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1899.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

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# ABORIGINES DEPARTMENT.

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## R E P O R T

FOR

# FINANCIAL YEAR

ENDING

30TH JUNE, 1899.

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

PERTH:

BY AUTHORITY: RICHARD PETHER, GOVERNMENT PRINTER.

1899.

No. 40.



## ABORIGINES DEPARTMENT.

### *Report for Financial Year ending 30th June, 1899.*

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE PREMIER.

SIR,

I beg to submit my Report on the working of the Aborigines Department for the year ending 30th June, 1899, and the general condition of the Aborigines throughout the settled portions of the Colony. A preliminary report for the three months ending 30th September, 1898, was forwarded to you for your perusal, and is attached, which shows how the Department commenced its duties and the state of things then existing.

*Expenditure.*—The expenditure of the Department for the financial year ending 30th June was £10,823 16s. 3d. The statutory vote of £5,000, increased by £424 10s. (balance from last financial year), having been expended in December, an excess vote, under your recommendation, was obtained for £3,000. This, again, was expended in May, and it was found necessary to ask for a further excess of £2,400, of which only 13s. 9d. remains in hand.

As required by Section 10 of "The Aborigines Act, 1897" (61 Vict., No. 5), I attach a balance-sheet for presentation to the Legislature.

The work of the Department has been carried on by me, with the assistance, in office, of one clerk, and also, as an accountant, the late Secretary, who, though not able to give the whole of his time to the work, was specially useful in enabling me to pick up many loose threads of the business of the late Aborigines Board. The latter gentleman's services are now dispensed with, and an officer has been appointed as a travelling inspector and dispenser of drugs; and I anticipate good results from his labours, as he has gained considerable experience as a student for some years at a large London hospital. A very great deal of assistance has been given me by the Police Department throughout the Colony, and I beg you will allow me here to express my sincere thanks for the shrewd and ready way in which all members of that Department have come forward whenever I have asked them for information or assistance.

The chief duties have been in watching over and regulating the outlay in distributing rations to the aged, crippled, and otherwise destitute aborigines throughout the Colony; and the extensive area and number of places in which it is found necessary to carry out this work account for the large correspondence which has ensued, as shown in Table 1.

I have taken some trouble to get an approximate census of the natives (1) in employment, (2) relieved by the Department, (3) obtaining their own subsistence. This census *does not include* what may be called wild natives, that is those who are not generally in contact with the Europeans, or inhabiting those parts which are settled or held under pastoral lease; *nor have I included* those in the East Kimberley District, where settlement is so scattered. The wild native population in that district is stated to be large, and we know that their physique is superior to those farther South, owing probably to the fertility of the country and abundance of game. The results of my efforts, so far, are as follows, more particular details being given in Table 2:—

Employed.	Relieved.		Self-supporting.
	Regularly.	Partially.	
4749	743	125	6690

The intercourse between the races is leading to a considerable increase of half-castes. Many of them find their way into the Missions, but a far greater number are probably reared in native camps, without any sort of education. This is a question which, I think, should receive consideration by the Legislature. I trust, during the next twelve months, to be able to report more fully on the number and condition of the half-castes, apart from that of the pure aborigines.



immemorial, and it has become so much their nature that it is, in most cases, impossible to induce a native to inhabit a house, or take care of anything as his own property. A native living according to his own customs will remain healthy and strong; dress him up and house him, and he will soon fade away. The experience of the good Bishop Salvado, as he forcibly explained to me, is, that we must not forget they are savages, and we must first try to enable them to make their work worth their food and clothing, and, if they gain this knowledge, reading and writing may then be taught; but, as they can never hope to have the same status as a white man, it is useless to teach them those things which will not be useful to them. Religion can only be appreciated properly after they have learned to read. Many a native appears to be moved by religious feelings and desires, but, when analysed, it is generally only his desire to please which actuates him.

Steps are being taken to provide relief in a systematic manner against diseases, but the growing prevalence of venereal diseases amongst the Aborigines in some places compels me to suggest that our curative efforts should be assisted by legislation, with the object of preventing them, in their own interests, from loitering in townsites and other places where the evil exists, affecting alike both the black and the white population.

#### EAST KIMBERLEY.

In May, 1899. Police report, Wyndham; syphilis becoming very prevalent: several deaths occurred within last 12 months.

*Hall's Creek.*—From report by the Warden received in November, 1898. Natives reported to be, in many places, disabled by blindness, locomotor-ataxia, syphilis. They were inspected at the following places:—Sturt Creek (100 miles South of Hall's Creek), Flora Valley (Buchanan and Gordon Bros.' Station), Grant's Creek, Ruby Creek, the Brockman River, and in places along the main road to Wyndham. He reports having made sure that only those natives are relieved at Government expense who are utterly unable to make their labour serviceable to station owners, and is not in favour of the contract system. He says, "I gather from most men that a runaway boy is of very little use after having been once brought back; this being so, the idea of signing seems to be utterly lost. It should be a mutual arrangement between the two, with which the law should have nothing to do. In all cases that have come under my notice there has been little unkindness and no cruelty."

*Wyndham.*—The Government Hospital at Wyndham having been closed, but left in charge of an orderly, I made arrangements in March, 1899, that many natives reported to be suffering from venereal diseases should be treated thereat, and, under the advice of the Medical Department, forwarded a quantity of drugs, with directions for use. These were shipped in the "La Serena," which was, unfortunately, stranded on the voyage, much delay being thereby caused, and it was only in July they reached their destination.

#### WEST KIMBERLEY.

A large number of natives are in the employ of settlers on the Fitzroy and Meda Rivers, as will be seen by the census taken; but the relief is administered chiefly through the Telegraph and Police authorities at the Fitzroy crossing, Upper Fitzroy, Derby, Broome, and the Trappist Fathers' institution at Beagle Bay. (A report by Father Daly is appended.) Considering the large number that are in contact with whites, the number on the relief list is very small, but, as may be expected in these distant places, the rate is rather high.

In a report from the Resident Magistrate, Broome, he gives it as his opinion that in this district the great requirement of the natives is medical attention; that the country, being fertile, and numbers of natives in good employment, the aged and sick are so far principally assisted by their relatives and friends; but he foresees the day when this will cease, as the employés are gradually getting out of the way of helping their friends who are in need. He, however, says "that the natives are on the whole a well fed, well treated, happy, and independent race." The natives living on this coast have the advantage of being able to get a lot of food, tobacco, etc., from the pearlers, for whom they carry water and firewood.

The natives in the district between Broome and the mouth of the DeGrey are in a disadvantageous position. The country is very poor and inhospitable. It is described by the telegraph officer there as "devoid of game, with the exception of a few lizards, and at present natives are living on small grass seeds which they grind up and bake (as damper) in ashes." I am obliged to relieve a considerable number who are destitute at the two telegraph stations of LaGrange Bay and Wallal. These are lonely places, and there are difficulties of obtaining supplies, but I find the only satisfactory plan to adopt is to supply the officer in charge with sufficient flour to last for certain periods, between the arrivals of the infrequent boats, and trust to their rectitude and that of their assistants to have the proper quantities

distributed week by week. There are generally about 20 natives on relief at each place, and their claims are reported to be urgent. At LaGrange Bay, possibly from some climatic cause, there seems to be always a good deal of rheumatism, dysentery, asthma, and colds; venereal diseases are also prevalent, so that I have to supply the place with a good deal of medicine, and am kindly assisted by the medical officer at Broome in this matter.

## NORTH-WEST.

### DEGREY AND PILBARRA, AND NORTH-WEST DISTRICTS.

On the DeGrey River, the principal transactions are with the large firm of Grant, Anderson, & Edgar, who employ several hundreds of natives, about 50 of whom have to be relieved as indigent and invalided. Through the good management, however, of the resident partner, the cost of this is reduced to a minimum by his acceptance of about six tons of flour as our whole annual contribution towards his relief. The position of his runs near the mouth of the river makes it possible for him to allow natives at each springtide to go off to the salt water creeks on the coast where they can obtain plenty of fish, and thus contribute much to their own support. They also lend guns to their able natives to shoot kangaroos for themselves. The manager writes strongly about the increase of venereal disease, especially during the last year or two. Before this, he tried to keep it in check, but the worst form of the disease is showing out, and it is getting beyond him; their own immoral habits and want of cleanliness are great obstacles to them.

Other relieving stations in this district are at Corunna Downs (Brockman Bros.), Braeside (on the Oakover), Boodarrie Station, Pyramid Station, and at Marble Bar by the police; but the numbers are not great, although the number of natives in contact with the whites is considerable. I cannot say that the condition of the natives altogether on the Pilbarra Goldfields appears to be satisfactory. There is a great deal of immorality; and a good many cases of absconding and interference come before the Court at Marble Bar. We may expect, however, more of this sort of thing in a shifting community than in a purely pastoral district.

The country West of Yule River to the Fortescue River has been settled for a longer period than other parts of the Northern District; and probably the majority of the aboriginal population has drifted into the service of the settlers. A good many are relieved, and at many stations, among others, Messrs. McKay Bros., Meares, Withnell, Lockyer, Robinson Bros., Millstream Station, Tableland Police Station, and at Roebourne and Cossack.

Although within the tropics, the weather is sometimes very cold, the land being elevated; and blankets and clothes have to be supplied in consequence. The condition and treatment of the natives throughout seem satisfactory, only one case of apparent ill-treatment having been brought under notice, which was dealt with at the Roebourne Police Court.

The manager for McKay Bros., at Mundabullangana Station, states:—"We, have no trouble whatever with the natives, with the exception of those who have been encouraged round the mining public houses. They show no signs of dying out—at least those who adhere to their old native customs. This year there are quite a number of babies."

### ASHBURTON, GASCOYNE, AND MURCHISON.

In a report from a police officer on Ashburton River *re* natives generally, just received, it appears that they are employed in considerable numbers at the following places:—Ashburton Downs, 217 miles from Onslow; Mt. Mortimer Station, 152 miles; Hardy Station, 134 miles; Peak Station, 143 miles; Glen Florrie Station, 153 miles, Ullawarra Station, 160 miles; to which must be added that of Mr. Higham, Nanutarra Station, and Harris Bros. at Yannery, and Cameron at Wogoola. Government relief is given by the three latter. In the aforesaid police report a good season is stated to have occurred, and consequently plenty of native food and game were obtainable, and there was very little disease. It appears, however, that a good many half-castes are wandering about, and, so far, they are without care or education, which will have to be seen to in the future.

Mr. Higham, in his correspondence with me as to the large number of natives whose circumstances have to be considered as one of the main questions in settling a new country, makes the following remarks; after showing how he has to employ, simply for humanity's sake, many more natives than his work demands, and is a loser thereby, he says:—"This native labour has been forced on settlers by circumstances, and I think that in accepting the responsibility of providing work and control for a large number of natives over and above those considered necessary, instead of allowing the surplus to remain idle and become a nuisance both to ourselves and the Government, as has been done in the early settlement of other districts, both here and in other colonies, that we are deserving of every reasonable con-

sideration; and I maintain that when the final Australian history of this native question has to be written, there will be much to be said in favour of the system adopted by a handful of settlers in North-West Australia in doing their best to provide employment for the whole of the native population in that district."

In the Gascoyne and Murchison districts quite three-fourths of the natives in the settled districts, extending more than 300 miles inland, have been in service for many years; about 200, being now aged and invalid from various causes, are relieved at about twenty settlers' stations, and police stations at Mount Gould, Thomas River, The Junction, Carnarvon, Sharks Bay, Mount Wittenoom, Peak Hill, Northampton, and Gullewa. With the exception of one or two cases which have come to Court, and have been dealt with by the magistrates, who found reason to impose penalties on the employers, very little complaint has been made as to the treatment of the natives. I have had several reports from the police as to matters within their own several districts, in some of which natural game appears to be plentiful, and the only destitution is caused by the infirmity from age or injury. Towards the coast, however, there seems to be little chance of natives getting their subsistence, except by entering into service, and considering the large number of natives employed, the absence of complaint, either by police or other disinterested parties, I am led to believe that they are well treated and cared for.

There seem to be a good many requiring relief at Carnarvon and Sharks Bay; the country around in the neighbourhood of the coast is rather inhospitable for them, and there is little to be done now in the service of the pearlers. In the Southern portion of the district, included in the Murchison Goldfields, the native population does not seem numerous; but I have been able to glean so little information, so far, as to this district, that I must postpone my remarks until the inspector recently appointed has been through it.

#### SOUTH-WESTERN DISTRICTS.

The natives of the South-Western districts are widely and sparsely scattered about among the farms and small stations, but a great many still wander about the bush in small families, only occasionally, and perhaps never, doing any work for the whites. This is on account of the wooded nature of the country, which still gives cover to plenty of game, which even crippled and old natives are able to catch. These remarks apply principally to the upper portions of the Murray and Blackwood rivers. Along the South coast, from Albany Eastward, the country is generally poor, and apparently never supported a large native population. Inland, they are very nomadic, and appear to be subject to occasional epidemics, rapid and serious in their action. During the last year a tribe was decimated in a patch of country round Balladonia, where there are very few settlers and very little communication, and though every attention possible was given them by the residents there, so many died that the rest were panic-stricken and dispersed into the bush. The epidemic is supposed to have been acute and very infectious influenza. The natives are found in the largest numbers at Fraser Range, about 120 miles North from Esperance Bay, and Mundrabillia, about 160 miles West from Eucla, which may be called oases in the desert country. Even at these places, however, they number less than one hundred.

A good many are relieved in Perth and Guildford, where it is not usual to see a young native; they are nearly all remnants of the tribes, gradually dying out. A certain number of them have a little work in them, and as it has been found very undesirable to allow them to hang about the town, I am trying to gather them together on a reserve at the Canning, which is accessible and healthy. On this reserve there is some tolerably good land, and water has been obtained at a very slight depth, and one native has already a neat little garden with potatoes and various other vegetables coming forward. I have every hope of making this place a suitable home for many of them, where they will be able to contribute a good deal towards their own support.

#### EASTERN GOLDFIELDS.

On the Eastern Goldfields the natives are also scarce, as the country generally, where not very poor, is either waterless or salty. They collect about the mining camps in small numbers, and appear to be a very degraded race of low physique, owing to the centuries of semi-starvation which has been their lot.

Like those on the Southern coast they are very nomadic, and subject to sudden epidemics, such as that of measles, by which they were attacked at Red Hill, on Lake Lefroy. The Progress Committee there most humanely came forward and looked after their wants until the arrival of the police officer, and, in consequence, there was very little mortality. I only heard of the death of two at that time. The weather on this elevated plateau is very cold in winter time, and blankets have to be distributed wherever required. A considerable expense is incurred by the necessity of supplying water to the natives from the condensing stations. This is owing to all the small and rare waterholes from which they formerly obtained supplies having been converted into wells or otherwise interfered with by mining operations. Venereal disease is somewhat rife, and the worst cases have been attended to in the hospitals. Most, if not all, of the Departmental relief is here administered through the police force.

Before closing, it may be interesting to give you a comparison between this and the Eastern colonies as to the Aboriginal population and the expenditure thereon, which the following table will show:—

Colony.	Aboriginal Population.	Latest Annual Expenditure.
		£ s. d.
New South Wales ... ..	{ 3,230 pure 3,661 half-caste	{ 17,000 0 0
Queensland ... ..	{ About 20,000	{ 9,000 0 0
Victoria ... ..	{ 479	{ 5,515 0 0
South Australia ... ..	{ About 20,000 N. Districts About 3,000 S. Districts	{ 4,262 0 0
Western Australia ... ..	{ About 30,000	{ 10,823 16 3

Trusting that the above remarks will be sufficient explanation of the expenditure above the vote allowed by Statute,

I have, etc.

HENRY C. PRINSEP,

Chief Protector of Aborigines.

25-9-99.

### ABORIGINES DEPARTMENT.

#### BALANCE-SHEET.

DR.

July 1st, 1898, to June 30th, 1899.

CR.

RECEIPTS.			EXPENDITURE.					
	£	s. d.		£	s. d.	£	s. d.	
To funds unexpended from vote for 1897-8, 3 months previously ...	421	0 0	By Salary Chief Protector ...	550	0 0			
„ Vote 1898-9, under 61 Vict., No. 5, Sec. 6 ...	5,000	0 0	„ Accountant ...	200	0 0			
„ Excess Vote, March 9th, 1899 ...	3,000	0 0	„ Clerk ...	156	0 0	906	0 0	
„ „ „ June 6th, 1899 ...	2,400	0 0	„ Relief to Natives—					
„ Refund, February 7th, 1899 ...	3	10 0	Blankets and Clothing ...	651	3 1			
			Provisions ...	7,197	4 3			
			Transport ...	293	7 11			
			Medical Fees ...	91	17 2			
			Burials ...	76	6 6	8,309	18 11	
			„ Native Missions, Grants—					
			Swan Native and Half-caste Mission	718	4 9			
			New Norcia ...	450	0 0			
			„ „ (four months prior to to 1st July, 1898) ...	150	0 0			
			R.C. Institution, Subiaco ...	15	19 0			
			Deaf and Dumb Institution, East Perth ...	22	0 0			
			Salvation Army ...	14	5 0	1,370	8 9	
			„ Miscellaneous—					
			Including Rent, Travelling, and Shelters ...			237	8 7	
			Balance unexpended ...			0	13 9	
	£10,824	10 0				£10,824	10 0	

TABLE I.

Correspondence Returns, 1st July, 1898, to 30th June, 1899.

Letters and Telegrams received ... ..	1,207
Letters and Telegrams forwarded ... ..	1,111

TABLE 2.

*Approximate Census of Aborigines and Half-castes in the Colony of Western Australia (exclusive of that part of Kimberley Division East of Leopold Range).*

	In Employment.	Relieved by Government.	Others in contact with Whites.
West Kimberley ... ..	959	102	4,400
North-Western Districts ... ..	1,568	136	740
Ashburton and Gascoyne ... ..	1,035	121	258
Murchison and Victoria ... ..	699	85	306
South-Western Districts ... ..	195	191	352
Eastern Goldfields ... ..	63	23	463
South Coast ... ..	230	85	172
	4,749	743	6,691
Total number ... ..	12,183		

No. of natives in East Kimberley and far interior is unknown.

TABLE 3.

*Reserves set apart for use or benefit of Aborigines.*

No.	Area.	Locality.	Purpose.
146A	a. r. p. 29 0 0	Melbourne ... ..	New Norcia Mission.
297A	50,000 0 0	Upper Murchison ... ..	Use of natives around Bia Spring.
607	5,000 0 0	North ... ..	Use of natives.
677	10 0 0	Roebourne (Sub. Lot 16) ... ..	Site for native mission school (Church of England).
944	13,000 0 0	Melbourne ... ..	Benedictine Mission, New Norcia.
963	15 1 36	Carnarvon ... ..	Church of England Mission (not at present acting).
967	25,000 0 0	Melbourne ... ..	Benedictine Branch Mission, Marah.
985	500 0 0	Canning ... ..	Native settlement.
1229	2,360 0 0	Swan ... ..	Use of natives.
1545	200 0 0	Melbourne ... ..	For occupation by native, Cooper, near Wongan Hill.
1765	5 0 0	Carnarvon (Sub. Lot 15) ... ..	Extension of mission area.
1834	700,000 0 0	West Kimberley ... ..	For native use, between Beagle Bay and King Sound.
2491	101 0 0	Jandakot (Lot 234) ... ..	For occupation by native, F. Lewington.
2904	114 0 0	Swan ... ..	Do. do. W. Shaw.
3960	100,000 0 0	East Kimberley ... ..	For native mission, Forrest River (not in use at present).
4681	0 2 28	Katanning (Town Lots 398 and 399) ... ..	Hospital for aborigines.
2143	100 0 0	Williams ... ..	For occupation by native, W. Harrial.
5952	12 0 0	Derby (Town Lot 453) ... ..	Aborigines camping ground.

TABLE 4.

*Distribution of Blankets, 1898-9.*

Agents, Stations, or Districts.	No. of Blankets.	Agents, Stations, or Districts.	No. of Blankets.
Wyndham ... ..	50	Newcastle ... ..	25
LaGrange Bay ... ..	50	Wagin ... ..	100
Beagle Bay ... ..	50	Williams ... ..	70
Wallal ... ..	50	Bridgetown ... ..	30
Broome ... ..	51	Pinjarrah ... ..	15
Derby ... ..	50	Vasse ... ..	20
Roebourne ... ..	100	Bunbury ... ..	20
Onslow ... ..	25	C. C. Smith, Yerk ... ..	14
DeGrey Station ... ..	50	C. & J. Heal ... ..	6
Carnarvon ... ..	150	C. M. Sewell ... ..	5
Hamelin Pool ... ..	15	J. T. Parker ... ..	6
Victoria ... ..	125	W. B. Parker ... ..	7
Gullewa ... ..	20	E. G. Parker ... ..	2
Mount Malcolm ... ..	25	T. Muir ... ..	6
Mount Margaret ... ..	25	W. Smith ... ..	5
Coolgardie ... ..	25	R. L. S. Crawford ... ..	2
Cue ... ..	100	H. Smith ... ..	20
Broad Arrow ... ..	75	Southern Cross ... ..	25
Kanowna ... ..	37	Albany ... ..	50
Menzies ... ..	50	Esperance ... ..	75
Kurnalpi ... ..	30	Bremer Bay ... ..	25
Bulong ... ..	30	Israelite Bay ... ..	50
Peak Hill ... ..	25	Kennedy McGill, Mundrabillia, Eucla ... ..	60
New Norcia ... ..	50	F. W. Beere, Eucla ... ..	25
Northam ... ..	25	Perth ... ..	62
Dundas Goldfield ... ..	40		
Moora Station, Swan ... ..	6	Total ... ..	2,119
H. B. Lefroy ... ..	15		
Guildford, Swan ... ..	50		

*Report of Swan Mission.**To the Chief Protector of Aborigines.*Church Office, Perth,  
12th September, 1899.

SIR,

In accordance with your request for a report upon the Swan Native Mission, I have the honour to state:—

The number of inmates is now forty-six, of whom thirty-nine are being at present maintained by your department, the remainder being supported by the Church. Of this number, sixteen are boys, and thirty are girls.

The Institution consists of two branches, one for the girls and infant boys, the other for boys over six years of age.

The premises, as you are aware from personal inspection, are scrupulously clean.

The dietary scale is liberal and carefully thought out, and is from time to time revised, vegetables forming a very large portion of the diet.

The girls and infant boys are under the control of Miss E. Mackintosh as Superintendent, who does her work excellently well, giving them the attention and care of a mother.

The girls are trained in domestic work, attend school for three hours daily, do their own baking and a good deal of their own sewing.

They have large grounds to play in, and out of doors are occupied attending to poultry, a little dairy work, and considerable gardening.

The boys' branch is in connection with the orphanage for white boys, where the native boys are treated in all respects as whites; receiving the same school instruction and practical instruction in handicrafts, gardening, and farming.

In school the native boys hold their own with the white boys, while, in sports, the former in many cases excel.

The boys are under the care of Mr. J. N. Shipton as Superintendent, who takes great pains with them; their health being looked after by Mrs. Shipton, the Matron, whose care in this direction is beyond praise.

The boys take their turns in visits to Perth, to my office, in order to give them a training for entering the world. The boys, as a rule, do well when started in life.

The institution is visited by me once or twice a month as a rule, when the inspection is very thorough.

The future of the girls is a matter of the gravest anxiety to me. Notwithstanding the care that is taken, there seems no hope of building up a strong moral character in them if they are to be discharged from the institution at the age of sixteen, which is the limit now fixed by your Department for their support.

With the help of your Department, I should like to see a further development by which the girls could be married to natives or half-castes, and provided with small cottages under the control of the institution.

I am, etc.,

DAVID J. GARLAND, Manager.

*Report of Beagle Bay Mission.**H. C. Prinsep, Esq.*Trappist Mission,  
Beagle Bay, 28th July, 1899.

MY DEAR SIR,

In accordance with former instructions, I beg to forward the following Report of Natives of our Mission of Beagle Bay, Disaster Bay, Broome, for last six months ending in June:—

Native children nourished and instructed	...	...	...	67
Old and infirm natives	...	...	...	38
Christian natives	...	...	...	189
Pagans and Catechumens	...	...	...	100

During the past six months information to the authorities resulted in the conviction of a Malay for giving intoxicating liquors, and which, I believe, will have the effect of preventing much of this unlawful practice.

The natives are abandoning the chief of their savage and unnatural practices, and seem to begin to value the advantages of civilisation.

The young ones, who have been with us since their childhood, do not seem to have the same difficulties to give up savage life, and appear to have a created want of civilised food, which takes away from them much of the charm of their romantic "corbories;" and we trust, that after persevering year after year, to have the consolation of seeing them settle down to the various useful occupations of country life.

Should you require any further or more detailed information of the natives or Mission I will be happy to follow your instructions.

I am, etc.,

C. J. DALY, N.P.



## ABORIGINES DEPARTMENT.

### *Preliminary Report for Financial Year ending June 30th and including three months following to 30th September, 1898.*

THE RIGHT HON. THE PREMIER,

SIR,

I beg to submit my Report on the condition and working of the Aborigines Department up to 30th September, 1898.

By the Statute under which this Department was formed (61 Vict., No. 5, Section 10), it is provided that a report of the welfare and condition of the Aborigines and Statement of Expenditure of Aborigines Department shall be presented to the Legislature at the close of each financial year, together with balance sheet.

As, however, I only took over the management of the department during May, I was unable to give much further information as to the condition of the natives than that contained in the report by the late Aborigines Protection Board, dated 28th March, and, with your assent, I postponed any action until a quarter of the new year had elapsed; the balance sheet, however, has been made up to the end of the financial year only, and is attached.

#### CONDITION AND WELFARE.

On first inquiries I found that liberal relief was being afforded to natives in every district of the Colony, chiefly on the instructions which had been left at the various homesteads and police stations by the late travelling Protectors of Aborigines, and that the amount incurred per month was far in excess of the amount placed at my annual disposal by the Statute, viz., £5,000. The vouchers received did not generally give the condition of the natives relieved, but it was presumed that they were fit subjects for relief; and I therefore saw no grounds, until further inquiries were made, to recommend any refusal of payment or curtailment of expenditure.

The natives had been so well supplied that it no doubt had the effect of attracting many of them who were able-bodied to hang about stations, and become an unnecessary burden on the vote. With this in my mind, I issued instructions that, as far as possible, able-bodied natives should be told that they must work, and that relief should be only given to those unable to earn their own living. I was careful to point out that you had given positive instructions that all crippled, sick, or aged natives must be relieved. This action has had considerable effect, but it is a matter of regret to learn that there are, among the native population, so many unfortunates as my books now show.

By wide and continuous inquiry, I made a register containing information of about 950 natives who were first reported to me as being relieved, viz:—

Kimberley District, about	...	...	...	...	140
North-West and Ashburton	...	...	...	...	180
Gascoyne	...	...	...	...	120
Murchison and Victoria	...	...	...	...	120
Central and South Coast	...	...	...	...	290
Eastern Goldfields	...	...	...	...	100
Total	...	..	...	...	950

However, since the issue of the Circulars by you on the 1st May, and by me on the 2nd June (copies of which are appended), a good deal of reduction has been made, and my books now show as follows:—

Kimberley District, about	...	...	...	...	90
North-West and Ashburton, about	...	...	...	...	80
Gascoyne, about	...	...	...	...	90
Murchison and Victoria, about	...	...	...	...	130
Central and South Coast, about	...	...	...	...	260
Eastern Goldfields, about	...	...	...	...	100
Total	...	...	...	...	750

*East Kimberley District.*—Comparatively few natives are being relieved in the Eastern part between Hall's Creek and Wyndham, and these chiefly hang about the towns.

*West Kimberley District.*—Here the number of relieved natives is swelled by the fact that more of the country is settled, and there are more ports to which the natives are attracted by the pearling industry.

*The North-West, Ashburton, and Gascoyne Districts.*—The native population here is considerable. The settlers employ a large number, and, in some cases, contribute a good deal towards the support of old servants past work; but there are numbers of old natives who, now that the country, by the extension of

the sheep blocks, is getting denuded of its game, are compelled to seek subsistence from the stations, and this department is therefore charged. There are also many elderly or crippled natives who, having once been in service, have been left without relatives from whom they can claim a share in their food.

The following words occur in a report received from Inspector Lawrence, who overlooks matters in the Gascoyne District on my behalf :—

“ From what I can learn from the Police and others, there are about 620 natives employed by settlers, about 370 unemployed, and about 50 old and infirm.

“ You will notice that the majority of the natives are employed (these and the whole of the natives referred to are in the settled portion of the Gascoyne District), and those employed, from what I have seen and heard of, are very well cared for . . . . . The natives employed by the whites (not only on the Gascoyne) are very useful servants. Many of them are engaged driving wool teams, breaking in horses, carting goods, erecting fences, shearing, and shepherding, and all kinds of laborious work which could not be got done better by white labour, for which they only receive their rations, clothing, and tobacco in return.”

In all the districts above referred to the price of relief is high (about 9d. to 1s. per head) except in one or two cases; this is owing, of course, to the cost of conveyance in these widespread and distant localities.

*Victoria District (including the Murchison).*—There are not so many here, but they are widely distributed in threes and fours at the different stations.

*The South-Western Districts.*—From the Moore River Southwards to Bremer Bay the aboriginal race seems in a very moribund condition, though there are a good many natives working for the settlers you do not see many young men. Numbers of the farms and stations have two or three elderly natives working about, and probably as many old ones past work. The cost of relief in the South-Western Districts does not exceed 6d. a head, and is often lower; but when we consider that 6d. will generally provide each individual with 14lbs. flour, 2lbs. sugar, and  $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. tea per week, it seems enough. Natives do not always require meat, but when they do they can take it instead of flour.

*Eastern Goldfields and along the South Coast.*—The condition of the natives on the Eastern Goldfields requires close attention, and in my next report I hope to be able to deal more fully with the question.

Along the South coast there are very few stations, and the principal aborigines which we have to deal with are at Eucla. They depend almost entirely on the work they get from the sheep farmers, and when there is any reduction of hands, those knocked off are a considerable expense to the department.

#### INFORMATION.

The information I require is most willingly and diligently obtained for me by many officers of the police force, on whose statements I at present rely almost entirely, and it is better that the natives should learn to look to the police as their protectors (the police being generally in uniform, are recognised by them) and they are more likely to tell the real truth of their condition to the police than to ordinary individuals.

#### TRANSACTIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT.

In August I travelled round part of the South-Western Districts, visiting Busselton, Bunbury, and Bridgetown, and had interviews with the Resident Magistrates and police of those places, and satisfied myself that these gentlemen were using every endeavour to relieve all necessary cases, but with prudence and economy. I visited several of the farms where natives resorted, going as far as Dingup, 27 miles beyond Bridgetown, and everywhere I found that there was great sympathy with the remnants of the black race; that they were kindly and considerately treated, and that really the greater part of the charity due to them was afforded by the settlers themselves. In September I travelled round by Newcastle, and though I was unable to see the magistrate, who was absent at the time, I saw several of the settlers, and found that the same feeling existed as at the South. In the Toodyay Valley natives were most useful in farming operations, and I could see the civilising influence upon them of the exertions of the good Bishop Salvado and his community at New Norcia. As this place was only a day's journey, I took the opportunity of visiting it. Here I found, perhaps, 150 natives, old and young, many of them able to read and write; nearly all the adult men expert in the management of cattle, sheep, and horses, and with the beneficial influence of daily worship before their eyes, in which every inducement was given them to join. Bishop Salvado's creed is eminently a practical one; his efforts are, first of all, to enable them to obtain their livelihood by work; secondly, to improve their minds by secular education, and then he considers them to be in a fit state to appreciate the worship of their Maker. All is orderly and systematic. The results of mechanical force are apparent to the young ones, who are being educated; and the unselfish example of the Fathers and Brethren must bear its fruit. The girls' school, of about 30 pupils, is conducted by women of colour, under the superintendence of one of the Brothers; the boys' school, of about 30, by an aboriginal master, who, being specially gifted in musical talent, under the guidance of the Bishop (whose attainments in that direction are well known) is able to give an interest in their studies in a more than ordinary manner. They all look well fed, well clothed, and happy.

I have also visited the girls' branch of the Native and Half-caste Institution, supported by the Anglican Church, Middle Swan, of which Miss McIntosh has charge. Here I found everything done for the happiness of the inmates, who, besides their ordinary schooling, are taught needlework, washing, etc., with a view to making them good servants or housewives.

The large correspondence which has naturally fallen upon the department at its inception has confined me to my office when I would like to have visited the Victoria district, Williams, and the Goldfields, and Rottneest; but I trust that, during the next quarter, I shall be able to do so.

## ABORIGINES PROTECTION DEPARTMENT.

Balance Sheet, 1st April to 30th June, 1898.

## RECEIPTS.

Dr. Treasury	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	£	s.	d.
								5000	0	0

## EXPENDITURE.

Cr. BY SALARY—	£	s.	d.
„ Chief Protector	91	13	4
„ Secretary	50	0	0
„ Clerk	39	0	0
„ C. A. Bailey, Protector late Board, paid up to 30th April, 1898	50	0	0
„ Inspector Lawrence, paid up to 30th April, 1898	16	13	4
	247	6	8
 RELIEF TO NATIVES—			
By Blankets and Clothing	87	9	7
„ Provisions	3477	18	8
„ Transport	77	17	2
„ Defence Native Prisoners	18	7	0
„ Medical Fees	155	10	0
„ Burial Expenses	43	15	0
	3860	17	5
 NATIVE MISSIONS, CAPITATION GRANTS—			
By Swan Native and Half-caste Mission	265	5	0
„ Roman Catholic Institution, Perth	6	2	0
	271	7	0
„ Salvation Army	16	5	0
„ Miscellaneous	182	13	5
	4578	9	6
Total Payments	4578	9	6
Balance	421	10	6
	£5000	0	0

24th October, 1898.

HENRY C. PRINSEP,

Chief Protector of Aborigines.

*Copies of Circulars issued by the Aborigines Department.*

[CIRCULAR.]

Aborigines Department,  
Perth.

The care and protection of the Aborigines having now devolved upon the Government, it is to be considered part of the public duty of Resident Magistrates, Resident Medical Officers, and Police Officers to assist in every way in promoting the welfare of the natives, and in providing relief to the aged, infirm, and sick, due regard being given to the practice of strict economy.

In order to carry out these measures it is desirable that monthly lists should be furnished to the Aborigines Department, giving, as far as possible, information as to the names, sex, ages, and condition of the natives to whom relief has been given, care being taken that, as a general rule, no able-bodied natives who can provide for their own maintenance should receive rations.

Accounts should be rendered monthly, certified by a Resident Magistrate, a Government Medical Officer, or a Police Officer.

JOHN FORREST,  
Premier.

1-5-98.

## [CIRCULAR.]

In order to make proper provision for the relief of Aboriginal Natives in the future, and to account in detail for such relief, I would be obliged if you would enter, on any voucher you forward me, the names of the recipients, and the grounds of their claim for relief at your hands. Accounts should be rendered monthly, and, whenever possible, on the usual voucher form, certified by a Resident Magistrate, a Government Medical Officer, or a Police Officer.

Natives who are sick and unable to work, with the exception of the old, blind, and infirm, should produce a medical certificate before they are admitted to the ration list, and it should be forwarded, with the accounts, to this office.

For the information of the Treasury, the name of Bank, its branch, or the person (with full address) to whom the money is made payable should be clearly stated.

2nd June, 1898.

HENRY C. PRINSEP,  
Chief Protector of Aborigines.

SIR,

Aborigines Department,  
February 1st, 1899.

I beg to remind you of a Circular dated 1st May, 1898, of which a copy is given below. \*

As in certain cases it may be impossible to obtain monthly reports, I trust you will secure for me reports as frequently as possible at longer intervals, but there are few cases in which quarterly reports at least cannot be obtained. I feel sure I shall have your co-operation in this matter.

I am, Sir,

Yours obediently,

HENRY C. PRINSEP,  
Chief Protector of Aborigines.

\* See above.

W.N.A.R.

Aborigines Department - Report for Financial Year ending 30th June 1899  
Corporate Author: Western Australia Aborigines Department

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