, and the women a tribe of harlots. I saw in the Southern district two native schools and I was told that the children are good scholars and well behaved; training of the proper kind and under proper supervision would I am sure meet with response from them. It may be, however, that these children, though undoubtedly of fair intelligence, will not be able to reach a satisfactory standard at the age at which white children leave school. It has been said by authorities that it is in the last two years at school that the greatest progress is made by them. With a longer period of school training, followed by instruction in handicrafts appropriate to rural pursuits, I am convinced that a good future may be assured for the half-caste, provided adequate organisation is adopted.

Dealing with half-castes—and this clause has chief reference to these people—Dr. Bryan has spoken strongly against the mating of half-castes with half-castes, on the ground that it will perpetuate the black and coloured elements. And still, without advocating the marriage of whites and half-castes, he does support the mating of a half-caste with a coloured person higher in the white scale. To further this scheme, he says, we should do all in our power to prevent a half-caste marrying another half-caste, and to encourage him or her to look higher. This, of course, can only be done by throwing these people together and hoping for the best, and this is just what in other words I have been advocating when suggesting the Community Settlements where these coloured people, or half-castes as I have called them (without reference to the degree of colour in them), will live their lives together under proper supervision. If this scheme of breeding out the colour is really effective, and if these people assist in the policy by choosing the appropriate partners, well and good. If, on the other hand, a half-caste chooses to marry a half-caste, then I would not be a party to interfering with such choice, hoping always that, as the coloured race multiplied, effective administration might be the means of raising them in habits if not in colour.

Although the half-caste problem is most acute in the Southern district, there are, of course, half-castes to be found in aboriginal camps on pastoral stations. They present a different problem. They are not in such numbers as to cause great anxiety, and in habits and temperament they are more black than white. They have been reared under native conditions, they mix happily with the full-blood aborigines and take their place in the station work in the same way but with greater ability. They are excellent stockmen and in many cases become expert mechanics. To exclude them when young from the native camps would necessitate taking them from their mothers and removing them to Government Settlements remote from their own country. In some cases their conditions of life may make this course necessary, but, in the absence of such a course, to leave them on stations means that from an early age they are trained in suitable occupations—whether boys or girls—and become useful in work which is natural to them and in country to which they belong. Where

they are already on Government settlements (*e.g.*, Moola Bulla, in the Kimberleys, where there are means of educating them), then I say that the same process should be adopted as that which I have suggested for the children of the South—a gradual weaning from the aboriginal influence and an encouragement to fit themselves for life in a white community, so that, when they reach adult age, they may, if inclined to forsake their bush life, be acceptable in other places. That they show promise of being able to become reputable citizens of a white community is exemplified by the half-castes of Derby and some of the half-caste population of Broome. There are, of course, others in the latter town who are no credit to the community in which they live. That there are even some who, without the advantage of the training and education which I hope will follow this report, are able to live as decent white citizens live is an indication that the experiment is worth trying.

1.—(b) *Proximity of Native Camps to Towns.*

This is, I think, generally speaking, a great mistake. In the last preceding clause I have suggested the abolition of camps adjacent to the Great Southern towns. In that suggestion I was actuated by what I consider to be the future welfare of the half-castes. In Northern districts where half-castes are not found in such large numbers it may be necessary for camps to remain in existence. To collect and place in one reserve or settlement a large number of natives would necessitate moving them into foreign country, which would I am convinced be wholly against their best interests. The country to which the Northern native considers he belongs is in many cases bounded by narrow limits, and I cannot anticipate any success in a settlement to which natives are forced from their own district. To establish a chain of reserves providing for each separate tribe or district seems to me to be impossible. It follows, therefore, that camps may of necessity remain in existence in the Northern parts of the State. It may be argued that a camp being close to the town renders police supervision more successful. I doubt it. The force is not sufficiently strongly represented to enable supervision to be exercised at all times, and outsiders desirous of visiting the camps soon discover when they may do so without detection. A notable example of the danger of having a native camp on the outskirts of a town is provided by Broome. Broome has, and for some time past has had, greater police protection than any other Northern or North-West town, and yet we find in the Broome Police District, according to latest returns, 417 half-castes—more than half the total half-caste population of the North. The town of Broome is not responsible for all these. Some of them have been brought from other districts to Missions within the Broome Police District, but it is generally admitted that a great number of them were born in Broome, and to-day the number of half-castes in the town itself is not far short of 150. The camp, however, cannot be placed at too great a distance from the town, as the question of the issue of rations to the indigent natives must be considered.

In having a camp in close proximity to a town, it is inevitable, as matters are at present, that the native will spend a great part of his time in the town. This should not be permitted and the provi-

sions of the Act should be enforced. If it is necessary for the native to come into town to work, a system of permits should be introduced. The native develops begging habits which seem to be natural to him, and, especially with the children of the town, the danger of contracting disease from the native is always present. Further, it is, of course, easier for the native when in or near a town to obtain intoxicating liquor, which is obviously most dangerous. Later, I shall recommend an addition to the Act on this subject.

It is difficult to prescribe a limit within which a native camp should not be established. It depends on the circumstances of the district, but I feel that, having regard to those circumstances, it should be as far from the town as practicable in all cases where there is no appropriate alternative to the existing camp system. In selecting a suitable area, the greatest regard should, of course, be given to the question of water supplies and matters of sanitation.

In this connection may be mentioned the undesirable sight so often experienced on the Trans-Australian Railway of a collection of filthy, disreputable-looking natives visiting the stopping places of the train. The natives apparently seek to make themselves look as poverty stricken as possible in order to enlist the sympathies of travellers in their begging tactics. Unfortunately, visitors very often obtain, in these undesirable people, their first sight of an Australian aboriginal, and are inclined to regard them as typical. It is not to be wondered at that stories are taken overseas of the wretched condition of our blacks.

I understand that there was at one time a ration depot at Karonie, where these natives were looked after and kept under some form of restraint. This, or some similar place, should be established and every means taken to prevent a continuance of this most unedifying spectacle.

1.—(c) *Physical well-being of aboriginals, and any suggested measures for amelioration.*

(d) *Disease amongst aboriginals and measures for their treatment.*

As these two clauses appear to me to bear some relation to each other, I propose to deal with them jointly.

In so far as the physical well-being of the natives is concerned, I have already expressed the view that, generally speaking, the native on sheep and cattle stations is well cared for: his housing, clothing and food are adequate to his needs. The same may be said of the natives on Missions, but my views regarding those institutions will be more elaborately stated when dealing with Clause (g) relative to Missions. There are, however, other matters to be considered than those I have mentioned. These matters vary according to local conditions, but, throughout the whole State, there is one aspect of the native's life which requires attention—the question of medical treatment. Those in charge of pastoral properties and Missions do all they can to care for the sick natives: it is obvious, however, that their ability is limited. Each of the stations and Missions which I visited carried a supply of medicine suitable for the treatment of ordinary every-day ailments, but serious epidemics occur when something more than household methods are necessary. The isolation of these

places, especially in the Kimberleys, makes the position more than ever difficult. I travelled through the Kimberleys at a time when mortality amongst the natives was very severe. No one knew the exact nature of the illness which was responsible for the many deaths which occurred. The epidemic was the worst in the experience of the Moola Bulla manager, who had been at the station for 13 years. I understand that subsequent bacteriological examination of slides sent to Perth established the trouble as malignant tertian malaria. I am satisfied that everything possible was done for the natives on the stations. I had personal evidence of the care and attention shown—but the natives died.

One East Kimberley pastoralist of 34 years' residence described Moola Bulla as the pulse of the native situation in East Kimberley, and urged emphatically that greater facilities for medical service should be provided at this centre. I quite agree. The establishment of a clinic at Moola Bulla and telephone communication provided with Hall's Creek would immensely improve the present situation. Only two additional miles of posts are required to enable connection to be made with the existing line, and labour should cost nothing. In addition to being able to cope more effectively with epidemics of the kind described, the clinic would be of use in other directions. A considerable amount of venereal disease is to be found throughout the Kimberleys, and a branch of the clinic for the treatment of cases of that nature would be of great value. At the present time, it may be said that these cases are left for diagnosis to the white men on stations. Often they are in advanced stages before discovered; it then becomes necessary to send them hundreds of miles to a hospital for treatment. With a clinic at Moola Bulla, natives could be treated practically in their own country—once this is realised they will more readily disclose their trouble and early isolation will be possible. The appointment of a medical man as Divisional Protector, a recommendation for which will be found later in my report, will also make much easier the early detection of these cases.

Coming further South, it is found that epidemics, chiefly of influenza, occur and mortality is severe. It is a strange characteristic of the native that he will often recover rapidly from the most severe spear wounds but offer little or no resistance to what in white people would develop into nothing more than slight illness. At Wyndham, Broome, Roebourne and Onslow there should be hospital accommodation for the natives (including isolation for the treatment of venereal disease). In spite of the opinion of the Medical Officer at the last-mentioned town that there is no cure for venereal disease, his successor in office will, I think, hold a contrary opinion, and much may be done with the establishment of suitable accommodation. No elaborate premises are needed. These natives do not require wards and beds with sheets—they would be uncomfortable and unhappy in them. For treatment of venereal troubles, the class of accommodation at Port Hedland would meet all requirements (see photo. A, Appendix) (though I would recommend a greater distance between the male and female sections), and, for other ailments, similar provision to that made recently at Wiluna Hospital would be adequate.

The above recommendations apply to hospitals in all districts where natives are located, and will affect

station natives and any others who may be found by the Protector to require medical attention. In addition, first-aid outfits should be carried by all drovers and teamsters who employ natives. Minor matters (*e.g.*, the provision of mosquito nets in the Kimberleys as a preventive of malaria) will receive the attention of the Divisional Protector and call for no elaborate reference in this report.

Of far greater importance than these matters is the question of leprosy, and so keenly did I feel the urgency of this subject that on the 3rd July, 1934, I submitted to Your Excellency, from Derby, an interim report in the following terms:—

Pursuant to the Royal Commission issued to me on the 21st February, 1934, to investigate, report, and advise upon matters relating to aboriginal life and conditions, I have the honour to submit an Interim Report upon the subject.

I feel that the matters to which I am about to draw attention call for urgent decision, and, as it is unlikely that I shall hear further evidence on the subject which would cause me to alter the view I have formed, I consider it right that I should place that view on record before my final report is submitted.

In the town of Derby the dominant problem relative to native affairs is that of leprosy. This is, of course, no new problem, and it is on record that some three years ago the members of the Local Board of Health resigned owing to what they considered was the Government's inaction. I am not concerned with the position as it then was. I propose to deal with the position as I find it today.

Since October of last year 85 cases have been admitted to the area set apart for leprosy patients on the outskirts of this town, either for observation or as definitely diagnosed cases of leprosy. Of that number 18 were discharged or transferred to hospital as not suffering from the disease, eight died, one escaped, 12 were sent to the leprosarium at Darwin, and the remaining 46 are being held pending their transport to the same place. No cases were removed to Darwin between October, 1933, and June of this year, and at the present rate of removal, and assuming other cases are discovered, it is probable that there will always be some lepers in the area. This view is supported by the fact that the present accommodation at Darwin is limited to a further 40 patients. These circumstances bring me to the first question which is causing concern (see photographs B. and C, Appendix).

It is considered by the Local Health Authority that the present site of the area is such that the presence of leprosy natives there constitutes a grave menace. Assuming that complete isolation is necessary, and Dr. Cook, the Commonwealth Medical Officer at Darwin, considers it is, then it is obvious that the site is wholly unsuitable. It is in the same compound as the Native Hospital with not even a dividing fence between that hospital and the wretched huts in which the leprosy patients exist, the huts being within 100 yards of the hospital building, which at present holds 12 patients suffering chiefly from some form of venereal disease. There is nothing to prevent the natives from the two places mixing together, nor indeed is there anything to hinder other natives in and near the town from going into the area, or so far as I can see the leprosy natives coming into town. I am assured that the infected natives in both places have been warned of the danger which would ensue by reason of contact, and that contact does not take place. So far as the warning is concerned, I have not sufficient confidence in the natives to satisfy me that it would be heeded. As to the statement that contact does not take place, there have been since October last five convictions recorded against natives from the town for entering the area.

I hesitate to use the language which to me the present position seems to justify in the fear that I may express too strong an opinion on a question which may be regarded as purely medical. Is it not, however, a matter which calls more for common sense consideration than the application of medical knowledge? If, in fact,

I do trespass on matters on which in the absence of medical training I am not qualified to express an opinion, then I am prepared to base my remarks solely on Dr. Cook's emphatic demand for isolation. Here there is none.

It is possible that medical opinion is divided as to the infectivity of leprosy. There are doubtless some medical authorities who will differ from Dr. Cook in his view on the necessity for isolation. He is, however, occupying his present position as an expert in tropical diseases, and I am not inclined to reject his opinion until someone of greater experience in the same branch of the medical profession satisfies me that he is in error.

If this area were used merely for the purpose of holding patients for a few days pending removal, the position would still be bad. To have used it as an appropriate site in which to hold those patients for eight months suggests, in my view, either a degree of casual administration which should not be tolerated or a lack of knowledge of the real facts on the part of those responsible.

As a preliminary to discussing the question of remedy of the present position, other aspects of the matter must first be considered.

I am not aware of the circumstances which led up to the taking over by the Commonwealth authorities of the care of lepers. Nor do I know whether the present arrangement with the Commonwealth is such that it is impossible for the State to withdraw and make other provision for the treatment of its leprosy patients. If it is now too late for the State to make its own arrangements, then another temporary holding ground should be selected and some provision made for the accommodation of patients. At present it may be said there is none.

I am assured by the Health authorities that within ten miles of the town there are suitable areas, larger in extent than the present site, where greater supervision of the patients could be exercised and isolation assured, and where the natives suffering from the disease in its early stages could find some form of recreation in fishing. A suitable water supply is, I am informed, obtainable. The provision of a few small huts, properly ventilated, in which the patients could be locked at night would render unnecessary any form of patrol.

If, on the other hand, it is still in the power of the State to withdraw from the existing arrangement with the Commonwealth, then there are in my view reasons which suggest the advisability of such a course. Anyone who has knowledge of the native appreciates his love of his own country, and the effect on him of banishment to what is to him a foreign land. In spite of the utter discomfort and wretchedness obtaining under the present system, the only request I had from the patients was that they should not be sent to Darwin. Some idea that a number of them were to be sent away a fortnight ago was somehow gained by the patients, and as a result it was considered necessary to put two men in chains. Soon after the 12 were sent to Darwin, six of the remaining natives escaped, five being recaptured, but one almost certainly was drowned.

I am firmly of the opinion that when it is generally known, as these things do become known, that natives suffering from leprosy are being sent to Darwin, any possibility of a thorough combing of the district will be out of the question. That such a combing is necessary is clear, not only from Dr. Cook's emphatic statement, but also because in a few months and after a cursory examination of a comparatively small portion of the Kimberleys, some 61 natives have been discovered suffering from leprosy.

In the event of the State being able to take complete control of its leprosy patients, it appears appropriate that Sunday Island, situated some 70 or 80 miles from Derby, should be considered as a possible site for a leprosarium. I have not yet visited this island, but I understand that little opportunity is afforded there for the training of the natives at the mission at present established there, and, as that seems to me to be all-important, the place might, I think, be used to greater purpose as an isolated area where natives could be treated in surroundings more congenial to themselves.

Dr. Hodge, District Medical Officer in this town, considers it suitable.

I recommend, with all possible emphasis, that an immediate investigation of the matter from a medical point of view be made by some independent authority in tropical diseases. From the standpoint of the natives and the inhabitants of Derby, the present position, as I see it, must not be allowed to continue.

I have little to add to that report. Time has not modified my views. It was perhaps too late, on my report being received, for a systematic combing of the Kimberleys to be arranged during the remainder of the dry season. I can only say that it is amazing that so little action has been taken since Dr. Cook reported on the matter in 1924. In ten years there has been no systematic examination of natives for leprosy, and those lepers from this State now at the leprosarium at Darwin—numbering about 80—were, as I pointed out in my July report, discovered as a result of a very cursory examination of a comparatively small area of the Kimberleys. It is essential that this matter, perhaps above all others mentioned in this report, should receive urgent attention.

1.—(e) *Native Settlements.*

Although it is not quite clear as to the exact meaning of the term "Native Settlements" I propose under this clause to discuss the Government Stations and Ration Depots I have inspected—the native camps of the Southern Districts having already been referred to under clauses (a) and (b). The institution at Moore River has been referred to by the Chief Protector in his evidence as a "Native Settlement" and I have already submitted an interim report on this place. I understand from the Chief Protector that certain improvements have been effected since that report was submitted.

My report, dated the 19th April, 1934, was as follows:—

Pursuant to the Royal Commission issued to me on the 21st February, 1934, to investigate, report, and advise upon matters in relation to the condition and treatment of aborigines, I have the honour to submit an interim report upon this subject.

Although, doubtless, no report is expected of me until such time as my inquiries relative to aborigines have been completed, I feel that I shall not be exceeding my duty if at this stage I refer to my recent visit to the Native Settlement at Moore River, during which visit I was confronted with many matters which in my view call for urgent attention. Were it not for the very strong feeling I have as to the urgency of these matters, I should be well content to postpone my comments until my report on the whole question referred to me is prepared.

It is not my intention in this minute to do more than make passing comment on the apparent poverty of the land on which this settlement is placed. The reason for the selection of such a site does not at the moment concern me. I mention the matter merely as one of the many difficulties with which the Superintendent and his staff are faced.

Taking the settlement, however, as I found it, and for the time assuming that there was some good reason for selecting its location, it forms, in my view, a woeful spectacle.

In giving evidence before the Royal Commission, the Chief Protector of Aborigines, Mr. Neville, in speaking of Moore River, said:—"To this place orphans, indigents not otherwise provided for, and others for many reasons have been sent from time to time. The place is not ideal. It only partly effects its purpose owing to lack of accommodation. . . . The place is doing good work. It is turning a lot of raw material, particularly youngsters, into something a little better and enabling

them to earn their own living outside. Had they been left in the camps they would never have reached the stage they have now reached."

I am not going to join issue with the Chief Protector on his last statement, but when one has some knowledge of what constitutes life in a native camp his remarks are not necessarily extravagant in praise of Moore River. Having spent some nine hours at the settlement, and having seen, I think, everything I should see appropriate to the object of my visit, my firm impression is that the settlement leaves very much to be desired.

Constitution of the Settlement.

The settlement comprises—

1. A compound at which are located young people sent there for a variety of causes, and people taken from their parents sent to the settlement for education and protection.
2. A camp for indigent natives and their families, situated some 300 yards from the compound.

The Compound.

Accommodation.—The dormitories present from the outside a dilapidated appearance. Inside, at the present time, there appears to be adequate room, but, remembering the numbers who, at this time of the year, sleep on the verandahs, I should say that, during the winter months, the rooms are far too crowded. Dr. Maunsell, of New Norcia, who frequently visits the settlement professionally, agrees with this.

The dormitories are vermin ridden to an extent which I suspect makes eradication impossible. Assuming that the settlement remains on its present site, the sooner new dormitories are constructed, and constructed of some material which will offer less scope for vermin, the better for the health and comfort of the inmates and for the reputation of the Department.

There are no means of keeping the inmates in the dormitories at night. The doors are locked, but latticed walls are easily broken and many cases are on record of the girls visiting the camp, a few hundred yards from the compound, after they are placed in the dormitories for the night. Later I shall have something to write of the camp. While it remains part of the settlement, it should be made impossible for the inmates of the compound to have any communication with it. At New Norcia Mission I noticed that all openings to the dormitories were guarded by strong link mesh netting. I was told that this is effective, and a similar expedient for Moore River was suggested by the Superintendent, Mr. Neal, in his evidence. It should, in my opinion, be attended to at once, and the compound should be patrolled at night by a responsible person—not a native policeman. At the present time all the inmates of the compound go to the football ground adjacent to the camp and, although under the supervision of a white assistant, no doubt many opportunities are afforded for arranging clandestine meetings and, as I have said, the girls find no difficulty in the way of keeping their appointments. In addition, although the Superintendent told me that no camp people are allowed in the compound after dark, this must be in theory only, for I myself saw on the night I was at Moore River many of the camp inmates, if not all of them, at a concert and dance held in the compound dining room.

There is no accommodation for the compound children during rainy days other than the dormitories. Those of school age cannot in wet weather use the bough shed which in the summer is used as a classroom, and the church hall is far too small to accommodate them all. I noticed some timber which I was informed had been sent up for the purpose of building a shed or something of that nature. Its appearance suggested that a most efficient tradesman would find difficulty in utilising it to any great advantage. The head teacher spoke feelingly of her difficulties because of inadequate school accommodation, and the matter, in my view, requires urgent attention.

The missionary at the settlement, a very keen and enthusiastic worker, and doing, as I see it, very valuable work on the social side, should be provided with a room for her own use. She is not really a departmental officer, but recognition might in this way be made of the good she is doing at the settlement.

The hospital is a substantial building, but two additional wards are necessary. The nursing sister declares that a labour ward is a necessity, and whatever name may be applied to it, it certainly seems to me necessary to have an additional ward as, at the present time, there is one ward common to men and women. There is no isolation ward, and the one bathroom is used as a surgery. The need of an isolation ward was made apparent by the presence of a child, suffering from syphilis, on the verandah and mixing with other children.

It is a very proper principle, I think, that the male members of the staff should be married men. The second farm assistant cannot have his wife at the settlement, as he is provided only with a single hut. The accommodation should be enlarged.

Equipment.—With the exception of the work done in the sewing room, in which I am informed clothing is made for all indigent natives throughout the State, and a small amount of sand brick making, nothing is being done in the way of vocational training, because no equipment is provided. Even starting in a small way with a few blacksmith's tools and a carpenter's shop, a great deal could be done. The Superintendent, I understand, is capable of giving instruction.

The head teacher of the school asks for certain apparatus to enable her to train the elder girls in household duties. At the present little can be attempted, although, of course, practical experience of a kind is gained by some of the girls in the dormitories, dining room, and kitchen.

The equipment in the dining room is deficient, and, with few exceptions, the children had no implements of any kind to aid them in eating. Judging by their dexterity in the use of their fingers, I am afraid they have little knowledge of any other method, though I did not experiment with a child and one of the few spoons available. I am told that there had been a sudden disappearance of spoons, and that more had been ordered. I hope the children will not experience great difficulty in manipulating them.

Food.—Here there is much room for improvement. Powdered milk for children is obviously useless, but 56 pounds are consumed in a month. No vegetables are grown at the settlement, and a totally inadequate supply is imported. Tinned vegetables (so called) are in the same category as powdered milk. There is an insufficiency of meat, and, if such articles as fruit and eggs were occasionally supplied, fewer children would go to the hospital. This view is supported by the doctor and the nursing sister.

Punishment of Inmates.—I was not entirely satisfied with the evidence of the Superintendent on this point. I was shown a place of detention commonly called "the boob," and I disliked its appearance very much. A small detached "room" made of posts driven into the ground, floor of white sand, scarcely a gleam of light, and little ventilation, and I was told that inmates have been incarcerated in this place for as long as 14 days. It is barbarous treatment, and the place should be pulled down. If detention is necessary, and at this early stage in my investigation I do not propose to express an opinion, it should be carried out in a more suitable place and the maximum period of 14 days prescribed by regulations, considerably reduced. Records of such punishment should be sent to the Chief Protector.

The Camp.

It seems obvious to me that this should be removed to some other site immediately. Nothing more detrimental to the work of the settlement can, in my view, be imagined. Many of the inmates are, in the Superintendent's opinion, useless, and they seem to be, with few exceptions, of the poorest type. I was unable to obtain the number of inmates at the camp, but 102 full rations are issued daily, a child receiving half a ration.

The inmates of the compound are admitted for protection and education, and I found them living within a few hundred yards of a collection of useless, loafing natives, content to do nothing and always ready to entice the compound girls to the camp. It would be better that the grown-up people should be sent away and the children taken from their parents and put in the com-

pound than that the inmates of the compound should be under such a contaminating influence. It is, in my opinion, and in the opinion of the staff at Moore River, a menace to the settlement. I am surprised that new camps are being erected, as it shows, firstly, an intention to continue the camp, and, secondly, that money is being spent which could so much more usefully be used in the compound.

It is not my purpose at this stage to comment on the departmental administration of the settlement. It may be that difficulties, of which at the moment I know nothing, have materially hampered the Chief Protector in attending to those matters which to me have seemed so obviously to require attention. I have found it difficult, however, to reconcile an annual expenditure of £5,000 with the present condition of the settlement.

Although my report is, I am afraid, not favourable to the settlement, I must, in justice to the staff, record my opinion that, from the Superintendent down, each member is doing everything possible to make it a success. They are, strangely enough, happy, and work apparently in the greatest harmony, and, although each was given every opportunity to talk candidly on any matter affecting his or her work, the only complaints made were relative to those matters on which I have endeavoured to comment in this report.

It appears that the Moore River Settlement absorbed, for the time being at all events, those natives who were from 1915-1922 attached to a settlement which was established at Carrolup some twenty miles from Katanning. Since the closing of Carrolup, the one settlement at Moore River has been the only place in the Southern part of the State where those natives who required care or training could be sent. Whereas in the Kimberleys there are three Government Stations and six Missions, South of that division there are only one Government settlement and four Missions, two of which are still in the primitive stage.

My report on the Moore River Settlement will have conveyed my opinion that the place is not suitable. It will be of no practical value, unless means are found of employing the inmates fully. If there is suitable land adjoining the present settlement, it should be used. If not, then the location of the settlement should be changed. As it is, I can see no hope of success.

The Government native stations, all of which are situated in the Kimberleys, are Moola Bulla and Violet Valley in East Kimberley, and Munja, which lies at the head of Walcott Inlet. Permanently attached to these stations are approximately 400 natives.

Dealing with Moola Bulla, one of its objects, as I have already mentioned, was to reduce the amount of cattle killing by natives. It can be assumed that it had other purposes, which may be gathered from its present operations. I am not suggesting that it was to be regarded as a Trading Concern, neither am I suggesting that it should ever become one: the impression one gains, however, at Moola Bulla is that one of its chief objects is to keep natives usefully occupied by helping to grow cattle—and, incidentally, sheep. The impression differs only slightly, if at all, from the impression created by privately owned stations. Cattle are grown and the native helps in the operation. It is true that, unlike the private properties, Moola Bulla takes an interest in the elementary education of half-caste children, and that in listening to the manager one hears perhaps more of the training of the native than one would hear from the management of a private property, but, if Moola

Bulla is ever to assume the status of a properly equipped Government Native Settlement, then I feel that far more should be done for the people in touch with the Station. I have pointed out earlier the difficulty in the way of any form of organised training on private properties. The Aborigines Department cannot expect anything more for the natives from those properties than they are at present receiving: indeed, the Department should be, and no doubt is, grateful in reflecting that part of its burden is being shouldered by these pastoralists in keeping so many natives usefully occupied, and in caring for old and infirm natives from whom they get no tangible return. But, after inspecting three Government Stations in the Kimberleys, all established with the object of benefitting the blacks, I left with the firm conviction that far more is needed. It is right, in the first place, that all able-bodied natives who are fed and clothed should work: at Moola Bulla there is not enough work to occupy the 200 natives attached to the Station. It is right that the younger people should experience the advantage of vocational training: here there are no facilities. It is right, above all, that the half-caste child should be given the greatest opportunity of fitting himself or herself for a higher station of life than that provided in a native camp: so far no means are apparent of enabling this to be done. There is no reason why these half-caste children should not be trained to work for themselves. They are, I am sure, capable of a higher ideal than to work merely because the white man tells them to.

At Violet Valley, it may be said quite frankly that no work is done, unless the pottering tasks about the small homestead can be classed as work; but, perhaps, there is little that can be done here, and its existence may be justified if, in fact, as I am led to believe, cattle killing by natives is less prevalent since its establishment. The number of natives in touch with this Station is small, probably no more than 40, and no half-caste child has been born on the station during the last 18 years. (See photograph D. in Appendix.)

Munja Station offers scope for work of a different class from that of Moola Bulla. Here there are, according to the Manager, hundreds of acres of good agricultural land in the vicinity of the homestead. Why is this not turned to good account?—not as a means of transforming Munja into a Trading Concern, but as a means of training the natives to work for themselves. There are 700 natives in touch with the station—140 are permanently there and 60 are worked. The Station equipment for agriculture consists of a three-disc plough and a set of harrows. No Adviser in Tropical Agriculture has visited Munja during the eight years the present Manager has been there. Is it not in the interests of the State that experiments should be carried out on a Government Station? It seems so obvious to me that at both Moola Bulla and Munja a great deal more should be done to train the natives. The experiment may in some instances be a failure. On the other hand, I am confident that a great deal of success will be achieved. But in both these places, whatever scheme for the advancement of the native is adopted, it must be thorough and complete. There must be no half measure; a half educated native presents greater difficulty than one with no education at all. There should be an immediate inspection of this property by the Government Tropical Adviser and such agri-

cultural training as he recommends undertaken without delay. The Manager emphasises the difficulties of transport to and from Munja. He should certainly be provided with some form of sea transport.

There are throughout the State a large number of rationing depots, but these, obviously, do not provide any form of training for those natives who would derive benefit therefrom. Of the rationing depots which I inspected, that at La Grange Bay requires, I think, special reference. At La Grange Bay, the number of natives receiving rations averages between 60 and 70. Many of these are able-bodied men, capable of working, as was demonstrated by the manner in which they unloaded the stores in the surf from a boat bringing these ashore from a lugger. Apart from very spasmodic work in the nature of gardening and wood carting, these natives apparently are not occupied in any useful way, and it is no wonder that the number being rationed has increased. The officer in charge said he thought he would be able to place them on surrounding Stations—he intended to try—but apparently had not up to the time of my visit made any attempt. A native will not work unless he is forced to do so. To allow him to sit down and obtain his food, doing nothing in return for it, is to do the native great harm. Although I am not suggesting that at other rationing depots the same slackness is in evidence, I am quite sure that a periodical inspection of these places would effect an improvement.

At the Tableland district ration depot, which is controlled by Mr. Cusaek, part owner of Tambrey Station, I am satisfied that everything possible is done to obtain work for the natives, who numbered about 40 at the time of my visit. The work is of a temporary nature, but it prevents the native from leading a life of complete idleness and reduces the Government cost of keeping them. Mr. Cusaek is one who obviously takes a great interest in the natives and, having lived the greater part of his life amongst them, has a good understanding of them. He has made a request for some alteration in the existing boundaries of the reserve and for fencing material, and I think, in view of the work he is doing, his requests, which appear to me to be justified, should be acceded to.

It has obviously not been possible for me to inspect all ration depots. I am confident, however, that, in the majority of instances, insufficient attention is paid to the necessity of finding work for those drawing rations. In the Great Southern towns, where rationing is in the hands of the police, I found only one Station—Katanning—where no employable native appeared on the ration list. One can hardly blame the police. They have other duties to perform and, as I shall endeavour to point out later when dealing with the administration, police officers are by no means suitable people for appointment as Protectors. The adoption of a system of Divisional Protectors will do much, I am sure, to assist the organisation of employment for the natives.

For those natives, and more particularly the half-castes who are now to be found around the Southern towns, and whose deplorable conditions of life have been referred to earlier, some provision, as I have pointed out, must be made without delay. On the settlement which was opened at Carrolup in 1915 buildings were erected at a cost of approximately

£5,000. These buildings—most elaborate in structure—were of a kind which suggested that the place was to be regarded as a permanent settlement. It was, however, closed in 1922 and the inmates transferred to the Moore River Settlement. The transfer was no more successful than was to be anticipated. It resulted in overcrowding at Moore River, and caused unhappiness to the natives, by reason of their being moved to country so different from that to which they belonged. The Carrolup Settlement was discontinued on the ground of economy and, with the exception of a small area, the land comprising the reserve was alienated and taken up as farming properties. Some of the buildings have been sold, but there still remain others, of which it is doubtful whether any use can be made unless Carrolup Settlement be reopened. The idea of reopening Carrolup does not seem to me, however, to be altogether practicable. I say this for more than one reason. In the first place, it would be a matter of some expense to resume an area suitable in size for native settlement, and, secondly, even were the expense justified, it would be doubtfully fair to those people who have taken up the country and made their homes there with every justification for feeling they would not be disturbed. There is a third reason which, if sound, provides a very strong ground for not reopening Carrolup—it has been suggested by a number of the surrounding settlers that the country is too poor for the purpose. I do not care to express an opinion on this. Before the establishment of Carrolup the District Surveyor reported (10th March, 1913) that his inquiries led him to believe there was very little good land in the area but that the advantages were, firstly, permanent water in the big pools, and, secondly, the absence of objection from the Road Boards concerned. In July, 1913, the Agricultural Commissioner for the South-West reported that the site was ideal for the proposed settlement, suitable for grazing, intensive culture and for growing vegetables and all kinds of crops. In 1915, in the course of a long report, the Chief Protector stated that the water in the pools was brackish. The settlers have advanced this as another reason why Carrolup should not be reopened. I do not think I shall be avoiding my responsibility if I refrain from expressing an opinion on the suitability or otherwise of Carrolup. I am not a judge of country, but I should like to see a settlement established on land where the half-castes may be trained to work for themselves—not merely to carry out the white man's wishes. The Government has at its disposal officers capable of selecting such a site. Wherever it is selected, there will no doubt be opposition from the surrounding settlers. It must, in my opinion, be in country to which these people are accustomed, and it must be country fit for cultivation. Merely grazing country would not meet the requirements of the position. The most that could be said of such a settlement would be that it would keep a certain number of half-castes occupied in looking after stock. It would be only a slight improvement on Moore River, which, to my mind, is entirely unsuitable. Much more is necessary. Put them on country where they can live under decent conditions, have their own plots and grow their own produce, and make them realise that there is an obligation on them to look after themselves. I do not think this scheme is idealistic. I feel confident that, with proper management, as much success can be achieved here as has been done in Queensland.

Dealing with institutions in the Metropolitan Area, the home for girls at East Perth is, in my opinion, a useful institution at which half-caste girls are trained for domestic service and to which those employed in the country may go when on holiday. (Chiefly the girls come for more intensive training on leaving the settlement at Moore River. So long as the policy of bringing to Perth only those girls who are not being cared for suitably in their own districts is observed, I see in this home a very useful training ground. I have pointed out what are in my opinion the dangers of bringing a certain type of highly sexed half-caste girl to the city, and I hope this aspect will not be disregarded. I cannot help thinking that positions of domestic service on farms in the country will be more suitable for these girls and offer less risk than similar occupation in the city. So long as they are well trained, however, and at present they appear to be, and are sent to service at homes where they will be well looked after, the Home at East Perth will be doing a work of usefulness. It requires further accommodation and, as it stands on part of the State school grounds—being formerly the head teacher's quarters—I think an endeavour should be made to obtain some further portion of the school grounds to enable the building to be extended. There seems to be an ample area to permit of this being done. As the house is used to accommodate girls sent in for treatment as out-patients at the Perth Hospital, it is necessary that it should be in some central position as at present.

Although not "native settlements" as the term is generally understood, I think I should here refer to two institutions which I have inspected and at which quarter-caste children are cared for. One is at Queen's Park and is under the control of Sister Kate, formerly of Parkerville Children's Home; the other at Buckland Hill, where Miss Lefroy is in charge. They are both part of the same organisation and it is intended, when further finance is available, to extend the accommodation at Queen's Park and to discontinue the Buckland Hill home. At the present time, there are 12 inmates of each home, the very small children being at Buckland Hill. At Queen's Park, the children attend the State school, and at Buckland Hill there is a kindergarten at the home. The object of the homes is to care for and train quarter-caste children and children of lighter colour who cannot be provided for elsewhere, and I regard these institutions as being of great value. The Queen's Park home has been established from the resources of Sister Kate and Miss Lefroy, augmented by public donations, and, although at present subsidised to an extent, a great part of the cost is borne by these two ladies. I hope it will be found possible to assist this institution financially to extend its premises.

During my investigations a reference has been made in several instances to the question of dealing with the type of native who exercises a bad influence over the others. He is a difficult problem. He belongs really nowhere; he is a nomad, a loafer and very often criminally inclined. A term of imprisonment has no good effect on him. There should undoubtedly be a settlement for these people corresponding to Palm Island in Queensland. There are sufficient islands off the coast of this State to enable a selection to be made without difficulty. In these cases there need be no fear of inflicting undue hard-

ship by removing a man from his own country. He probably has no particular country; if he has, he has done little or nothing to justify his being left in it and, for the sake of others, he should be removed.

1.—(f) *Employment of aboriginals and persons of aboriginal origin.*

Section 17 of the Aborigines Act makes it unlawful to employ any aboriginal or male half-caste under the age of 14 years, or female half-caste, except under permit or permit and agreement.

A permit may provide for the employment of one native, or it may be a general permit to employ natives without limitation in number.

The permit system may be said to have worked well since its introduction. It was certainly a vast improvement on the methods which obtained prior to the passing of the present Act. If it has weaknesses, they are due to the manner in which the permits are issued. I have seen a number of cases in which general permits are issued without any specified number of natives being inserted. Although the Act does not limit the number, the Department should, I think, know the number of natives an individual is employing, and the form of permit contains a space for the insertion of such number. I would go further. The interests of a native under employment cannot properly be guarded unless the identity of the native is known to the Department. On many stations—indeed on most of them—I have seen a complete list of all natives employed, indigents and children. It would be a matter of no difficulty for the employer, when applying for his permit, to submit a list of the names of those he wishes to employ. These natives are in touch with civilisation and the Department should know its wards.

The fees charged are for a single permit 5s, and for a general permit £2 per annum. These fees seem to me to be nominal, but, in view of a suggestion I shall make later for a medical fund to be contributed to as a condition of employment, they should, I think, remain as at present.

So far as my investigations have carried me, I have seen little evidence of effort on the part of Protectors to obtain employment for natives within their districts. This refers chiefly to those natives in Southern towns—some natives will look for work, but so many of them are content to draw rations and spend their time in idleness. I do not think the Protectors should be blamed too much. They are honorary Protectors, often appointed without previous reference to them, and have other matters, for which they are paid, to attend to. It is an unsatisfactory system, and, as I shall submit with greater detail under clause (3), one which should be altered.

The form of permit provides as a condition that the employer shall supply the native employed with substantial, good and sufficient rations, clothing and blankets, and also medicines and medical attendance where practicable and necessary. The last part of the conditions, relative to medical treatment, has led to confusion, and voluminous correspondence and interviews have not succeeded in placing the matter on a basis of certainty. There should be a clear definition of the employer's obligation and, had this been arrived at before, a good deal of the antagonism which is apparent between certain pastoralists and

the Department would have been removed. Earlier I have written of the care given to sick natives by pastoralists. There may be exceptions, but I feel sure there are not many. Had the employer cared to adhere to the exact terms of his permit, he might have called on the Department to assume the responsibility of medical treatment for all natives other than those actually employed by him: but, generally speaking, he has not done so, and any native on the station, whether worker, indigent, or child, has received the same care and attention at the pastoralist's expense.

I have said that, in my opinion, it is time that the position should be clearly defined. My inclination is towards the establishment of a medical fund. Such a fund is in operation in the Northern Territory and the Chief Protector of Aborigines (Dr. Cook) assured me that the system has proved satisfactory.

The granting of a permit to employ an aboriginal or aboriginals should be subject to conditions relative to this question of medical treatment. These conditions should not be included in the form of permit, as they will require some elaboration and should be made the subject of regulations somewhat on the lines of those in force in the Northern Territory. I suggest the following as a guide:—

1. The holder of a permit shall, as soon as is reasonably possible, notify in writing to the nearest or most accessible protector the condition of any aboriginal employee who is sick, injured, or affected by any disease.

2. Whenever any aboriginal is sick, injured, or affected by any disease, and it is expedient in the interests of the aboriginal that he should be removed to some place for medical attention or treatment, the holder of the permit under which that aboriginal is employed shall—

(a) (i) as soon as is reasonably possible provide free transport for the aboriginal, and send him to a protector; and (ii) if required so to do by a protector arrange and pay for the transport of the aboriginal to such place as the protector specifies; or

(b) as soon as is reasonably possible provide free transport for the aboriginal, and send him to the nearest or most accessible hospital.

3. The holder of a permit shall, as soon as it is reasonably possible, notify in writing to the nearest or most accessible protector the condition of any aboriginal who is sick, injured, or affected by any disease if the aboriginal is employed by him, or if he becomes aware of the sick, injured, or diseased condition of any other aboriginals.

4. The holder of a permit shall, for the purposes of the Medical Fund, pay to the divisional protector the following contributions:—

Where five or less than five aboriginals are employed— per annum.

Where more than five, but less than eleven— per annum.

Where more than ten, but less than twenty-one— per annum.

Where more than twenty, but less than forty-one— per annum.

Where more than forty— per annum.

5. The holder of a permit shall keep and use for the benefit of aboriginals a supply of drugs, dressings, and instruments for rendering first aid to aboriginals.

6. Compliance with the above regulations shall relieve the holder of a permit from any further responsibility financial or otherwise for the medical or surgical treatment of aboriginals.

It will be noticed that I have not suggested the amount of the contributions. This will probably be a matter for actuarial calculation, but, subject to that,

I know of no reason why such contributions should be in excess of those prescribed by the regulations adopted in the Northern Territory.

Other aspects of the question of employment have been dealt with elsewhere in this report and require no further comment here.

1 (g).—Missions.

In writing of this matter I am hopeful that the views I express will not encourage further controversy on this already very controversial subject; I hope that nothing I may write will be regarded as evidence of lack of appreciation of what I am sure is a whole-hearted desire of missionaries to benefit the natives. But for such a genuine desire, it would be impossible to find men and women who would be prepared to face the isolation and hardship inseparable from the life on a remote mission. Beyond doubt the missionaries amongst the natives of Western Australia are doing, without exception, a work of great self-sacrifice. I hope that sacrifice will not be in vain.

During my investigation I have visited 10 missions, conducted by representatives of the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Presbyterian Churches, by the United Aborigines Mission (inter-denominational) and in one case by an individual person. These missions are in touch with and caring for approximately 1,300 natives. (See photographs E., F., and G. in Appendix.)

It is not my intention to deal separately and in a comparative way with the methods of the various denominations: rather do I desire to make some observations on matters to which I think all in control of missions should direct their attention and consider in their future operations.

It is admitted by all those connected with missions who have appeared before the Commission, and indeed it is obvious, that the primary object of the missions is to Christianise the native. The word "mission" used as it is in the present instance connotes that object. The mission must necessarily, therefore, be established in country where contact may be made with as many natives as possible. So it is that in the Northern Division of the State missions are found in the territory of the natives where no settlement has previously taken place and where, in consequence, the natives have had little or no knowledge of the white man and his habits, religious or otherwise. Are these people then suitable subjects from whom to expect a ready response to Christian teaching? Is there not some preliminary work to be done before the Christianising process begins? Imagine the bush native living his wild—possibly savage—life suddenly taken from his natural bush surroundings to a settlement of buildings—always including a church—to receive instruction—even though at that stage it be elementary instruction—in the principles of Christianity. Is such a process likely to meet with success? Is it not necessary that he should at first, and for some considerable time, be trained in habits of civilisation more universal than the habit of going to church—first and foremost in the habit of work? The only form of work the native has known has been that which has produced for him the means of living—the hunting of game for food: he has done that through sheer necessity, but it has, combined with his natural mode of living, kept him healthy and vigorous, and, I am sure, perfectly happy. That is the state in which the mis-

sionary finds him. With the establishment of the mission he is brought under its influence straight from his bush life. To lay the foundation of such an influence, he must be provided with food—without that he will not stay; here, I think, is to be found the first weakness: in so many cases he gets his food for nothing, and the element of laziness, which is inherent in him, is encouraged. He should be made to work; if there is not enough work to go around, those natives not working should be sent to the bush to get their own food. I saw one mission only where this principle obtained. I am convinced of the wisdom of such a principle. Not only does it ensure that the native will not be fed for nothing, but it keeps him in touch with his bush craft, and the children are trained in it also. The majority of the missions desire to keep the people employed, but the country taken up does not always lend itself to extensive operations. The question then arises—"Has the right country been taken up for mission work?" The answer of the missionary comes readily enough. "We selected this spot because it gave us contact with the largest number of natives." From the missionary point of view I understand that; from the point of view of what is best for the native it is not satisfactory. I do not say that in all cases—or even in many of them—new areas for the work should, at this stage, be selected. The missions in most instances are firmly established and are likely to continue their operations in their present areas. But I do with all emphasis suggest that this process of Christianising the native should take a more leisurely form; if it comes as part of a natural progress, well and good; but other elements of civilisation should first be introduced into the native mentality—otherwise there will always be the risk of the ready response being in the mind of the native merely an easy means of obtaining food without trouble.

The native in the first place is attracted to the mission not only by a desire to obtain food and tobacco, but also, it would seem, by curiosity—many of them not having previously seen a white man. Having attached himself to the mission, he soon adapts himself to his new diet and is quite ready to acquire his food in the easiest way. If he can get it merely by going to church once or twice a day, he will be perfectly content, but the danger is that he looks upon his church-going merely as a means of being fed. He has no cultivated religion or understanding of worship. Fear of evil spirits is to him the only restraining influence. Observations on this effect were made by Sir Hubert Wilkins in his book "Undiscovered Australia," and in my travels I saw no reason to disagree with him. But apparently much can be done by working on practical lines, and this is exemplified by the same writer in his reference to Cowal Creek, Cape York Peninsula. He writes:—

The native settlement was rather interesting because there the aborigines, under the guidance of a mission-trained Torres Straits Islander, maintained a village in a most respectable manner, and carried on agricultural pursuits. The aborigines of this area, with little food to be obtained by hunting, have been forced to adopt agricultural methods, and, owing to the fertility of the soil, they now have food in abundance. They have developed a cheerfulness in their mental outlook, and with fixed abodes they have more leisure, and have acquired a certain amount of culture, but this rather tends towards the material and things of the flesh. It has been said that the aboriginal does not take kindly to agriculture, and, as far as their services as hired labourers are con-

cerned, that is so, but at Cowal Creek it has been proved that the natives will work for themselves. So long as the white missionaries were with the natives, the latter seemed to think it was the duty of the white man to be responsible for all development, but since a coloured teacher has been with them they have followed his example, and are found to be enthusiastic agriculturists. They have their own garden plots and banana plantations, and are running boats and industries on a communistic basis. Without any encouragement from the white man the natives have developed to the point of maintaining clean, well-kept villages and governing their own affairs in an orderly manner under a council appointed from among their fellows. The houses in the village are swept clean daily; they tend their gardens in the early mornings, and meet for religious worship at night. These meetings are thoroughly appreciated, and, while it may be that the natives do not quite understand the dogma taught, they do appreciate the atmosphere established by congregational effort—even more so, perhaps, than do many whites whose example they follow. The children are taught simple arithmetic, reading, and money values, and show a healthy development in mind and body. The councillors solve all domestic problems, and one of their number is appointed police sergeant, and is entitled to carry out their orders.

It seems from this, and I accept Sir Hubert Wilkins' opinion as one well worth having, that much can be done with proper methods. From what I have seen of missions there are few which show signs of having the above ideals in view. If they have, then, as matters are at present, I cannot see much success ahead of them. Their country is not fitted for the purpose; their supervisors are more missionary than agriculturist. They are prone to be too indulgent with the native. The opinion is too often heard from the pastoralists—"I would not have a mission-trained boy on the place." These people, and many of them have spent a lifetime almost among natives, have nothing against missions; their objection is to the method adopted with the native. One fundamental principle of Christianity is "brotherhood." The danger of adopting that principle with the native is that by familiarity he will be spoiled. The native does not appear to understand that attitude; he regards it as weakness on the part of the white. All he looks for is fairness; he must never be "let down"—a promise to him must never be broken. That principle combined with firmness is what the native expects and what is best for him.

I know that the majority of the missions lack the funds necessary to enable them to do all they would like to do, but that does not apply to them all, and I think that further development work might be carried on at no great expense even by those who cannot afford to embark on higher technical training. It is demoralising to a white man to be on the dole; it is equally so to a native to experience equivalent conditions.

I should, I feel, refer specifically to the position of the United Aborigines Mission at Mount Margaret. I emphatically do not agree with the statement of the missionary that "the conditions of employment of to-day are only modern slavery." This is just one of those extravagant statements which are calculated to do harm to missions. If the missionary really believes that, there may be a good deal of truth in the statement made by adjoining pastoralists that "the boys trained on the mission are spoiled." But I am inclined to discount many of the statements made both by this missionary and by his neighbours, the pastoralists. There is obvious ill-feeling between them, and it is difficult to ascertain the real facts. The missionary re-

sents the fact that land has been taken from the natives and turned into pastoral properties. The pastoralists are annoyed because people from the Mission camp at their wells with their dogs, and keep the stock away. An atmosphere of irritation is noticeable, and I see no possibility of this Mission being successful so long as this continues. There are on an average 200 people at the Mission. Many come from the bush because they cannot feed themselves. They are given Government rations, and they do no work. More country is, I think, needed. The missionary wants some of the adjoining pastoral areas. The pastoralists—supported by the police constable at Laverton—say that the Mission should transfer its operations to an area further East where already a reserve has been proclaimed. I think the latter course is preferable. Even if the Government felt inclined to resume land for the purpose of enlarging the area on which the Mission stands, which is extremely unlikely, there would still be pastoral properties surrounding the Mission, and trouble would continue. The only difficulty in the way of moving the Mission is the cost of taking down, transporting, and re-erecting the existing buildings. As the pastoralists are so anxious to have the Mission moved, it may be that they would contribute towards the cost. The Government should take the initial action in endeavouring to establish a new location for the Mission, as at present it cannot be successful from the point of view of the natives. It would be difficult for the Government to exercise any great degree of control over the methods of a mission. It should at least be able to decide its location.

Sunday Island as a mission site also calls for more than passing comment. The Superintendent regards it as a good site geographically, but not industrially. He would welcome a change. As indicated by my remarks in my interim report on the question of leprosy, I inclined to the view that Sunday Island might be a suitable site for a leprosarium. I had not then seen the island. Since writing that report I have visited Sunday Island, and see no reason to change the opinion I then expressed. Buildings are there which might be taken over for the new purpose, and the Mission established in some other locality more suitable to its work. (See photograph H. in Appendix.)

A mission is in its initial stages at Gnowangerup, but the missionary is of opinion that the present site is unsuitable. This is borne out by the Chairman of the Road Board and by the local doctor. As a result of my inspection, I agree with the views expressed by these witnesses. The camp on which the natives live at present is in close proximity to the sanitary and rubbish depots, and is infested with flies. If this Mission is to continue its activities, then a more suitable location should be given it. An inspection of a proposed site was made by me in company with the above witnesses. It is partly fenced, and has a good water supply. It is further from the town. Its area is 190 acres, and the purchase price is 25s. per acre. The Mission is anxious to buy it, and I think the Government should, unless it is prepared to look after these natives elsewhere, encourage the Mission in its proposal.

In making my observations on the work of missions, I do not overlook the fact that the care and supervision of the natives exercised by missions have resulted in many cases in making the natives

more peaceably inclined, and in removing them from the influence of undesirable whites. Nor do I disregard the educational work being done amongst the children. It is to the children, I think, that the missionary should look chiefly for any real response to religious training. The school work of the missions is, in most cases, carried out on sound lines, and the results as seen by me were encouraging. (See photograph I. in Appendix.) It may be said that, from this point of view alone, the work of the missions has not been in vain. But the missionaries themselves regard these matters merely as a beginning. I hope that in continuing the training they will not lose sight of the necessity always of making the native a useful person. They stress his inherent ability, and cite many individual cases to prove it. Let them do their best to develop such ability, and remember that a Christian outlook (if such a thing may with reason be anticipated) will not of itself fit the native for the life to which the missionaries say he is entitled.

Before leaving this subject, I feel I must emphasise the necessity (as I regard it) of those in charge of missions being married. I realise, of course, that in the case of the missions of one denomination this is not possible. In most of the others I found married people in charge but, in one mission, of the six members of the staff, one only was married. I do not desire this comment to be regarded as a suggestion that any improper practices are carried on; I saw no evidence to suggest such a condition of affairs, but I feel convinced that in a mission established in isolated country, more particularly where the staff comprises both men and women, married people should be selected.

1.—(h) *Trial of aboriginal offenders.*

Although this matter has recently been the cause of a good deal of comment, the system of bringing all aboriginal offenders before our ordinary Courts of Justice, no matter the nature of the charge, has been the subject of judicial criticism for many years; but the system has continued. Perhaps it has continued because authorities have hesitated to interfere with a procedure in the extreme fairness of which they feel some pride; perhaps because the matter has not been deemed of sufficient importance to justify interference. As far as a great many natives are concerned, I see no reason why there should be any change in our present system. There are many who have been born and brought up in civilised communities who have little of the tribal instinct in them and who have, by reason of their long association with whites, quite a working knowledge of the difference between right and wrong. Why should they not be amenable to our laws and, when offences are alleged against them, be tried by the Courts set up to administer such laws? But there is another class of native against whom our laws would seem to operate unfairly—the bush native who commits what under our law would be a crime, but which is perfectly in order according to his tribal customs—which amount to his law. In such a case, the whole procedure, from the moment of arrest, seems inappropriate. In the case of a white person accused of an offence, he is, or perhaps I should say should be, cautioned that he need not, unless he so desires, make any statement. Whether he is in fact cautioned in that way or not, he in most instances knows sufficient to be able to look after his own interests. He is given

every opportunity of preparing his defence. The procedure favours him to a degree some might consider almost absurd, in order that he shall not be unfairly treated. On the other hand, in the case of a bush native arrested on some charge arising out of tribal disturbance, or for cattle killing—which seemed up to a point to be one of the most frequent charges—evidence has on many occasions been given of the admission of the accused person. How was that admission obtained? Can one imagine the arresting constable reciting the formula he would use, or should use, when arresting a white man. And if so, can one go further and imagine the bush native understanding what the constable is talking about? And is it not apparent that, if the constable asked the native if he killed a bullock, the native would say "Yes" even if it were a bullock he had killed five years before. However, the admission is there and is sufficient to justify the arrest, regardless of the possible weakness of the other evidence against the accused. The accused native and the witnesses are then taken under escort to the nearest Court—it may be 200 or more miles away—and placed in the dock to answer the charge. He has brought no witnesses with him—his mental equipment, even if he understands what is going on, does not enable him to think of that before leaving his country, and his protector—well, at that moment the protector is a police constable, and, of course, his duty is to arrest the man and bring him to trial. In the event of a conviction, and the case seems sufficiently one-sided to justify one, the prisoner is sent to gaol. After his sentence has been served, he returns to his country, not in any spirit of humility, but, on the contrary, feeling in every way superior to others of his tribe who have not been so fortunate.

I do not think that the question of tribal custom as a defence has any great bearing on this subject. If such a defence affected only the question of punishment, the matter would still call for reform, because, whatever punishment were imposed, the native's tribal companions would know nothing of its nature, and it would not act as any deterrent; but the defence of tribal custom might result in the acquittal of a native of an offence for which he should really be punished. As conditions are now, the natives' bush life and customs are being continually further affected by white influence, and it is well that, even before such an influence comes to him, the native should be taught that his habits of killing are not right.

What is required in my view is, firstly, a different tribunal—one that will really enable the native to understand what is going on and the proceedings of which can be listened to and understood by others of the tribe; secondly, a different form of penalty. That imprisonment acts neither as a punishment nor as a deterrent to others has been advanced in evidence by more than one witness experienced among natives. The only alternative which has been suggested as an effective deterrent is that of whipping, and I am inclined to the view that such a punishment, carried out without undue severity in the presence of as many of the tribe as possible, would be more appropriate to the natives than a term of imprisonment.

The form the tribunal should take requires consideration: I am not favourably inclined towards a

court constituted as suggested by the Chief Protector, the personnel being in my opinion too cumbersome for effective work. The proposal was that the court should comprise a resident magistrate (as chairman), the Chief Protector, or his nominee, some person to be nominated by the Minister, and the head man of the tribe to which the accused belonged.

For the North of the State, I should prefer to see the divisional protector, if a man with the qualifications to be mentioned later in Clause (3) can be obtained, clothed with magisterial powers, so that on his patrol he could, on the spot, investigate complaints, explaining when the white point of view conflicts with the black, and exercising his influence over the members of the tribe.

2.—*Laws relating to aboriginals and persons of aboriginal origin and suggested amendments.*

The present Aborigines Act has been in force since 1906. With the exception of a few amendments, the law has not been altered.

In 1929 a Bill to amend the Act was introduced to Parliament, and was passed by the Legislative Council, but it failed to pass the Assembly.

In 1932 it was proposed to enact a few of the more important amendments suggested in 1929, but it was found impracticable to include this in the programme for that session.

In August, 1933, Cabinet approved of the introduction of a Bill to amend the Act. The Bill was drafted, but no doubt the appointment of this Royal Commission was responsible for the fact that it was not introduced. Consequently, the Act remains virtually as it was passed almost thirty years ago.

I have considered the proposals as set out in the draft Bill, and, in order to give effect to the recommendations of this report, it will be necessary that some of these be re-drafted.

I suggest that provision be made as follows:—

1. That the present system of control by a Chief Protector be abolished, and, in lieu thereof, a system of divisional control be instituted by establishing districts each of which will be under the control of a divisional protector, who will be responsible to the Minister.

2. That a permanent secretary be appointed to the Department, and that his duties be to control the accounts and records, and generally supervise the office in Perth.

3. That the definition of "half-caste," in Section 2 of the Act, be amended to include persons of aboriginal origin in a remote degree:

It will be necessary to insert a safe-guarding provision that persons within this category who are properly cared for will not be brought within the ambit of this definition:

It is suggested, therefore, that, before including a person of this category, an application should be made to a magistrate who would decide on the merits of the case whether or not such person should be subject to the Act.

4. That greater control be given over half-caste minors, and that for this purpose:—

(a) the Minister be deemed the legal guardian of every half-caste child until that child attains the age of sixteen years;

(b) the Minister have power to delegate his authority as guardian to a divisional protector;

(c) on application being made to a magistrate, the magistrate be empowered to make an order in an appropriate case extending the age to 21 years.

[*Extract from Government Gazette, Friday, 23rd February, 1934.*]

ROYAL COMMISSION

WESTERN AUSTRALIA, } By His Excellency Sir James Mitchell,
TO WIT. } K.C.M.G., Lieutenant-Governor in and
JAMES MITCHELL, } over the State of Western Australia
Lieutenant Governor. } and its Dependencies in the Common-
[L.S.] } wealth of Australia.

To Henry Doyle Moseley, Stipendiary Magistrate, Perth,
Western Australia:

I, THE said Lieutenant-Governor, acting with the advice and consent of the Executive Council, do hereby appoint you Henry Doyle Moseley to be a Commissioner to investigate, report, and advise upon the following matters:—

(1) The social and economic conditions of aboriginals and persons of aboriginal origin, with special reference to—

(a) the inclusion or exclusion of different classes of persons of aboriginal origin in or from native camps ;

(b) proximity of native camps to towns ;

(c) physical well-being of aboriginals, and any suggested measures for amelioration ;

(d) disease amongst aboriginals and measures for their treatment ;

(e) native settlements ;

(f) employment of aboriginals and persons of aboriginal origin ;

(g) missions ;

(h) trial of aboriginal offenders ;

(2) Laws relating to aboriginals and persons of aboriginal origin and suggested amendments.

(3) The administration of the Aborigines Department generally.

(4) Allegations which have appeared in the Press since the 1st day of July, 1930, relative to the ill-treatment of aboriginals in Western Australia.

And I declare that you shall, by virtue of this Commission, be a Royal Commission within the Royal Commissioners' Powers Act, 1902, as reprinted in the Appendix to the Sessional Volume of Statutes for the year 1928, and that you shall have the powers of a Royal Commission or the Chairman thereof under that Act.

And I hereby request you, as soon as reasonably may be, to report to me in writing the result of this your Commission.

Given under my hand and the Public Seal of the said State, at Perth, this 21st day of February, 1934.

By His Excellency's command,

(Sgd.) J. WILLCOCK,
Acting Premier.

GOD SAVE THE KING !!!

5. That, in order to provide for proper medical, surgical, and hospital treatment of aborigines and half-castes who become ill or are injured or affected by any disease while in the service of employers, it be made a condition of every permit that a fee, to be fixed by regulation, be paid by the employer into a special fund to be controlled by the Minister, and that the proceeds of the fund be utilised to provide the cost of such medical, surgical, and hospital treatment:

It should be provided in the Act that, if a contribution of this nature be made to the fund by an employer, such employer is to be absolved from any liability under the Workers' Compensation Act.

6. That native courts be established to deal with offenders whose offences arise out of tribal customs, including capital offences.

That a court be constituted of some person to be appointed by the Governor who has a knowledge of native lore and customs.

That the penalty to be inflicted by native courts be ordinarily in the nature of corporal punishment, or for more serious cases banishment to the island settlement recommended for delinquent natives:

These provisions should apply to the native known as the "bush native," and not to the native whose life brings him into contact with white civilisation.

Before any trial is commenced before a native court application should be made to a Judge of the Supreme Court, who should make an order for trial before such native court if he is satisfied that the offender is a bush native, and that the offence arises out of a tribal custom.

7. That, relative to the trial of natives, a new provision be inserted in the Act that no admission of guilt or confession before trial shall be sought or obtained from any aboriginal or half-caste charged or suspected of any offence punishable as mentioned in the preceding clause, or by death, or imprisonment in the first instance, except with the consent of the divisional protector of the district, to which such aboriginal or half-caste belongs, and that if any such admission or confession be obtained it shall not be admissible or received in evidence.

8. That Section 43 of the Act be amended by inserting a new subsection, as follows, in lieu of the existing Subsection (1):—

(1) Any person (except an aboriginal or half-caste)—

(a) who habitually lives with aboriginals or half-castes, or with any aboriginal or half-caste not his wife or her husband, or

(b) who cohabits with or has sexual intercourse with any aboriginal or half-caste who is not his wife or her husband shall be liable to imprisonment for a period not less than six months, and not more than two years.

9. That, for the better control of disease amongst natives, new provisions should be inserted in the Act, as follows:—

(1) A divisional protector may authorise some suitable person or persons to examine any aboriginal or half-caste suspected of being infected with disease.

(2) Any person or persons so authorised may use such force as may be necessary to compel such aboriginal or half-caste to undergo examination accordingly, and to submit to such treatment as in the circumstances may be necessary.

(3) Any aboriginal or half-caste who refuses to submit himself or herself to examination or treatment, or who obstructs any person acting under any such authority commits an offence against this Act.

10. That, in order to make it more difficult for natives to obtain intoxicating liquor, new provisions should be made, as follows:—

(1) Any person, being the holder of any license under the Licensing Act for the sale of spirituous or fermented liquor, who shall permit or suffer any aboriginal or half-caste not exempted from the provisions of this Act to enter, remain on, or

loiter about his licensed premises shall be guilty of an offence against this Act.

(2) Any aboriginal or half-caste not exempted from the provisions of this Act who enters, remains on, or loiters about premises in respect of which a license as aforesaid is held, shall be guilty of an offence against this Act:

Provided that this section shall not apply to any aboriginal or half-caste employed on the licensed premises under a permit granted by a divisional protector.

11. That provision be inserted to enable an appeal to be made to a magistrate in the event of a protector refusing to grant a permit to employ an aboriginal, and in the event of the Minister refusing to grant a certificate of exemption under Section 63 of the Act.

3. *The administration of the Aborigines Department generally.*

It seems in accordance with time-honoured precedent that Government methods should be the subject of adverse criticism. I do not suppose the State of Western Australia is singular in this respect. Possibly if the operations of some private enterprises received the same publicity as that given to Government concerns, criticism might more generally be distributed.

The Aborigines Department has not been free from such comment, although, of those who have given evidence before the Commission, few have been very severe in their strictures.

Apart altogether from the details of the organisation, of which I shall write later, it does seem to me a matter of impossibility that the affairs of the natives should be adequately governed by one officer having his headquarters in Perth. That is what the present form of administration amounts to. There are, it is true, no fewer than 102 honorary protectors scattered throughout the State. It may, however, be said of the majority of those that, beyond signing a few permits for employment, they have nothing to do with aborigines; of those (e.g., the police) whose contact with the natives extends further, it is apparent that their authority is limited in the main to the carrying out of instructions issued by the Chief Protector. They have no authority to act without reference to the Chief Protector and the State is too large to enable such a system to be successful. So long as the present system of honorary protectors exists, I should not suggest greater authority being given. Their protectorship is in most cases a sideline, and no doubt subservient to their ordinary or real occupation. They may or may not be suitable people for the work. To invest them with greater authority than they now possess would, especially in the case of police protectors, be unwise. If the present system is to be continued, then this report may I think be regarded as valueless, as no less difficulty will be experienced in bringing into operation any suggested reforms than obtains at present. There must of necessity be a central office in Perth where records may be kept, but the work of the office should not be allowed to interfere with the Chief Protector's obvious duty of travelling. It is impossible, as matters now are, for that officer to travel to any extent. And even if it were, this would not meet all requirements. The State is too large to enable native problems to be dealt with satisfactorily even if the Chief Protector travelled the whole time. There must, in my view, be Divisional Protectors, permanent officials who will devote the whole of their

time to matters affecting the natives within their respective districts. They should have power to act not merely to recommend certain action to the Chief Protector. I see no great difficulty in the way of this, unless it be the cost involved. My point of view will, I hope, be understood when I say that I am not greatly concerned with that aspect. I am not suggesting anything in the nature of extravagant reform. I am merely convinced that without Divisional control, the administration will never prove successful. The selection of Divisional Protectors must, of course, receive the most careful consideration. If their appointment is to be regarded as an opportunity to promote officers already in Government departments in Perth, then the idea may as well be abandoned. A thorough understanding of the native (if such an attribute is possible) is a first essential. If it is possible to find a medical man with something approaching such an understanding, then, so far as the North or Kimberley Division is concerned, the Protector should be a medical man. If it is not so possible, then a medical officer must be appointed in addition to a Divisional Protector. Under Clause (d) I have dealt with the question of leprosy and other diseases in the North. In my interim report I endeavoured to point out the seriousness of the position. Even if every leper is found within a short period of time, which is extremely doubtful, other diseases will continue to provide one of the most serious native problems, and, if the Protector for the North is not a medical man, a travelling doctor will certainly be necessary. He will also, of course, be an honorary protector. It will naturally be essential that he possesses qualifications in tropical disease research. When the native understands that he is at once his protector and one who will relieve his ailments, he will have the greater confidence in him, and the protector will not be regarded, as so many Government men are, as a suspicious character. I think at least two of the Divisional Protectors should be appointed without delay. One should have jurisdiction throughout the Kimberleys and North-West as far South as the Tableland District. That provides him with a very large area, but, bearing in mind that for four or five months in the year travelling through the Kimberleys would be impossible for him, that period might be devoted to problems in the Southern part of his district. A second Divisional Protector should have control of the area South of the Tableland, including the Ashburton, Gascoyne, and Murchison districts. The remainder of the State in the Midlands, Goldfields and South-Western areas should I think be capable of control by the present Chief Protector. The natives to be found in that area have so long been accustomed to life in a civilised community that their problems can more easily than the problems of the North be dealt with in Perth; but I should like to see the title of "Chief Protector" altered so that it may be made clear that within their respective districts each Protector has equal authority and is responsible only to the Minister or the permanent head of the department. There is really no reason why the title "Chief Protector" should imply control over the actions of the other Protectors, but it might possibly be construed that way. To avoid such a possibility, the chief position in Perth might be called "Divisional Protector and Secretary." For the present, to test the working of the new organisa-

tion, I consider these three Protectors will prove sufficient. In the event of the new system proving of greater efficiency than the present, as I am confident it will, it may still be found that the areas are too large for successful administration. In that case a further appointment could be made. The establishment of Divisional Protectors will do away with the complaint so frequently heard by me during my travels that local conditions are not understood in Perth, and that there is no one of authority with whom matters may be discussed on the spot.

While dealing with this subject it may be well to refer to the suggestion made by some witnesses before the Commission that an Advisory Council should be appointed to help the department in its work. Candidly I do not welcome the idea. If the aborigines were to continue to rely for their protection on one official stationed in Perth and seldom away from that centre, I should consider the suggestion as one of some value. But I do want the Divisional Protectors to have a free hand and to be able to decide matters for the welfare of the natives from their own understanding of the native and their personal observation of the situation. The various bodies who would be represented on such a council would still be, as they always have been, able to place their views before the Minister controlling the department.

It is I think unavoidable that the system of honorary protectors must to a certain extent continue. I am hopeful that the appointment of paid Divisional Protectors will be the means of reducing their number. It is particularly desirable that police officers should be relieved of this position. The police force is apparently considerably understaffed; members of the force are now called upon to perform much work which does not properly come within their police duties, and something must of necessity be neglected. But chiefly the practice of appointing them to be Protectors of aborigines is undesirable because, when called upon to take police action against a native, a constable cannot satisfactorily at the same time act as his Protector. It must necessarily occur that the constable will be confronted with two conflicting sets of instructions, one from his superior police officer, and the other from the Divisional Protector. I cannot see how such a system can be successful. In expressing this opinion I am not suggesting that the police have carried out their work as Protectors otherwise than as fairly as in the circumstances has been possible. From the point of view of everyone concerned, however, the practice seems wholly unfair.

In so far as the Perth office is concerned, the recording branch of the department appears comprehensive and up to date. The Trust Account is in my opinion satisfactorily administered. Each creditor of the account has his or her own Savings Bank pass book, withdrawals are made only at the request of the depositor, and orders are signed for all purchases required. Investments are made in Government bonds and building society shares where any depositor's balance exceeds £50. There are 199 Savings Bank accounts with a total credit balance of £2,058. In addition, investments as above have been made of a sum of £3,955.

Other branches of the office are apparently well organised and conducted. It is no doubt a very busy

office, but, as I have endeavoured to emphasise, the more important outside work has been neglected. Under the existing financial policy, that has been unavoidable. The Chief Protector, having no understudy, has found it difficult to leave his office. For inspections near at hand he has been unable to obtain either a Government motor car or a petrol allowance for the use of his own car. Economy in these directions has, I think, been carried too far.

4.—*Allegations which have appeared in the Press since the 1st day of July, 1930, relative to the ill-treatment of aboriginals in Western Australia.*

The fact that this clause embraces all Press references to the alleged ill-treatment of natives during the past four and a half years renders my task of dealing with it a difficult one. In the first place, it has not been easy to discover the references. I have been supplied by the Aborigines Department with a large volume containing extracts from newspapers, and have endeavoured in that volume to trace any allegations of ill-treatment that may have been the subject of newspaper comment during the long period mentioned. I have not discovered many. Some were of such a date as to render investigation at this stage impossible. The first one of any moment apparently appeared in the *Daily News* of the 25th August, 1931, and referred to the transport of 17 native lepers from Cossack to Darwin in the lugger "Colarmi." It was impossible for me to obtain anything in the nature of evidence regarding this matter. Two years later further criticism appeared in the *West Australian* relative to the removal of further lepers to Darwin from Broome in the lugger "W. S. Rolland." There was a great deal of controversy on this occasion, and I was able to obtain evidence from various people both in Perth and Broome. It may be said at the outset that the representatives of the Kummunya Mission (the owners of the "W. S. Rolland") must be entirely exonerated from any form of blame if, in fact, the conditions obtaining on the lugger did adversely affect the natives on board. The control of the lugger was taken out of the hands of the Mission's representative, the usual master; he, however, sailed with the lugger in another capacity, and, although one might expect him, having been relieved of his command, to be somewhat critical, his evidence is that the patients were very happy on the trip. Mr. B. E. Bardwell, the Wharfinger and Shipping Master at Broome, was of opinion that the boat could have carried three more patients without any discomfort to them, and Mr. Bardwell has had experience of carrying natives by sea on similar boats. A newspaper representative in Broome had much to say in criticism, but he admitted that, in inspecting the "W. S. Rolland," he was actuated by a desire to obtain "news," and, although he had very little to say in favour of the conditions on the ship, he said nothing about them until after the boat had sailed. Captain Scott, who was in charge of the "W. S. Rolland" on this voyage, was also very critical, but apparently did not think that conditions were sufficiently bad to warrant his declining to sail, and admitted to me that he did not tell anybody before he sailed that conditions were unsatisfactory. At Darwin I had an opportunity of questioning Dr. Cook, the Chief Protector of Aborigines, on the matter. No complaints were made to him by anybody

connected with the boat, and the patients, apart from their leprosy state, were in good condition. There seems some reason to believe that a certain amount of jealousy was occasioned by the letting of this contract for the carriage of lepers, and the intervention of so many people in one capacity or another did not help matters. If there are to be further shipments of patients to Darwin, the matter of the arrangements should, I think, be left entirely in the hands of one responsible Government official. Although the voyage of the "W. S. Rolland" was in many ways an unfortunate one, I can find no evidence that anything amounting to ill-treatment was occasioned to the natives.

I may say that in July last I had an opportunity of seeing, off Sunday Island, the leper patients on the schooner "Muriel." The accommodation was in my opinion quite adequate, and the conditions satisfactory.

The "Allegations of Slavery," appearing in the *West Australian* on the 17th May, 1932, were made by Mrs. M. M. Bennett, who appeared as a witness before the Commission. They were in keeping with the many general statements of this nature made by this witness, and really provided nothing specific into which I could inquire. Her views were apparently sent to London, and discussed at a conference of the British Commonwealth League. The newspaper report (*Daily News*, 17-6-33) appears under a heading in very large type, "Natives are Virtually Slaves."

It is much to be regretted that people from this State should send information of this kind to London to be discussed there by organisations, the members of which have little or no knowledge of the aboriginal natives of this country. If the authorities of this State are not alive to the conditions as they actually exist, greater good could be accomplished by people who protest that they have the interests of natives at heart by bringing the matter under the notice of such authorities.

I am, of course, not going to be so foolish as to suggest that isolated cases of cruelty to natives do not exist. I have mentioned that during my travels I have neither come across such cases nor have allegations of such a nature been made to me by witnesses or others I have interviewed.

Under this clause the practice of chaining native prisoners may, I think, be discussed.

I had no opportunity of seeing natives "on the chain" other than the prisoners at Broome Gaol who were working outside. I understand they were chained with the same class of chain as would be used in the case of natives under police escort in the bush, although the prisoners I saw were chained by the ankle and not by the neck. The practice has been described by one witness before the Commission as one causing the greatest misery and degradation. With all respect to that witness—a lady whose views show unmistakably her well-intentioned, but I think extravagant, ideas of what should be done for the native—I noticed no such effect. Indeed, they seemed perfectly comfortable in their chains, they had every freedom of action, and apparently did not notice them. Other witnesses of great experience amongst natives—men of humane ideas and expressing their honest conviction—have said that the practice is not

only necessary in many cases but, properly carried out, inflicts no hardship on the native. The Reverend J. R. B. Love, the Superintendent of Kummuyia Mission, at Port George IV., probably the most satisfactorily conducted mission I inspected, expressed the opinion that chains are infinitely preferable to handcuffs, and the practice is certainly not cruel. He thought a neck chain the most humane way of restraining native prisoners. This opinion was supported by Mr. A. W. Canning, who particularly advocated chaining by the neck rather than by the wrists, the latter method preventing the native from defending himself from attack by insects.

Realising the difficulties of a police escort, possibly consisting of one constable, properly taking charge of a number of wild natives in their own country, I do not see how chaining can be avoided. It would appear to be necessary, both from the point of view of the safety of the escorting constable and also in order to prevent escape. Chaining may possibly have taken place when not strictly necessary. That could hardly be avoided when the decision is left to an individual discretion.

I am told that in the case of the prison natives at Broome their safe custody could not otherwise be assured. I do not dispute that statement, and, as I have already said, the prisoners showed no sign of any adverse effect either physical or mental.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

The views expressed by me in general terms throughout this report may be summarised in the following recommendations:—

1. Appointment of Divisional Protectors as permanent officials.

2. Reduction in number of honorary protectors and abolition of police protectors.

3. Proclamation of an additional reserve North of Leopold Ranges to be a permanent reserve exclusively for aborigines.

4. All existing reserves to be permanent reserves exclusively for aborigines.

5. Complete examination of Northern and North-Western natives for leprosy and venereal disease.

6. Compulsory examination and treatment of natives suffering from disease.

7. Selection of new site as a holding ground for lepers at Derby.

8. Establishment of Leprosarium for Western Australian native lepers at Sunday Island or other similarly isolated area suitable to medical requirements.

9. Investigation of matters contained in recommendations numbered 7 and 8 by authority in tropical diseases.

10. Accommodation for medical and surgical treatment of natives at all hospitals in districts where natives are located.

11. Establishment of medical clinic at Moola Bulla.

12. Further development at Moola Bulla to enable all natives to be employed. Equipment to be provided for vocational training of half-castes.

13. Inspection of Munja Native Station by the Government Tropical Adviser and agricultural development carried on as he may recommend. Necessary equipment to be provided.

14. Organisation of employment of half-caste youths of Broome in the pearling industry.

15. Native camps to be removed from the immediate proximity of towns. Natives not to be allowed in towns without permits.

16. Ration depots to provide only for natives not employable. Those persons in charge to organise all available employment.

17. Establishment of ration depot at Karonie or other suitable place in order to remove natives from the Trans-Australian Railway.

18. Establishment of settlements in Southern districts for care, education and training of coloured children now in camps near Great Southern Railway towns.

19. Establishment of island settlement for delinquent natives.

20. Addition of area adjoining Moore River Native Settlement (if suitable land) to make settlement more self-supporting and more appropriate for the training of half-castes; otherwise the location to be changed.

21. Establishment of special Courts for trial of certain natives.

22. Alteration of sites of missions at Sunday Island, Mount Margaret and Gnowangerup.

23. Additional area of ground for East Perth Home and extension of building.

24. Financial assistance for increased accommodation at Home for quarter-caste children at Queen's Park.

25. Further particulars to be contained in permits to employ natives.

26. Establishment of Medical Fund to be contributed to by employers as a condition of employment of natives.

CONCLUSION.

I am aware that some of the matters recommended by me have been considered by the Department in the past, and that suggested reforms have been impossible owing to lack of funds.

Other of my recommendations may appear to savour of the obvious; if so, it is a fact that the obvious has not hitherto received attention.

In framing my recommendations I have endeavoured, in view of the continuing unsatisfactory state of finance, to deal only with those matters which appear to me to require immediate action. The Department has in the past received a very meagre vote with which to carry on its activities, and the following comparative table dealing with the year 1933 may be of interest:—

State.	Native Population.	Cost to Government. £
Queensland ..	16,957	41,128
New South Wales ..	9,724	53,124
South Australia ..	3,407	23,000
West Australia ..	29,021	28,340

Ethnologists and others of a scientific mind may be disappointed in the matter-of-fact statement of my views. I am not an ethnologist, and to have dealt with the subject from such a standpoint would have been presumption on my part. I have endeavoured to find a practical solution for some of the problems as they appeared to me.

In my introduction to this report I mentioned that I did not intend to support my remarks by frequent reference to statements made by witnesses. I should like, on the other hand, to acknowledge the help I have derived from the evidence given by many of those who appeared before the Commission. Their views have been most carefully considered by me. They are in some instances widely divergent, and I have attempted to steer somewhat of a middle course, hoping that moderation will prevail in those who genuinely have the interests of the native at heart, and that none of that interest will be lost by reason of anything I have said which is not entirely in

accordance with their own views. This is a community matter—a matter which concerns every person in the State. No administration will be effective without support from the people, and, if my report does no more than remedy a few of the matters which seem to me so urgently to call for attention, and stimulate an interest in the welfare of the remaining blacks and the growing number of half-castes, a beginning will have been made which I earnestly hope will lead to advancement in the condition of our native coloured population.

I have the honour to be,

Your Excellency,

Your obedient servant,

H. D. MOSELEY,
Royal Commissioner.

Perth, 24th January, 1935.

Report of the Royal Commissioner Appointed to Investigate, Report, and advise upon matters in relation to the Condition and Treatment of Aborigines (1934)

Corporate Author: Western Australia. Chief Protector of Aborigines

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APPENDIX.



Photograph "A"—Native Hospital, Port Hedland.



Photograph "B"—Darwin Leprosarium.



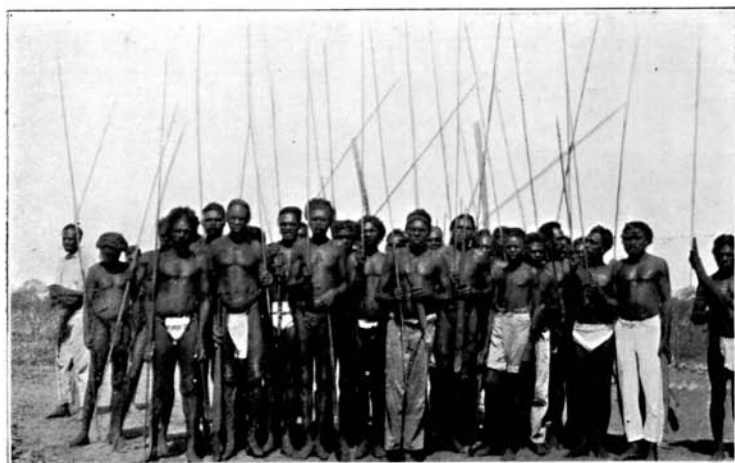
Photograph "C"—West Australian Patients at Darwin Leprosarium.



Photograph "D"—Natives at Violet Valley Station.



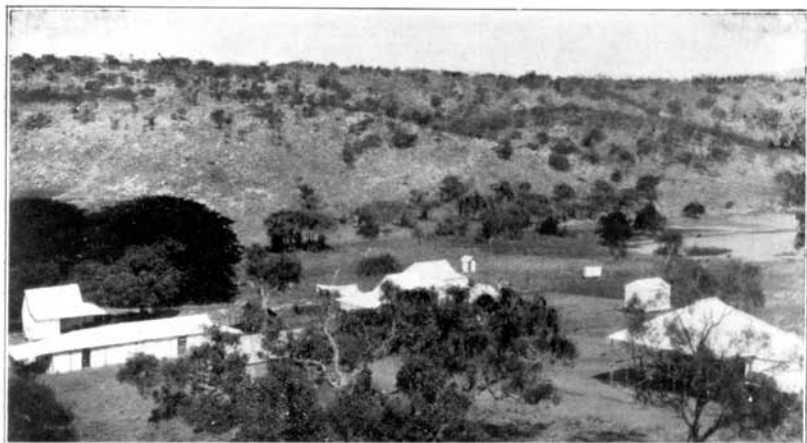
Photograph "E"—Forrest River Mission.



Photograph "F"—Drysdale River Mission Natives.



Photograph "G"—Kummunya Mission, Port George IV.



Photograph "H"—Sunday Island Mission.



Photograph "I"—Teacher and Children at Kummunya Mission School.