

1903.  
—  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

---

# ABORIGINES DEPARTMENT.

---

R E P O R T

FOR

# FINANCIAL YEAR

ENDING

30TH JUNE, 1903.

---

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

P E R T H :

BY AUTHORITY: WM. ALFRED WATSON, GOVERNMENT PRINTER.

—  
1903.

No. 32

APPROXIMATE COST OF PAPER:  
Printing (500 copies), £18 3s.



between Asiatics, who are so numerous and ubiquitous, and the natives, who are always ready for the benefits it brings by pandering to their lusts.

The relief given on this coast continues to be very considerable, owing to the inhospitable nature of the back country; and I regret to say that there are frequent epidemics of one sort and another reported, and although my agents show a very great deal of sympathy by their efforts to alleviate the miseries of the sufferers, and although liberal supplies of drugs and instructions have been sent up from Perth, a good many natives have succumbed.

A good deal more information has come from the East Kimberley District, and the native question there has demanded a great deal more attention lately, as civilisation is establishing itself. We have more centres of medical relief, and a good many more pensioners on our lists. The work is done in almost all cases by the police, and I am happy to say that at present there are men there belonging to the force who really interest themselves in the matter, and take a good deal of trouble to assist me. Nevertheless the prisons are filled with cattle-killers; a fact which has forced itself recently upon the Bishop of Perth while on tour. The proper way to grapple with this difficulty, he professes, is a difficult question to solve, and I agree with him. It has, therefore, been the subject of very much thought on my part for some years past. Several suggestions have been made, but one stands out more strongly than the rest, and for twelve months, with these suggestions in my mind, I have questioned those whom I have met that are conversant with the subject, and the more inquiry I make the more am I in favour of it. The stock-owners of the district, nearly all of them, are sufferers by the depredations of the natives on their herds. A native has not much respect or thought for the English laws when alone in the bush and hungry, as well as being a natural sportsman, but if the animals he saw around him were his own property, he would probably be a little more careful against their wholesale slaughter. Why not, then, establish one or two large reserves, and stock them with animals, which, I am informed, the stock-owners would freely offer, namely, on the understanding that, as far as possible, their herds would be protected, not only from slaughter, but from the continual panics which prevent them from fattening? One of these gentlemen has offered, from his station alone, to supply 200 head per annum, and if others met us as liberally, the question of starvation among the natives would be set at rest. The expenses of supervision for the first few years might be a little heavy, but the results would be remarkable. Here again, however, we can do nothing, unless the law, as I have suggested often before, gives me power to locate the natives, as is done in the Eastern States. Should our first efforts in this direction be attended with any sort of success, we may then think of a further suggestion, which has been to establish a more advanced settlement for natives on the North-West side of Cambridge Gulf, a nucleus from which the whole of that large area, which, I believe, is now roamed over by thousands of savages, could be brought under proper influences.

#### HALF-CASTES.

One of the principal questions which has exercised my mind during the year is the condition and proper government of half-castes. Without more data to hand than I had, it was useless to submit my views to you, and therefore, in January, I issued a circular request to all the district police officers to obtain from their patrols close information as to the number, ages, etc., of half-castes; and to insure uniformity and full information I issued to them tabular forms on which to place their information, with a request that I should receive them back in June. They have all been supplied, and though I think some of them are not absolutely correct, from my personal knowledge of the localities, still the information is very approximate. The returns show that there are more than 850 known half-castes throughout the State, of which about three-sevenths are adults and four-sevenths children. (Table C shows the actual number of sexes.) Now these half-castes very soon arrive at an age when they can either be a benefit to the State or a menace thereto; and brought up as they are at present there is no doubt which of the two they will be. In my opinion it is our duty to make good citizens of them by every means in our power. They are generally clever, and, if under good influences from their earlier years, will probably add very much to the useful workers of the State. I have several times, upon urging legislation, referred to this branch as one of the most important. A section proposed by me would make me the official guardian of all these children; and, by tactful action, I believe that if power were given me, I should be able in a comparatively short time to have most of these children placed under proper care, and brought up in useful knowledge. No doubt institutions for their reception would cost money, but I think by placing a good many of them out here and there on stations managed by people of undoubted integrity and repute, a good deal of expense could be avoided. It is a matter which calls for immediate action. During the years that I have had charge of this department numbers of these half-castes have grown from children into adults, and have so slipped out of my hands, even were I able legally to influence their lives.

Further encouraging opinions have come to me with regard to the legislation I have urged. A settler of experience in the North writes that he has perused the draft Act for better management of aborigines with pleasure, and is sure that it is a great improvement on any of the present Acts in force touching the matters mentioned. As drafted, it will no doubt tend to secure a 'greater attention being paid to native treatment, and also tend to protect the women.

Dr. Roth, Queensland, in thanking me for copies of our West Australian Aborigines Act, says :—

No Acts can be perfect : it is only by certain abuses coming to light that they can be amended for the better, as, for instance, our amended Act of 1901 (Queensland) was based simply on abuses which I had personally found to exist, and which I discovered I then had no power to remedy.

This has been just my case since 1899, when I first advocated the consideration of the Bill.

A new phase has appeared in natives' occupations recently. Reports have arrived that there are many natives occupied in getting tin on the Pilbara tinfields. I have not much information about it, but I hear that these natives purchase firearms for which they give exorbitant prices, and I have no doubt that whatever they do get, the metal won is paid for in the same proportion. I think this is a matter which should be looked into, and I suggest that no one should be allowed to buy ore from native diggers except under regulations framed for the protection of the ignorant native. From time to time stories have reached me that diggers keep a gang of natives around them whom they send out to speck for gold day by day, giving them a small amount of food. It is a matter which is so likely to happen on outlying goldfields that I have not paid much heed hitherto, as there is no cruelty involved, and at the present I have no particular case which I can call up, but it all bears upon my suggestion that white people should not be allowed to enrich themselves on the ignorance of our black protegés. As to the matter of guns, I am not aware of any evil which has resulted therefrom as yet, but the authorities on whom I depend seem to anticipate trouble in the future. I feel therefore bound to call this to your notice.

#### PRISONERS.

The return of all prisoners from the doors of the prisons to their own districts devolves upon me. A considerable amount has, for some years past, been annually paid in this direction. The closing of the Rottneest prison will, however, prevent a good deal of this expense, but natives imprisoned at the ports of the North will have to be given safe conduct should they be dwellers of the far inland districts. I am glad to learn that, by proposed enactment, the expense of feeding the discharged prisoners until ships come by to help them on their way home will be minimised by empowering gaolers to discharge them up to seven days before expiration of sentence should a favourable opportunity occur of sending them home.

Some little alteration has lately been made in the manner of submitting the depositions of native trials for my perusal. All the depositions which reach the Crown Law Department are submitted as usual; but those which are not sent to them, and in which natives are in any way interested either as plaintiffs or defendants or accessories, are submitted direct to me from the Courts.

The question of supplying prisoners with clothing is always cropping up, and I have had to interfere sometimes to prevent them from being dressed "regardless of expense." I am trying, however, to establish a system for uniformity in this direction.

#### GENERAL EMPLOYMENT.

Nothing further has been done with regard to employing natives to kill rabbits, although it seems more necessary than ever, from the reports of their onward march to the West. I have not been approached in the matter, but it seems to me there are a good many natives on the goldfields who get no work and live a most needy, vagrant life, whose services might be made very useful in that work.

Recent accounts show that rabbits are in the neighbourhood of Kalgoorlie, but before doing anything it will be necessary to arrange for the gangs to be under white superintendents, who could see that the skins were properly taken off and stored, so that some return would accrue for the expenses. Now that so much land is being taken up northwards from Menzies on account of the good seasons, the advance of the rabbits must be a serious drawback, and probably the pastoralists in that part would be inclined to render some assistance to the department in thus finding employment for natives which would relieve them of such a pest. I will move in this matter as soon as possible.

#### DISTRICTS.

##### KIMBERLEY.

The relieving stations in the East Kimberley district are at Wyndham, Hall's Creek, Flora Valley, Argyle, Turkey Creek, and Sturt's Creek; and I get regular reports from most of them.

At Wyndham there are a great number of prisoners, amongst these, last August, was a boy about 13, convicted of cattle killing. The Magistrate, owing to his youth, advised a remittal of sentence, and on my representing the matter to the Law Department, his release was approved of in September. The present Resident Magistrate and Medical Officer has again urged the formation of a large native settlement in the unoccupied country west of Cambridge Gulf. The time will come when something will have to be done in the way of collecting natives on certain portions of the Kimberley districts, and, if possible, training them to be of service, and to earn their living by their labour; and I would recommend that an area be decided upon and reserved from anything but temporary occupation, so as to be available in the future.

*Argyle.*—From Argyle I get continual reports from police constable MacKellor, who is very assiduous on my behalf. There are a number of old and feeble natives coming into this station for protection, some requiring relief as cripples and orphans. These were each given two meals daily until they were strong enough to go to the bush. The station being 170 miles inland from Wyndham, and the cost of cartage £20 a ton, relief is expensive; but the constable promises to comply with my request to economise without imposing hardship. A considerable quantity of medicine has been sent up to this station, both from Perth and by the Medical Officer at Wyndham, suitable for the treatment of colds, rheumatism, and venereal diseases, which were very prevalent during the winter months. A good many discharged native prisoners go through this station on their way home, and the police give them each a day's rations and tobacco, often at their own expense, and caution them against any further depredations. Forty-five blankets have been issued from this station. In response to the suggestion of Mr. MacKellor, I sent up 18 tomahawks, which would be given to the natives, and would greatly assist them in securing their food—about one to every six natives, as they lend them to one another at different periods of the day. They prize the tomahawks so much that they take them to bed with them. A constable says: "I only wish you could see how much they prize them. They are made to understand that 'Big fellow Boss,' meaning yourself, has sent them, and that if they were good and 'no more killum bullock,' they would be supplied with more on future occasions."

*Turkey Creek.*—Mr. Tate having been transferred, the relief here was undertaken by his successor, Mr. Kearney. He wrote in March informing me that game had become scarce, so that the natives had to travel long distances in search of it. He had found three old women, two children, and a blind boy (an encumbrance), and had left them at the station for relief. The natives look upon the postmaster here as "Government," and never fail to come along when they have their little troubles. Several times he has been called up in the night to administer medicine to sick natives, make soup, etc., and give them tobacco, all at his own expense. He has been instructed to use his discretion at the cost of the department, and to get certificates from police when they come by.

*Hall's Creek.*—At Hall's Creek the police report a good deal of sickness through influenza, both there and at Flora Valley Station, 16 having died. A supply of medicine was sent up, with instructions to buy what they could locally for emergencies. There is one quite young child here who appears to be a sad victim to syphilis.

#### WEST KIMBERLEY.

In West Kimberley I have agencies at Fitzroy Telegraph Station, Derby, Sunday Island, Oscar Range, Leopold Downs, Beagle Bay, Broome, Thangoo, and La Grange Bay; also at Wallal, just outside the boundary. The Sub-Inspector's general report will be found in Appendix No. 2.

*Fitzroy Station.*—A large number of natives come here from surrounding stations, and are well attended to by Mr. Annear. This gentleman does what he can to keep himself supplied with meat as well as flour by having bred a fine herd of goats, and he has also established a good garden. From the description I have received of this place, I think there could not be a better position for any ultimate native home that may have to be made at a future time for the natives in this district. The work that has been done by Mr. Annear will make it easy to establish such when it is found necessary.

In May over 200 bush natives were camped about this post, seven of whom were ill with influenza and fever; and under Mr. Annear's care they all recovered.

*Sunday Island.*—The Sunday Island Mission is still carried on with great zeal and some success, although Mr. Hadley is still having a great struggle, not only from paucity of funds but from the inroads of Asiatics. The latter difficulty, however, has been to a great extent overcome by the establishment of the patrolling policeman on the coast, whose work has been very effective in stopping the women from being taken on to the luggers. Corporal Turner does his work well, but constant vigilance will be necessary for a considerable time, and the proposed legislation will, I hope, soon come to our aid still further. Mr. Hadley has now the further assistance of Mr. Bird, who undertakes the education, and for some part of the year of Mr. Thompson, who undertakes boating, etc. More houses have been put up; more ground tilled; a certain quantity of *bêche-de-mer* obtained, and on the whole, prospects are good though present difficulties are great; and should it meet with your approval I would like to see some financial assistance given to Mr. Hadley, dependent upon the continued satisfaction of the department with his work.

A good deal of trouble is given by a Malay skin disease, but Mr. Hadley is now consulting the medical officer at Derby, and a supply of medicines, according to the doctor's suggestions, have been sent up for use. Thirty-two blankets were distributed in addition to the 40 procured by Mr. Hadley himself, and the tobacco culture is very successful, although its after preparation is not yet properly done. Mr. Hadley's last report is published in the Appendices, as well as that of Constable Napier. (See Nos. 3 and 4.)

At *Oscar Range*, Mr. Collins relieves a few while their husbands are in gaol for cattle killing. In November he reported good rains and plenty of food in the bush, and he attributes the absence of disease to the large quantity of vegetables supplied to the natives from the abundance which is grown on the station.

At *Beagle Bay*, in addition to granting aid to this institution of £250 per annum, rations to old and injured natives are paid for by the Department. The manager, Father Walter, arrived from his trip to Europe about April, and informs me that he is now in a position to house and educate about 50 boys; and when some sisters arrive at the Mission, will be able to do the same for 50 girls. Seventy-five blankets were sent to him for distribution. He is very thankful for the presence of the policeman at Beagle Bay during the "lay-up" season of the luggers, and of the thorough way in which that officer has done his duty. He looks forward to the passing of further legislation, being "astonished that my proposed measures of reform should even be questioned."

*Broome*.—The report by the travelling inspector when sent on his flying trip in April and May is published as an appendix (No. 6). It is very satisfactory to learn what improvement there is at this port in the condition of the natives, through the energy of the police force. A hospital for natives seems to be very much required in this place, where so many of them congregate, and I agree with the inspector in his recommendation that a reserve should be made some little way from the town. The recommendations for the management of this reserve tally exactly with those of certain sections in my proposed Bill. The marriages between Asiatics and native women do not meet with the approval of the inspector. I have had correspondence on this subject from other gentlemen of experience at the North, one of whom strongly advises that no marriage should be allowed of an aboriginal woman, except to an aboriginal native, or, of course, half-castes. Such marriages appear to him to be only the outcome of sensual passions, and as soon as the woman gets old, or even before that, or is an encumbrance, she is, as a rule, deserted in a strange portion of the State, and her husband takes up with a younger girl. These remarks coming from a gentleman of such experience are worthy of serious attention. Many of these marriages for a time have been productive of a good deal of comfort to the native women, but it is apparent to everybody that this happiness can only be temporary. I have ascertained that in Queensland, if any other than an aboriginal wants to marry a female native, he can only do so by permission of a Protector of Aborigines specially appointed by the Minister. If any other than an aboriginal is living unmarried with a female native he can be prosecuted for harbouring her, and the children can be taken away. Our present Act should be, if it is not already, similarly powerful.

*La Grange Bay*.—I have much communication with this place, and the telegraph master, Mr. Tuckett, is one of my most valued helpers. There are numbers of natives in this portion of the district, which in itself provides very little natural food; consequently they are driven to the coast, where they can fish and also obtain a good deal of employment from the pearling boats which come in to water and refit. There is quite a squadron of these (some 60 or 70 at times), and in the past an immense deal of immorality has been known to exist. I am thankful to the present Cabinet for having decided to establish a police station here, even though at the cost of the Department, and the results have shown themselves already. The police officer, however, has very great difficulties to contend with in scouring the coast where so many boats put in, and where so many landing places exist.

The natives come in large numbers to the Peearr Well, near the coast, northwards from the station. The land all around here having been lately let on pastoral lease, the natives were threatened with banishment from their long-established camp, and a good deal of trouble was brewing; they were ordered off the ground, and came in a pitiable body to complain, and Mr. Tuckett immediately wired to me. I replied that on my behalf he might threaten legal proceedings, and the utmost punitive action possible. As a result he was able to re-establish the poor people in their homes, and they have been unmolested since then. The Lands Department have been asked to declare a reserve for them, and I expect a favourable reply. Epidemics pass over La Grange pretty frequently, but Mr. Tuckett seems to know a good deal about diseases and their remedies. A large supply of medicine was sent up, at the request of the travelling inspector, in May. The report of this station by the travelling inspector, of 24th May, in Appendix No. 9, will, I know, be read with interest, as well as the extract from Mr. Tuckett's letter of 5th June (No. 8). Extracts from general report of the officer in charge of police, Kimberley districts, will be found in Appendix No. 2.

*Wallal*.—The same influences as regards natural sustenance exist here as at La Grange. A considerable number, from 15 to 20, congregate in various stages of decrepitude, who have to be fed by the telegraph master. Epidemics occur with which he copes as he is best able, being supplied with drugs by me, but during the past year several deaths have unavoidably taken place. My agent reports being unable to diagnose a disease from which the natives do not appear to have previously suffered; but he has no doubt that it arises from natural disorder, but it appears hereditary and in bubonic form and requires a severe course of opening medicine whilst the swelling is being painted with Iodine. The only other cure is by poulticing; but this requires so very much attention that it would be impossible to follow such a course. Natives suffer from several complaints, says he, on which no one but a physician could pronounce clearly, but Pain Killer, Eucalyptus, and Epsom Salts, and other milder opening medicines appear most serviceable. The Asiatic influence, however, is here absent.

## NORTH-WEST.

In the North-West district I have a number of agents, 15 or more, some on the goldfields centres, but principally on sheep stations. On the latter, the employed natives are made as far as possible to support their aged and incapable relatives, but some require my assistance. The police at Marble Bar, Table-land, Port Hedland, and Roebourne keep supervision, and send in reports which show that the condition of the natives throughout the district is tolerably good. Few questions of importance have cropped up in this portion of the State, but these few have been looked into and satisfactorily settled. Some half-caste children have been sent down to be brought up at the south, and a few deaths have been reported, the general health having been excellent. At Roebourne a coloured man has been fined £20 for supplying drink to an aboriginal, but preferred imprisonment. At Marble Bar there was an accidental death from shooting, and this calls one's attention to the purchase of firearms, before mentioned, by natives on the Pilbarra goldfield, a matter which has only cropped up recently and has not been considered in the proposed Bill but might be appropriately dealt with in the Gun Licensing Act, additions to which you may see fit to recommend. There are so many advantages to the southern settlers in allowing natives to go and shoot game that I cannot recommend severe restriction on natives being allowed to carry a gun, but they should be under supervision. A turbulent native "Dick," of Derby, was reported to be educating the natives around Marble Bar in villainy and vice, and I gave instructions for his return to his own country.

## THE ASHBURTON DISTRICT.

I am kept well supplied with reports from this district by the police. There are a considerable number of unemployed on the stations, the owners of which are liberal and, as a rule, do not depend upon the Department for the support of the aged and crippled. A serious feature is that there is a considerable amount of venereal disease. I have been asked to engage a medical man to make a tour to attend upon these unfortunates, but this seems to me to be a most expensive way of dealing with the difficulty, and not very effective, as he could not stay long enough to nurse the sufferers back to health. It will be far better to have a native hospital at Onslow under permanent supervision of the medical officer there, and I have no doubt the squatters would, for humanity sake, arrange for the carriage of the patients thereto.

## GASCOYNE DISTRICT.

A large number have been employed on the stations, and are well treated, though certainly not pampered. A good many of the incapables are supported at the expense of the Department, and recently several more had to be put on the relief lists, at the request of the patrolling police on the upper branches of the rivers. At Minilya station Mr. MacLeod still carries on his efforts to civilise the natives and educate the young ones without any Government aid so far. But should the half-castes become wards of the State, as in my proposed Bill, no better place for their care could be found than at Minilya under Mr. MacLeod's supervision.

## VICTORIA DISTRICT AND MURCHISON GOLDFIELDS.

Things are pretty much the same as usual, and very few unusual occurrences have taken place here. At Peak Hill and Nannine there is apparent need of a native hospital to deal with the usual unfortunate diseases, but in the other parts of these districts the condition of the natives seems very healthy, and they get employment readily.

## THE EASTERN GOLDFIELDS.

The future management of aborigines on the Eastern Goldfields is a matter of much solicitude and apprehension on my part. Here we have several hundreds of natives in a totally pauperised state, with scarcely any actual food or water, and very little opportunity of employment. They wander about like tribes of Arabs, pitching their camps for a short time at one goldfield centre, and then on to another, begging from the whites, and reported to be earning a good deal by prostitution, and there seems no hope of their ever becoming anything but a serious burden to the State. We have no powers legally to prevent their wandering where they like; and each year the bill for food and water gets larger.\* The Travelling Inspector's Report of March last will be found in Appendix No. 10. The only bright gleam in the prospect seems the possible utilisation of their services towards rabbit killing; but to do this it must be done in a systematic manner under white superintendence, and it seems to me that leaders of parties should be appointed and given power to collect and feed the natives whose time must be devoted to killing rabbits in certain lines of country. The skins should be taken off so as to be commercially valuable, thus giving some return for the expense; and as this movement is likely to be of great benefit to pastoralists, some contribution might reasonably be expected from them. A very large area has been

\* To give an instance of how expensive matters are, I will relate a circumstance which took place at the Mount Morgans hospital. A native woman was found *en route* under distressing circumstances, and, at my request, was received into the hospital. There her confinement took place, and she and the child were attended to. The woman died, and the child had to be cared for at considerable expense. It was impossible for the hospital authorities to look after the child for long, so I had to employ a white woman to bring the child to Perth, paying her fare to and fro, with a certain amount for sustenance. The Salvation Army Rescue Home kindly undertook to look after the child, which I saw several times receiving every attention as if a child of the house, but after all the expense which had been necessarily incurred either through the hardship of its birth or the unsuitability of civilised surroundings to a child of savage parentage, the poor thing died. Now, things like this cost a good deal of money, and there is nothing to show for it; and such matters are not likely to be taken into consideration by those who wonder how the Aboriginal Vote is expended.

taken up recently between Menzies and Lake Way on pastoral leases, and a phalanx of natives to meet the advancing army of rabbits is said to be as good as any fence.

In a letter which I have received from Mr. Talbot, a settler of eight years' standing in the Eucla District, he tells me the rabbits are, and are likely to be a large expense and trouble to the Government. He thinks a useful way of assisting the unemployed natives to earn their living would be to employ them in batches of about 50, with a white man in charge, to destroy the tremendous large number of rabbits now travelling West between Eucla and Balladonia. He feels sure that if properly worked the skins would pay nearly all the expenses incurred in feeding and clothing the natives, as well as the wages of the white men. This work would check the inflow of the rabbits, who are in millions anywhere between Eucla and 170 miles West—absolutely ruining the country as they go. Here is a means of not only securing a living for the blacks, but preventing a dire evil to the settlers.

#### THE SOUTH-EAST COAST.

Here the great majority of natives are employed by kangaroo hunters and sandalwood cutters, some being employed on sheep stations. They seem to be well cared for, and very few appeals for help come before me. A few are fed at Bremer Bay, Israelite Bay, and Esperance.

#### PROPOSED NATIVE RESERVE, ESPERANCE BAY.

I have been again approached in this matter, and attempted to bring it to an issue. The land originally proposed, westward from the bay, was found to be not well watered, and selectors had crept out so as to interfere very much with it. This was not to be desired, so I turned my attention to the Dombup Area, a very suitable block of land which had been set apart for an agricultural area, but not gazetted. The matter was for some time under consideration by the Minister for Lands, but ultimately he was advised to reject my proposition. This was much to my regret, as I foresee that some place of refuge must be selected on this south coast; and I do not see any better and more suitable place than this which is within the reach of the medical officer, but yet far enough from town to prevent interference. It has natural water, some good land, and a chance of permanent game.

#### CENTRAL AND SOUTH-WEST DISTRICTS.

Although there have been few deaths, the number and condition remain pretty nearly the same. Those in the neighbourhood of towns are continually under the supervision of myself, the magistrates, and police; and all their ailments and wants are attended to promptly. A great many, in fact nearly all the able-bodied, find permanent work; and in reply to my inquiries as to children fit for placing in institutions, I was told "The natives are too comfortable to allow any children to enter into institutions." The native hospital at Katanning is kept in good order, and has been useful on several occasions. I get frequent reports from all parts.

From the *Plantagenet District* the natives are reported to be generally in good health, never want, for food or clothing, and have no complaints, nor have the police received any reports against them.

From *Bridgetown* I hear that the natives are diminishing.

The reports of the institutions in these districts, viz., Middle Swan (Anglican) and the New Norcia (Benedictine) appear as appendices. But I may here add a few words regarding these. The New Norcia Mission is under fresh management, and I hear there is to be large expenditure in the erection of schools for boys and also girls, and a convent building for the reception of some sisters of the order. This appears to me to have been the one great want in past years—there has been no woman's influence at all hitherto—and I anticipate far more successful work. The Anglican mission at the Swan has also been expending money in improvements. Dormitories and other rooms have been added on, and I was pleased to see a great improvement in all the surroundings, and the usual cleanliness and brightness of the inmates during a recent visit. (See Appendix No. 1.)

#### THE ELLENSBROOK HOME.

This is carried on in a quiet but very beneficial way for the few inmates (8); they could not have a better training to become useful employees or cottagers in the country districts; and some would probably ere this have been on the downward road but for their rescue here.

#### WELSHPOOL NATIVE SETTLEMENT.

This is being carried on still successfully. There are about 16 natives permanently resident, some of whom are not rationed, but earn their own living by odd jobs in the neighbourhood. There are four residences, and the allotments round these have now been fenced in with wire fencing, and the ground which was ploughed for each holder has been utilised by them for growing vegetables and a few planted trees. The unusual wet season has been hard on portions of their potato crops, but some bags full of excellent potatoes have been shown me. The presence of a resident working man will be a great benefit, not only in guiding the residents to till their ground methodically, but to ensure the distribution of rations to the decrepit ones fairly and to assist them in improvements and repairs to their cottages, to keep bad characters away from the reserve, and to establish the proposed garden and other industries which I trust soon to establish so as to give some return for the expenditure and to attract other natives



to the settlement. I have been obliged to be very careful, as nearly all my funds are required for ordinary relief purposes, but each year the settlement shows increased progress, and several more families seem inclined to go there. One strict condition, however, is that at least one of each couple shall be incapable of work. Those who can work find a little employment on neighbouring farms; and I see my way to providing a good deal for them on the settlement, which will be reproductive, say, by the storing of firewood for sale as occasion offers; the preparation of the garden, the flowers from which will give a return the first year, which is better than waiting three or four years for fruit; the making of nets and bricks may be tried, and some of the men now there are able to repair boots well, and possibly could be taught to make them well enough for the others to wear on the place.

#### CONTRACTS.

Owing to the law relating to the employment of natives under contract being with some settlers a dead letter, I have been unable to keep an accurate supervision of natives employed. The contract system, when looked at with an unbiassed eye, is good for the natives. If all natives who work were obliged to be employed under contract, and my system of forwarding returns to the head office were carried out, the condition of every native would be properly looked into, and we should not hear these, probably exaggerated, accounts from secondhand sources of how some poor native had been subjected to African slavery. Here and there in the lonely fastnesses of the bush there may be cases of cruelty which the eye of Heaven only detects; but, from my knowledge of the independence which the native is not slow to assume, I cannot believe that there are many cases which are not reported; and every such case is a subject of close investigation. I have, however, now a system which gives me the names of all who sign contracts to work, that is, if I receive all the returns which I have asked for; probably I get most of them, but it is impossible to find out if I get all, as any Justice of the Peace can witness a contract; and, in spite of my urgent request, he may omit to send in a return. An index is carefully kept for immediate reference should it be required. Nevertheless, when the time comes for native reserves under personal superintendence there will always be a refuge for any ill-treated native where he may resort, whether able to prove the truth of his story or not. The great thing will be to get their confidence and their good feeling, which I am happy to say, to my knowledge, many of the squatters in this State have already established among the natives of their districts. In my correspondence with the Northern Protector, Queensland, he tells me that in that State contracts are only recognised with employers who hold a permit to employ. This is to guard against natives engaging with persons of unreliable character. Some arrangement of this kind might be ensured by the proposed new law here.

*Office.*—The clerk-accountant's work has largely increased for 18 months past, owing to a different system of payment, and it takes up nearly his whole time; but a very good system prevails by which at any moment totals up to date on all points can be obtained either of money spent generally, or in districts under whatever heading; also of the numbers of recipients of relief or of material used.

Every possible care is taken in checking accounts, and all particulars are given as to relief, on specially ruled voucher forms (*see sample*), of the claims of each native for relief, periods, scale of provisions, etc. (*See sample form after Table D.*)

But yet there are a few stations so isolated that I have to rely on the reports sent in by occasional patrols and Mr. Olivey's original inspection. I have still therefore, per force of circumstances, to place a good deal of faith on the word of these distant settlers, and I have no reason to believe that my confidence is misplaced. The police throughout the State are, as formerly, my ready helpers, under the direction of the Magistrates wherever possible and convenient; but there are parts, such as the Kimberley District, where for my purposes they are too few and far between. Again, I say, I trust in my proposed legislation meeting with your assistance towards the consideration of Parliament. Each year that passes makes it more difficult for me to carry out my duties without its assistance, and there are so many possibilities of making our large native population a useful instrument towards prosperity by the action which only this proposed legislation will make possible, that I cannot urge it too strongly or too often.

Owing to the ignorance which apparently still exists, judging from the correspondence which now and again appear in the Press, I trust that I shall be allowed a larger number of copies of this Report for distribution this year than I got last year. The amount of work which falls upon the Department, and the continual cause for careful judgment, cannot be known by any but those who really study the question. The quietness which generally pervades the matters from an official point of view will, I hope, be put down to the fact that the natives are generally so well and kindly treated that there is little to be said, and it is to the credit of the Department to say that the benefits received by the natives are not bruited abroad. Their welfare meets with my continued solicitude and there is much more work and responsibility than meets the eye.

The correspondence of the Department is as follows:—Letters received, 793; letters written, 842; a large number of Circulars and Returns; natives relieved, to agree with Table A; natives defended at law, 5, at cost of £23 3s. 6d.

I have, etc.,

HENRY C. PRINSEP,  
Chief Protector of Aborigines.



## ABORIGINES DEPARTMENT.

TABLE A.

Details of Relief to Aborigines and Half-castes in Western Australia, not including those in Institutions.

District.	Station and Believer.	Blind.		Aged, diseased, or crippled.		Destitute.		Total Natives. Station.		Total Natives. District.	
		M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
EAST KIMBERLEY ...	Thompson, J. C. (P.C.) Argyle Police Station ... ..	1	...	3	5	1	2	5	7	15	23
	Buchanan, Gordon Bros., Flora Valley ... ..	1	2	2	1	...	...	3	3		
	Skinner, H. M., Wyndham ... ..	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...		
	Keddell, F. G., Hall's Creek ... ..	1	1	2	5	...	...	3	6		
	Rhatigan, M., Turkey Creek ... ..	1	3	1	3	1	1	3	7		
WEST KIMBERLEY ...	Park, Chas., Broome... ..	...	2	2	2	...	...	2	4	44	79
	Tuckett, T. W., La Grange Bay ... ..	...	10	5	5	2	2	7	17		
	Filstead, C. E., Wallal ... ..	...	...	7	9	...	...	7	9		
	Annear, C. J., Fitzroy ... ..	3	9	3	2	2	1	8	12		
	Edgar, A. W., Oscar Range ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	9	...	9		
	Hadley, F. S., Sunday Island ... ..	1	2	1	4	...	...	2	6		
	Edgar & Biddles ... ..	...	1	1	4	1	1	2	6		
	Brennan, J., Derby ... ..	2	...	1	3	1	...	4	3		
	McClure, J., Derby ... ..	...	...	...	...	3	4	3	4		
	Beagle Bay Mission... ..	6	1	2	2	...	1	8	4		
Roe, G. H., Thangoo... ..	1	3	...	2	...	...	1	5			
NORTH-WEST ...	Byron, W., Balla Balla ... ..	...	...	3	7	...	...	3	7	28	54
	McRae, Straker, Croydon ... ..	...	3	2	4	...	...	2	7		
	Padbury & Lot n, Millstream ... ..	3	...	1	4	...	...	4	4		
	Blythe (P.C.), Tableland ... ..	3	...	1	4	...	...	4	4		
	Mearns, J. G., Sherlock ... ..	...	...	2	3	...	...	2	3		
	Gillham, A. C., Chiritta ... ..	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	2		
	Robinson Bros., Mount Florence ... ..	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	4		
	Pead, W. J., Woodstock ... ..	...	...	2	2	...	...	2	2		
	N.W. Mercantile Co., Roebourne ... ..	...	...	2	2	...	...	2	2		
	Lockyer, A. B., Spring Farm ... ..	1	3	...	...	...	...	1	3		
	Watson, H. J., Roebourne ... ..	...	...	1	1	...	...	1	1		
	Edwards, E., Port Hedland ... ..	2	3	...	3	...	...	2	6		
	Breon, Corpl., Marble Bar ... ..	1	2	3	6	...	...	4	8		
Hall, H. A., Roebourne ... ..	...	...	...	...	1	1	1	1			
ASHBURTON and GASCOYNE	Edgar, A. W., De Gray ... ..	...	...	...	...	25	25	25	25	81	112
	Hulme (P.C.), Mt. Mortimer ... ..	1	...	1	2	...	...	2	2		
	Radley (P.C.), Onslow ... ..	2	1	5	6	...	1	7	8		
	Carter, Thos., Pt. Cloates ... ..	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	2		
	Ayliffe, St. Barbe, Bangemall ... ..	...	...	9	8	...	...	9	8		
	Masters, D., Wooramal ... ..	...	...	3	5	...	...	3	5		
	Lefroy, G. and W., Yangeariddy ... ..	...	...	3	1	...	...	3	1		
	Martin, J. T., Hamelin Pool ... ..	...	...	1	1	...	...	1	1		
	Hearman, J., Middilya ... ..	...	1	2	2	...	...	2	3		
	McLeod, D., Minilya... ..	...	...	...	13	...	...	...	13		
	Campbell, R., Booloogoora ... ..	...	...	3	1	...	...	3	1		
	Munro & Hogarth, Doorawarra ... ..	...	...	1	1	...	...	1	1		
	Binning, T. Mooka ... ..	...	...	1	1	1	1	2	2		
	Spey (P.C.), Junction Station ... ..	...	...	5	18	...	...	5	18		
	Hatch, W., Onslow Creek ... ..	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1		
	Fitzpatrick, R. E., Dairy Creek ... ..	...	...	...	5	...	...	...	5		
	Bush, R. E., Clifton Downs ... ..	1	...	2	3	...	...	3	3		
Ferguson & Francis, Sharks Bay ... ..	...	...	4	1	...	...	4	1			
Baston, G., Carnarvon ... ..	...	...	11	12	...	...	11	12			
MURCHISON and VICTORIA	Wittenoom, F., Boolardy ... ..	1	1	...	...	...	...	1	1	81	112
	Nairn Bros., Byro ... ..	...	4	3	1	...	1	3	6		
	Turner (P.C.), Mt. Wittenoom ... ..	...	...	6	9	...	...	6	9		
	Sharpe, J., Wooleen ... ..	...	1	2	1	...	1	2	3		
	Ogilvie, A. J., Murchison House ... ..	1	...	...	2	...	...	1	2		
	Smith, E., Meka ... ..	...	...	1	3	...	...	1	3		
	Dixon, E. M., Nannine ... ..	...	...	1	1	...	...	1	1		
	Bell, W., Namorotharra ... ..	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	2		
	Cordell (P.C.), Peak Hill ... ..	...	1	1	1	...	...	1	2		
	Darlot Bros., Berringarra ... ..	2	4	3	4	...	...	5	8		
Carlyon, R. J., Yuin ... ..	...	1	2	3	...	...	2	4			
Pollard (P.C.), Yalgoo ... ..	1	2	1	7	...	1	2	10			
Carried forward ... ..	36	67	119	199	38	53	193	319			