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(SECOND SESSION.)

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA.

REPORT

OF

THE ADMINISTRATOR

FOR THE

YEAR 1913.

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If some arrangement can be made whereby a Queensland Inspector may be enabled to visit the Territory occasionally to examine and report on the schools and work of the teachers, it will be productive of great good to the whole system of education. I take it such inspections are considered necessary in any system of education.

PUBLIC HEALTH.

VII. The Report of Dr. Holmes emphasizes the necessity for the continuation of the good work (principally in Darwin) which is being carried out as a result of his efforts.

It is highly important that the present very satisfactory vital statistics should be maintained, but to do so the sanitary conditions and supervision of the public health of Darwin—the gateway of the Territory—should be brought up to and kept at a high mark.

Manifestly it is unfair economically that the Chinese should be allowed to live under conditions of housing which would not be tolerated elsewhere in Australia, while they enjoy wages similar to the whites, and it would be suicidal to allow them to continue to menace the health of the increasing white population of the same town by dwelling in overcrowded and insanitary tenements. The virulence of the recent outbreak of diphtheria, which was fortunately early checked, emphasizes the necessity for every sanitary means being adopted.

As Darwin grows the water supply (which became a serious problem for many at the end of the last dry season) will become a more and more acute question, the only solution of which will be a conduit from the Darwin or Adelaide Rivers. Meanwhile the continuation of shallow boring presents a more satisfactory method of providing water than the sinking of ordinary wells, the water in which may become so readily contaminated.

The question of an inland capital, whatever may be said to the contrary, for this as for other reasons, will some day demand serious consideration.

ABORIGINES.

VIII. The work of the Aborigines Department has proved satisfactory. Mr. Stretton, who was appointed for a year as Chief Protector after the departure of Professor Baldwin Spencer, has retired, and the statutory duties will be performed by the Government Secretary.

The usefulness of the Aboriginal Compound at Darwin is becoming more apparent, while the establishment of the school for half-castes and natives within the compound, and their separation from the white children, has proved very beneficial to the children of both races.

During my visit to the MacDonnell Range district recently I was impressed by the large number of half-caste, and even quadroon, children in the native quarter at Alice Springs growing up without education or any moral control. One half-caste mother has five quadroon children—four of school age—yet, although white in complexion, these children are developing under conditions worse than those of their native ancestors and disgraceful to their European relations.

It is hoped this may be early remedied, the first step being the establishment of a school with a qualified teacher, who, although primarily required for the white children previously denied a State School education, will also hold classes for the quadroons and half-castes.

I was also during that visit struck by the large number of aborigines forming camps near the Telegraph Stations along the overland line and at Alice Springs. Quantities of stores are sent each year by the Government to various depôts for distribution, and although the officers do their best, the receipt of what is practically alms by many who are quite capable of work is unavoidable. Such encourages a spirit of mendicancy. It can only be stopped by establishing a cattle and sheep station where work may be provided for all natives requiring food, other than the aged, infirm, and very young. I have made proposals in regard to such a station, which I trust may be adopted.

I also visited the Hermannsburg Mission Station, where I found the staff enthusiastic in its devotion to its work amongst the natives. I do not recommend the resumption of the station, conditions having greatly improved since the return of Pastor Strehlow from his vacation in Europe, but I have made certain recommendations to the controlling body and to yourself which I am confident will be adopted.

The Mission Stations at Bathurst Island and on the Roper River I was unable to visit during the year, but reports from visitors indicate that good work is being carried out amongst the surrounding natives.

INDUSTRIAL.

IX. The only important industrial occurrence of the year was the general strike of Government labourers, which occurred during April-May. While I was journeying back from an official visit to the South a demand was made, through the local branch of the Australian Workers' Association, for a minimum wage of 80s. per week and absolute preference to unionists.

These demands could not be granted, the former because I had no reason to believe the cost of living was so excessive over the cost in the South as to warrant such an advance; the latter because I had no authority—had I considered it advisable to do so—but arbitration was offered. This was declined and the strike declared.

I have reported fully to you regarding the whole of the circumstances, and need not dwell on them here. There was some dislocation of train and shipping arrangements, which was soon overcome, and serious dislocation of work on the Batchelor Farm, referred to elsewhere.

After ten days the men gradually came back to work, and ultimately the disturbing elements left the Territory. It is only just to say that the District Executive of the Australian Workers' Association at Townsville totally disapproved of the strike when advised of the whole circumstances. Throughout the dispute there was no disturbance or lawlessness, the men behaving with every propriety.

The relative efficiency of labour in the Territory compared with that in the South is not yet completely determined. Last year I drew attention to the statements of various heads of Departments, who each discovered a great deficiency due to climate, and whose experience my own evidence corroborated.

Recently the Chief Surveyor has handed me reports from three of his surveyors, who assert a deficiency in their men's work of 60 per cent. during the summer months. Against this, however, I have the statement of the Assistant Engineer of Railways regarding the value of the work done by a gang of men in repairing extensive wash-outs on the line for three weeks during January (a hot and moist month), in which he claims no deficiency when compared with similar work by men in the south of Queensland, where he has had extensive experience in handling men.

Further, the contractor for the houses erected by the Government advised me he found no deficiency. As he was in an exceptional position to make just comparison, having brought his own men with him from the South (and the majority remaining with him during the year he spent in Darwin), and as he personally worked along with his men, his opinion is of value.

I would also draw attention to the remarks of the Superintendent of Public Works regarding contract *versus* day labour, and the data he affords. In the small contracts he refers to the raw material was generally sold by the Department to the working contractor at cost prices, so that the difference represents purely one of wages. It may be, therefore, that our officers have rather overlooked the tendency to what is popularly termed "Government stroke." At all events, suffice it to say that conclusive proof regarding relative efficiency is not yet thoroughly established. Obviously, however, if men know their employer or his agent only require 60 per cent. or 70 per cent. of the work expected in the South in a given time, the temptation to supply that amount, and no more, is great.

X. During the year I have continued the policy of endeavouring to become thoroughly acquainted with the conditions of the country by personal observation and by consultation with pastoralists and others resident for long years in different parts of the Territory.

To this end, besides a number of comparatively short journeys, I recently made a long tour through the Barkly Tableland, and as far south as the MacDonnell Ranges, covering 2,000 miles by motor and nearly 1,000 by horse.

With the exception of the Victoria River country, which I propose visiting shortly, I may claim now to have some personal experience of the various classes of country comprised within the borders of the Territory.

REPORT ON ABORIGINALS DEPARTMENT, 1913.

His Excellency the Administrator.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

I have the honour to furnish you with my report on the working of the Aborigines Department.

It is not my intention to deal with the scientific aspect, such as the customs, habits, and beliefs of the aborigines of the Northern Territory, as this is being fully and ably treated by Professor W. Baldwin Spencer in his reports now being placed before the Commonwealth Government.

I desire more particularly to deal with the working of the Department. This has been found most difficult, owing to opposition amongst the small employers of aborigines. No doubt, it is somewhat irksome to them to have to furnish returns provided for in the Act and Ordinance; in some cases absolute defiance has been manifested, and it has been somewhat difficult to keep out of the Courts. However, I considered it better to give these employers a little time to consider their position.

ACCOMMODATION FOR STAFF AND SCHOOL CHILDREN.

The head office of the Department is situate in Cavanagh-street, being one of the offices lately built for the Government Departments.

Within the aboriginal compound at Kahlin Beach the children are living, in regard to which I attach a detailed report.

ABORIGINAL SCHOOL.

The school for half-caste and aboriginal children was opened on 19th October, 1913. It is at present carried on in a house adjoining the compound, but it is possible that better accommodation for school work will be required in the near future. His Lordship the Bishop of Carpentaria and the local clergy were present at the opening ceremony, and spoke of the great benefit of opening such a school. The number of children attending school are as follow:—

Half-caste girls	...	...	8
Half-caste boys	...	...	8
Full-blood girls	...	...	2
Full-blood boys	...	...	7

Although these children have had only one quarter's tuition, the advance made is, indeed, remarkable. The children enjoyed splendid health up to the time that the heavy monsoonal rains set in, and measles broke out amongst them; they are again restored to good health, and the second quarter of their tuition has started. They are a bright and intelligent lot of children, and before the year 1914 has ended many more will be added to their number. There are upwards of 200 of these unfortunate half-castes amongst the children of the Territory, and, to give them the benefit of schooling, other schools (notably at Alice Springs) will have to be opened. Sunday-school is held in the compound by a local clergyman.

RATION SUPPLIES.

This is a very large item in the expenditure. All the Protectors are supplied with rations for the old and infirm natives at the various stations.

A large quantity of rations comes from Adelaide. *via* Oodnadatta, for stations south of Tennant's Creek. I have no means of ascertaining the cost of these rations, except by the debits sent from the External Affairs office to the Administrator. These rations are distributed by the various police stations. Instructions have been issued to all the Protectors to keep a detailed return showing how the rations are disposed of, and the number of aborigines to whom the rations are supplied, also the reason for such supply. At the compound the rations are only distributed to school children, and the old and infirm. Melville Island is supplied with rations for the old and infirm visiting the station. A better system of serving out rations in the southern end of the Territory should be observed, showing to whom the rations are given, and why.

PAYMENT OF WAGES TO ABORIGINES.

The system of payment recently inaugurated by Your Excellency concerning the payment for labour done by aborigines for the Government Departments will, I think, act well. This provides for rations, clothing, and a sum of money weekly for all natives permanently employed. The native does not draw the money week by week, but it is paid into his trust account, held by the Chief Protector, and is available for the purchase of goods as required. I refer more fully to this in my general observations. Unfortunately, the remuneration made to aborigines for work done for the public must (as the law stands at present) be left entirely with the employé. As Professor Spencer tersely puts it, "No fixed rule can be drawn up which will apply equitably to all natives, or be fair to their employers." As a rule, they require payment either weekly or on completion of any temporary employment, and, being ignorant of the true value of money, it is not long in their possession, although a number of them are exhibiting a desire to put a few pounds into the trust account. Money they earn is laid out in stores, &c., for them, which they are anxious to give to their friends. This has a good effect in showing their friends that they have been well treated. It was somewhat difficult at first to make them understand that the money would be placed to their credit for safe keeping. With the general public the natives look for payment some time before they have done the work, and, of course, don't get it—also very often not after they have finished the job. This is one source out of the many by which the natives are spoiled. Several letters have appeared in public print to the effect that the Department is spoiling the natives; if seeing that they now get fair treatment at the hands of their employers is spoiling them, then we must plead guilty.

Daly River Station is situated on the north branch of the Daly River, on the site of the township of Maranunga. A substantial three-roomed house, built up on piles 5 feet from the ground, with verandah all round, is being erected. This building was started by day labour, but the Protector stationed there found the labour very unsatisfactory, and decided to complete the work

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

himself, with the assistance of aborigines. The principal tribes at the Daly are the Maranungas, the Berinkas, and the Mullock Mullocks. At the mouth of the Daly River are the Peron Islands, reserved for the natives, though not yet proclaimed; these islands are the key to a large tribe of coastal aborigines; at present an intelligent native with his family is in charge, and is proud of his responsibility. In this locality are a number of Chinese fishermen, who, in former years, supplied spirits and opium to the natives, but since the advent of frequent visits of Government vessels going to the Daly settlement, this has been frustrated. The Protector has a very large district, densely populated by aborigines, extending to the Fitzmaurice River. There are several half-castes in the district, whom I am anxious to bring to Darwin to attend school.

East Alligator Station is situated upon a splendid piece of land on the East Alligator River, which flows into Van Diemen's Gulf, and which will, in the near future, become a very important district. A detailed report upon this station is annexed hereto.

Bowen Straits Station has only just been opened, but it is a most important station. It is well situated, and in the way of all small vessels working trepang fisheries. The natives are numerous, and the old Port Essington settlement is within a few miles. A substantial house is being erected by the Protector, assisted by the aborigines. Croker Island, which forms the Strait, is a valuable piece of country, and a large number of aborigines visit it during the year for eggs, &c.

Roper River Station.—The Protector at Bowen Straits was formerly at the Roper River, but as there are two constables stationed there, and a mission within a few miles, there was no necessity for its continuance.

Pine Creek Station.—This is a most important centre, with its extensive mineral area, and scattered population consisting of all nationalities. The Protector has a most difficult duty to perform in protecting the natives, principally from the abuses of the scattered coloured races. The prohibited area on the Mary tin-field is a source of great trouble to the Protector; he makes frequent patrols but rarely finds the aborigines on the area, but the moment his back is turned they are on again. The Chinese at the various camps on the area entice the natives into their camps; instructions have been issued to the Protectors to use every means to bring the Asiatic races to book. The sick and infirm natives in this district, and those coming in from the interior, are now dealt with at Pine Creek, instead of transferring them to Darwin.

The officers in charge of police stations are *ex-officio* Protectors of Aborigines, and the appointment of them is having a very wholesome check on abuses against natives, the principal one of which was taking native women from their tribes. This has been in the past a very great evil, and one which has caused reprisals by the natives; although non-moral, they are bound to avenge, sooner or later, the taking away of any of their women. This is being steadily frustrated by the patrols of our Protectors and the police. There can be no better civilizing influence than that of continually moving about among the various tribes, each time taking a little tobacco or coloured cloth. How often has the weary traveller had to trust to the natives for a drink of water! I have had personal experience of this, and only for some few blacks I met I should probably have perished.

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The public hitherto have been accustomed to employ natives without restraint. In most cases a stick of tobacco and the scraps of the table would be sufficient payment for a day's work, such as cutting firewood, cleaning yards, and other work of a similar nature. But, as stated before, you have now decided that natives taken on permanently for Government work must be housed, clothed, and fed, and paid at least 2s. 6d. per week, which amount is placed in a trust account to the credit of each native. The Departments at the end of each month prepare an account showing the amount paid for food, clothing, &c., which is debited against the aboriginal, and the balance (if any) is paid to the Chief Protector as trustee for the aboriginal. This system is working well, but is not yet adopted by the public generally.

Owing to the great increase of the population during the past year, and so many natives being required for the various Departments, labour has been scarce. European servants are difficult to obtain, and there are few in the Territory who can afford to keep one at the wages demanded, so that aboriginal men and women to perform household work are in great demand. It has been stated by some people that the natives are spoiled; I can quite understand that to some extent this is so, but it certainly is not the fault of the Department. I am sure the heads of Departments will bear me out in this—that all the natives employed by the Government are most valuable servants, who do a very fair day's work, and compare most favorably with European workmen. A number of aboriginal men now in the compound are doing more work at a less remuneration than is paid by the public. There is one thing I should like to point out in regard to this, viz., that the native who is working by himself at any house is not content when he has no one to speak to; when working with others he is far more cheerful and contented, and this is only natural. The young male aboriginal adapts himself readily to all kinds of skilful work; we have one or two natives now at work in the compound who can make a galvanized iron tank without any supervision, one of whom worked for a plumber for some time, and proved an apt scholar.

One of the greatest evils against which we have to contend is the supply of spirits and opium to aborigines. This is done by the low class Asiatics. In cases where the native is found the worse for drink, or suffering from the effects of opium smoking, he is sent to Melville Island and placed under the care of an officer there; this temporary banishment is having a most desirable effect. There are three females and three males undergoing banishment; it is the most humane treatment for cases of this nature, as sending them to gaol for a week or two has not the slightest effect.

Most of the camps in the town have been broken up, and the aborigines removed to the compound at Kahlin. It has been a difficult matter to induce the different tribes to amalgamate and fraternize.

It is an object of great importance to induce as many of the "way-back" natives as possible to come in, even for a few days, and experience humane treatment, so that on their return to their own country they could circulate the fact.

Naturally, there are some people who consider the Aboriginal Department should be abolished, but give no adequate reasons. No doubt it is quite possible we have people in our midst who would like to have the natives as slaves, and I

have heard some appalling statements as to how the natives should be treated. There can be no half measures; if the natives are left to their own devices, which is absurd to think of, they must not be employed. We are occupying their country, and must give them something in return, and all that we can do is to improve their condition according to our way of living.

The treatment of sick natives at Darwin has been considerably relieved by the Pine Creek hospital dealing with most of the cases south of the creek. During the year the aboriginals treated numbered fifty-eight. If it is the intention of the Government to establish a Lock hospital, perhaps the better plan would be to have a floating one.

NATIVE POPULATION.

Professor Spencer, in his preliminary report, states that there are probably nearer 50,000 than 20,000, as stated. Of course, the number can only be approximated, but I should like to state that during my term of office at Borroloola, from 1888 till 1894, I went fully into the matter of the numerical strength of the coastal tribes, and found that they were much more numerous than those further inland. Taking the coastal fringe, say 50 miles from the sea, from the Nicholson River on our eastern border round to the Victoria River on the western border, a distance of about 900 miles, equal to about 45,000 square miles; this embraces all the head waters of the principal rivers, viz., Victoria, Fitzmaurice, and Daly, to the westward of Darwin, and the Alligator, Adelaide, Liverpool, Goyder, Roper, McArthur, Robinson, and Calvert Rivers to the eastward, and practically takes in the bulk of the aboriginals north of the 17th parallel of south latitude. Of course, until our vast Northern Territory is more fully known, it is impossible to estimate nearer than 20,000 or 30,000 for the whole of the Territory. There is one thing of which we are quite certain, and that is that they are decreasing in numbers very rapidly.

CRIMES COMMITTED BY ABORIGINALS.

The principal crimes committed during the year were:—"Unlawful possession," 16; murder, 10; drunkenness, 9; assaults on aboriginals, 5; escaping from custody, 4; cattle killing, 2; aiding and abetting, 1; inflicting grievous bodily harm, 1; indecent language, 1; larceny, 1; giving liquor to natives by a half-caste, 1. This calendar bears a favorable comparison with that of other nationalities. The murder cases include only two murders—one a tribal murder at Woologorang, on the eastern border, and the other of a white man at Guion Point, on the north coast. In the first case the prisoners were found "not guilty." In the other case five prisoners were sentenced to death, but sentence was commuted to imprisonment for life. The sixteen cases for unlawful possession were for having beef in their possession, presumably from cattle killed by the natives.

The Department have had no cases for infringement of the Aboriginals Act, and only a few cases against aboriginals for being on prohibited areas. In many instances, natives have been removed from prohibited areas and cautioned. The great difficulty experienced is in prosecuting Asiatics in the areas for enticing the natives there.

LICENCES.

There were 580 licences to employ natives current on the 31st December, 1913. Under these licences 1,000 natives are employed. It is difficult to obtain the exact number, as the system of agreement is not yet established in the Territory.

The number employed by pastoralists vary considerably, but the figures I quote are well within the number actually employed. A considerably greater number could be usefully employed in trepang fishing, bark stripping for tanning purposes, and ordinary fishing. These industries would pay very handsomely.

SICKNESS.

There have been a great number of ailments amongst the aboriginals treated at the hospital, mostly of a contagious nature. The transit of these natives from the interior and their return has been a costly item in the expenditure. This will not be so heavy in future, as all cases of sickness south of Pine Creek will be dealt with there. It is not only the cost of transit, but they have to be clothed and fed. Some of them, after treatment and during convalescence, remain at the compound and do a little work, while others find employment with the residents.

MISSION STATIONS.

The Hermansburg Mission, Finke River.—During the visit of His Excellency the Administrator to the above station, he had an opportunity of going thoroughly into the whole conduct of the mission, and reported direct to the Hon. the Minister.

Roper River Mission.—At this station the aboriginals are kept at work well, and every one visiting them speaks very highly of the work done by the mission.

Bathurst Island Mission.—The Order of the Sacred Heart has a station at the southern entrance to Apsley Straits. Cultivation is carried on by the natives, who are very peaceable, and no trouble has been experienced during the tenure of the mission.

During the year I have patrolled the coast as far as Guion Point, a distance from Darwin of 300 miles, in a lugger of 8 tons. This was on the occasion of the police arresting the aboriginals connected with the murder of a trepang fisher named Campbell. A great many natives were seen during this trip, but owing to the horses belonging to the deceased man Campbell, used to follow up the murderers, being in such very low condition, it was not possible to get far inland, and a great deal of the pursuit by the constables had to be done on foot. However, I was enabled to get some useful information about the adjacent tribes, and to explain to those met that the desire of the Aboriginals Department was that relations should be friendly, and that the blacks should work with the whites along the coast. The distribution of a little flour and tobacco among them had a good effect, inasmuch as it induced them to meet the lugger at various points touched at. It must be understood that these natives, in their long intercourse with the Malay trepang fishers visiting the coast for hundreds of years, had, to a great extent, altered their nature. Most of the natives on this part of the north coast speak the Malay language. As these Malay trepang fishers carried firearms, and sometimes small carronades (some of which have been found partly buried in the sand), they were always able to maintain a supremacy over the natives, but they were always at enmity. Since, however, the discontinuance of the visits of the Malay proas to our northern coasts, the natives are improving in their civilization. The better treatment meted out to them generally is creating a friendliness which did not exist with the Malays. It would be impossible for our local trepang fishers to carry on their industry without the aid of the natives.

The principal fishing grounds for the best quality extend from Cape Don, entrance to Van Diemen's Gulf, to the Sir Edward Pellew group of islands, at the head of the Gulf of Carpentaria, and the natives inhabiting the coast line between these two points are those who have had longer intercourse with the Malay trepang fishers.

After the police party had secured ten aborigines said to be implicated in the murder of Campbell, a start was made to negotiate 300 miles of dangerous coast line in an 8-ton lugger, with thirty souls on board, viz., three Europeans, three Malays (crew), twelve witnesses, and ten prisoners, also two children. Of course, it was necessary to have these prisoners chained to the deck. However, we reached Darwin in fairly good condition.

I also visited Daly River and vicinity in the lugger *Lone Hand*, and after seeing a large number of native camps, returned overland, inspecting the tribes and the equipment of the Protectors at Daly River and Pine Creek. Although I had frequently visited this locality in former years, it was a new experience to get so closely in touch with so many natives, and everywhere was greeted by some of the natives who could speak English with "Hello, boss!" Having a supply of tobacco with me, I was frequently able to indulge in the calumet of peace.

The report of the inspector on journeys made by him overland and along the coast is appended.

I have not been able to secure individual reports from Protectors, but their time has been principally taken up in patrol work, and, judging from their monthly diaries, this has been effectively carried on. Special attention has been manifested in gaining information as to the numerical strength of each tribe, name of tribe, locality of tribe, and the number of women compared with the number of men. This information should be fairly complete on production of the next annual report.

Protectors have been instructed to be particularly observant as to the diseases most noticeable amongst the natives.

The Protector at Oenpelli (the native name of the reserve at the East Alligator River) has done a lot of work with the natives, and his experience amongst these particular tribes, together with the great facilities to render this station reproductive, should be made manifest in the near future.

The Protector at Pine Creek has had a fairly long experience as a mounted constable, and is doing good work in watching the various Asiatic races, who are a menace to the betterment of our aboriginal race. His district is, perhaps, more difficult to manage than any other yet formed.

The Protector at Daly River has a large population of aborigines, and being in the centre of the European settlement, his work consists largely in giving the settlers every assistance in procuring aboriginal labour and controlling the river traffic. He is a special constable, and attends to minor offences which can be dealt with by the local justice of the peace.

The Protector stationed at Bowen Straits was formerly at the Roper River, but, as before stated, owing to the fact that two mounted constables and a mission station are there, it was deemed advisable to move him to Bowen Straits, where he should have larger and more important details in his work for the Department. He has already explored a large area of the country to the eastward of his station (see Bulletin No. 3 of 1912, of which he is the author), so that his reports on the country, as well as the inhabitants, should be of great value.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

I recommend that a royalty of 3s. per hide be imposed in respect of all buffalo hides secured by buffalo shooters in the Northern Territory. This royalty should be paid to the credit of the Department of Aborigines, and a condition should be imposed that bull hides only, and of a weight not less than 60 lbs., should be secured.

That Melville Island should be resumed, and reserved for the use of aborigines; industries to be started there and carried on by the natives, also a school to be commenced at once. (This reserve, if utilized, should in a few years become self-supporting.)

That trepang fishing reserves be set aside for the aborigines, and the industry worked by them.

That the Alligator River reserve should be stocked with cattle at once. (I am confident that this undertaking alone would nearly pay the expenses of the Department.)

I have the honour to be,

Your Excellency's obedient servant,

(Sd.) W. G. STRETTON,
Chief Protector of Aborigines.

REPORT OF INSPECTOR.

For the most part I have been occupied in a general supervision of the aborigines of Darwin and district: in dealing with correspondence, by direction of the Chief Protector; in issuing and renewing licences for the whole of the Northern Territory; and in making tours of inspection.

ABORIGINES IN AND AROUND DARWIN.

Though the town of Darwin is situated upon the country of the Larrakia tribe, that tribe has now fewer representatives in the town than have other tribes from distant places. As the result of close observation and careful inquiry amongst the aborigines, it appears plain to me that the Larrakia tribe, once strong numerically and influential along the north coast, has been brought very low. The Larrakias are now greatly outnumbered in their own country. Disease and excesses have killed, and are still fast killing, them off. Yet considerable virility still persists amongst them, for several tribally married couples at Darwin are raising large and vigorous families, but in each case these are people who indulge neither in opium or alcohol.

The vigorous repressive measures instituted by the Chief Protector against the purveyors of drugs and drink has had a good effect in lessening the deleterious traffic, but it is still carried on by persistent offenders, who meet the natives at nighttime by arrangement. Mostly, these lawbreakers are Asiatics, but certain low white men also pander to the depraved desires of the aborigines, and these are amongst those who make the most persistent outcry for the withdrawal of protection from the aborigines. I beg leave to suggest that the law be amended in such a way as to inflict drastic punishment upon those convicted of giving or selling drink or drugs to natives; that the evidence necessary to obtain a conviction against Asiatics for allowing natives to be upon their premises be simplified and made easier of proof; and that association with aborigines by Asiatics who have been once convicted of any offence against the Aborigines Act be made a punishable offence, with a substantial penalty.

The aborigines who, once brought under the influence of drugs and drink, are utterly unable

to repress their own desires, are enticed into the prohibited areas by the Chinese, who barter for the use of native women. As the law stands, the only successful prosecutions can be those against the aboriginals for being on prohibited areas, and to inflict the legal penalty upon all so offending would mean overcrowding the only prison available, or building a new one. An industrial prison at Pine Creek would have a great controlling effect on the aboriginals, and, in addition, would forcibly turn the misdirected energy of the disorderly natives, who hang about the Chinese and other mining camps, in a direction where it might be utilized for their own and the public benefit. The Fanny Bay gaol is mostly tenanted by aboriginals, but it is not half large enough, consequently large numbers of aboriginals who have been taken from prohibited areas by the Protectors have to be released with a caution. They simply go straight back to the prohibited area they were taken from. The prison gang at Darwin does excellent work on the roads and in the Botanical Gardens. The men and women in the prison arrive thin and dejected, and they depart fat and strong. The pity is that, though during their sentences they are enabled to overcome the craving for drugs and drink, they have not the moral strength to continue to abstain, but quickly succumb to temptation, which is cunningly placed before them. The heavier punishment (in cases where aboriginals are concerned) should be meted out to the tempter rather than to the tempted.

Beside the Larrakias, the aboriginals in Darwin comprise representatives from the Daly, the Victoria, the Roper, the Katherine, the Alligator, the Adelaide, and the Mary River districts; from Port Essington, Melville Island, Junction Bay, and even from remote Wessel Island and the English Co. Islands, and from Borroloola.

As a rule, those who come from a distance work, whilst in Darwin, though too frequently the standard of its quality is impaired through indulgence in drink. That the aboriginal can work, and does work, when under supervision, is made abundantly plain at the aboriginal compound at Kahlia Beach, where a number of aboriginal men and women are doing work for the Government that will compare favorably with similar work done by any labouring class. A number of inveterate loafers, who dodge work on every possible occasion, and who continually involve other natives in trouble, habitually hang about the outskirts of the town. By sending a few of these to Melville Island for an indeterminate term, the Chief Protector has conveyed to the rest a salutary warning; but as many of them, however, refuse to take notice of any example made, I trust the Chief Protector will, as soon as this Department's boat, the *Lone Hand*, can be released from the constant work she is doing for other Departments, be utilized in the interests of the aboriginals for the banishment of a number of the erring ones, upon whom reason and kindness is wasted. Threat of exile to Melville Island is now regarded by the natives in a humorous spirit, and they invariably reply, "You no more got 'em boat." The natives are cunning enough to watch all boats plying to and from Melville Island, and, when one is in the harbor, those who know that they are on the list, or deserve to be, go off into the bush until the boat is gone. Should the *Lone Hand* or any suitable craft be made always available for this work, then the most troublesome of the aboriginals could be taken at any time opportunity offered and shipped away. A year or two on Melville Island works wonders in the regeneration of these aboriginal decadents.

I ask permission to be permitted to point out, however, that what this Department most needs to assist in its work of uplifting and protecting the aboriginal is an island to be used solely as an industrial and reformatory reserve. This has already been alluded to by the Chief Protector, and should the suggestion be carried out, it would certainly prove economic and valuable. To such an island most aboriginals convicted of ordinary offences might be committed, as well as those taken in hand by direction of the Chief Protector solely for purposes of reformation.

PATROLS OF INSPECTION.

During the latter part of the year two lengthy patrols of inspection were made by me, in accordance with instructions issued by the Chief Protector.

On 20th September last I left Darwin in the Government scow *Leichardt* to inspect the newly-formed station at Bowen Straits, and, after landing a number of native witnesses and prisoners who had been concerned in the Campbell murder case, to travel overland to Darwin and make a visit of inspection to the Oenpelli Aboriginal Reserve by the way. Dr. M. J. Holmes, Chief Health Officer, who desired to make a medical inspection of the aboriginals generally, accompanied me. Having visited Croker Island and inspected the natives thereon, a couple of days were spent in examining the country along the straits on the mainland, and getting into touch with the natives in the vicinity. With one or two exceptions, all were healthy, and the number of infants noticed indicated that the tribes located along Bowen Straits, at least, were holding their own fairly well.

The track taken by us to Oenpelli led us past "Wark," a long chain of waterholes, never failing, and crowded with feathered game, whilst the surrounding country is plentifully inhabited by kangaroos and emus. At one time large herds of buffalo roamed about this country. They have been thinned out by the hide hunters, and only a few remain. The Wark water, or chain of billabongs, runs for about 20 miles south of Malay Bay, and along the course of them many aboriginals find a rich living. The surrounding forests are of splendid stringybark, interspersed with cypress pine and some ironbark. In this forest, which is very extensive, enormous quantities of valuable timber are available, and, as there is good farming land in the vicinity, thousands of acres of which is ready for grazing dairy cattle on rich, succulent grass, there is no doubt the timber will be a big asset in the development of this portion of the Northern Territory. The aboriginals utilize the stringybark in building houses, and a number of excellent weatherproof houses, some of two rooms and a verandah, stand in testimony to their industry. These houses have been built entirely by the natives of saplings, bark, and native rope, large enough to accommodate half-a-dozen people in each room without crowding, and the fact that they have stood the stress of the weather for several years, and are still weatherproof, is a distinct tribute to the ingenuity of the builders.

At Oenpelli Aboriginal Reserve, bark houses built by the natives under the direction of the superintendent were seen; the natives, however, seemed to prefer sleeping and living outside of them. This reserve comprises about 20 square miles of grassy plain country, which, in the wet season, is covered with water, but in the dry is clothed with a thick mat of luscious grass, upon which cattle could be fattened quickly. Stock so fattened might be taken to market either by

boat or driven overland, and, as the carrying capacity of the grass lands is very great, a substantial sum of money, which should go far towards the upkeep of the Department, should accrue each year. This, in my opinion, is what the Oenpelli Reserve is best adapted for. As a detention reserve, its utility must be doubtful, for game is so profuse around the billabongs and in the country along the Alligator River, that it would be most difficult to make the natives stay regularly about any place unless of their own free will.

At Oenpelli I left Dr. Holmes to proceed to Darwin in the launch *Lone Hand*, and made south-east for Burrundie with two black-boys and a mob of horses for the public trustee, belonging to the estate of the late C. E. Campbell. The first night out I had the misfortune to get poisoned (possibly ptomaines), and had to camp for three days. Dr. Holmes, who was still at Oenpelli, was brought out to me by one of my black-boys, did what he could for my relief, and he and Mr. P. Cahill stayed with me till I was out of danger.

At the "Big Banyan," on the South Alligator River, about twenty natives were seen, all fat and healthy. One of my boys told me that a very big mob were camped a couple of miles away, but I was not able to look them up. On the lagoons around the "Big Banyan" wild geese settle in uncountable flocks. We rode past millions of them, and the noise of their pinions as they rose, mingled with their loud flute-like honking, was as the sound of a great storm. Several birds, weighted with lily roots inside and mud outside, actually fell into our camp as the flocks passed overhead. The natives informed me that all they had to do to get geese was to climb up into the trees and knock them down as they flew over, or follow along the tracks of the flights and pick up the exhausted birds. Having seen them do both these things, I believed them. This portion of the South Alligator is a perfect paradise of a hunting ground for the tribe that claims it, the only drawback being the fearful plagues of mosquitoes that are incessantly there.

As the only settlement between Bowen Straits and the Mary River is Oenpelli, none of the tribes inhabiting that region are unduly interfered with now, though in the past some of them suffered dreadful usage at the hands of certain brutal men who temporarily settled near them. The natives now have every confidence in the good faith of the Department, and quickly report any interference with them, either at Oenpelli or Pine Creek.

By instruction of the Chief Protector, a patrol of the coast east from Darwin was made by me in the s.s. *Wai-Hoi*. My instructions were to visit and inspect every trepang camp, to get into touch with as many aborigines as possible, to investigate certain allegations made against a trepang fisherman, and report generally upon the condition of the natives as I found them.

Though the draught of the *Wai-Hoi* precluded her going into all the small inlets and creeks inshore, this was accomplished by means of the ship's boats, and a landing was effected wherever required. In my report in detail to the Chief Protector I was able to assure him that, on the whole, the natives were well treated by the trepang fishermen, but that there had been isolated cases of bad treatment. In one case, in particular, unnecessarily harsh treatment had resulted in the death of a man who had incurred the general enmity of the tribes around him, but I found the inclination of these very people was to be friendly with the well-disposed white man, and to do all they could to assist him. The trepang fishermen

know that the aborigines are at perfect liberty to go and come as they please, and as the industry as at present conducted is wholly and absolutely dependent upon the work of the aboriginal, the trepangers do all they can to induce good workers to stay, and to do this they have frequently to keep in food a number of their relations, aged and young, who do little or no work.

With the exception of the camp of Messrs. Linacre and Glasson, who have struck out into country little known, all the trepang fishing is done between Black Rock, on Cobourg Peninsula, and Junction Bay, there being nine camps, two belonging to Maoris.

The Maoris referred to are amongst the best employers of native labour. They are kind and generous, and never bad-tempered with the natives. Jimmy Kawhio, in particular, is more like a father to them, and spends the whole of his profits in food, &c., for the large mob of natives he has around him.

At various parts far along the coast, where the natives were reported hostile and dangerous, I landed as per your instructions, and went amongst them. They proved to be anything but hostile, and, though in some cases none of the tribe could speak English, they could all speak Macassar, and in that language, through an interpreter, made it known that they knew a lot about the Aboriginals Department, and regarded it in a protecting light. At Wessel Island, where I was warned not to land, I went ashore unarmed, with my small son, ten years old, and went several miles inland with a band of natives, none of whom could talk English. They were most friendly, and sent two of their young men to Darwin with the boat. These two are now working at the Botanical Gardens, and are learning fast and working satisfactorily. They are to be returned in six months, and others will come back in their place.

Elcho Island and the English Company's Islands, once numerous populated, have now only a few natives upon them. Tribal battles and raids made by a powerful mainland tribe, headed by a notoriously fierce native known as "Chokee," have almost wiped them out, and the remnants—old men and women, and young children—I found camped round Mr. Linacre at Arnheim Bay for protection. Linacre and Glasson had hunted Chokee back, and were feeding the fugitive natives. Chokee's tribe, in my opinion, could be made friendly by a visit of a Protector amongst them overland. Chokee is responsible for the murder of Rodney Spencer, trepanger, twelve years ago, and a number of shipwrecked Macassar men.

During this inspection I was able to positively determine that there are *no* settlements along our north shores other than the trepang camps alluded to. As to the statements made that there are secret foreign settlements, they are simply nonsensical.

T. J. BECKETT.

REPORT ON ABORIGINAL COMPOUND, KAHLIN.

The compound comprises about 13 acres, but in the centre are 4½ acres belonging to the Eastern Extension Australian and China Telegraph Company Limited. The compound has a boundary fence consisting of posts of local timber and barb wire.

Cultivation consists of about fifty mango trees in full bearing, a small banana plantation, and a few lemon trees. The vegetable garden was

carried on during a portion of the year, the products of which were consumed by the inmates of the compound.

There are now sixteen bark huts, a boys' dormitory, girls' dormitory, kitchen, laundry, office, storeroom, coach-house and fodder room, a fowl house, and some old dilapidated buildings in the gardens.

We have now nearly completed a large dormitory for the girls. The dimensions are:—Length, 40 feet; width, 20 feet; walls, 10 feet; material, galvanized iron walls and roof, concrete floor. This will accommodate twenty beds. The building is well ventilated, and will cost about £120. The land about the dwellings has been well cleared, and arrangements are being made to plant a few shade trees.

At 31st December last there were seventy-six inhabitants of the compound; all these, with the exception of the Superintendent, were aboriginals or half-castes.

Rations are only supplied to the workers within the compound, the school children, and the sick and infirm.

All native visitors, and the wives of boys working in the town, and fifteen women and children who cannot work for outside employers, occupy the west end of the compound.

The Superintendent, Mr. Godfrey, is a first-class artisan, and is already instructing the young natives in various work. On the whole, I am satisfied with the progress shown.

W. G. STRETTON.

(Copy.)

Oenpelli Station,

31st December, 1913.

Chief Protector of Aborigines, Darwin, N.T.

SIR,

I have the honour to report for year ending 31st December, 1913.

The aborigines on the reserve have nearly all called at the station, and seem pleased with the conditions now in force. Some of them have asked me to try and make the natives who belong to the reserve, and are now absent, come back to their own country. Several small parties of natives from over near the head of the Liverpool have come into Oenpelli; they were treated kindly by the reserve natives, and were given tobacco, pipes, and the oldest men were given blankets. On the second visit they brought their wives and children with them. I have been trying to entice those natives to come in for a good while. They are very wild, and require very careful handling, but once their confidence is gained a person will be able to do anything with them. They made several exchanges with the reserve natives, and joined in the corroborees, so I think that the wild natives will be easily quietened.

A good number of the reserve natives are away from the reserve buffalo shooting, and doing the work in connexion with buffalo hunting. The relations of the men employed by the buffalo hunters are accompanied by their wives and a big number of followers, who go to the camps for the buffalo flesh, of which they are very fond, and which they can get in unlimited quantities. It will be hard to prevent the natives going off the reserve while the buffalo shooting is carried on so near to the boundary of the reserve.

I have had a great deal of sickness among the natives; twenty were treated daily for some time and a lesser number off and on nearly all the cool season. The serious cases were kept at the station, fed, and given medicine, until they were strong enough to get native food again. Two

men were sent to the Darwin Hospital for treatment and operation. One was suffering from granuloma, the other from tuberculosis. Two women suspected of having leprosy were examined by Dr. Holmes during his visit in October. Several deaths occurred on the reserve; but only one death at the station, that of an old man, who was very nearly blind.

There are employed at the station—

Six permanent men on the pay-sheet,
Five women, wives of the above,
Nine children,
Two shepherds for goats,
One boy for horses,

and, generally, three to six casual hands who come and go as they please.

At times we have about a hundred natives camped near the station, but as the native food gives out they shift about to other places where food can be procured. They generally keep in touch with the station, on account of tobacco. I supply them with tobacco, but they must always do some work, or bring native honey to the station people, in exchange for tobacco. I find this plan works very well.

The horses were in good condition the whole year. Several were attacked by swamp cancer, which had to be cut out immediately the cancers were noticed. The operation in each case was successful. Goats and pigs did well, and were fat at the end of the dry season; in fact, we had enough green feed at the end of the dry season to fatten 2,000 head of cattle.

On my return from Darwin, at the end of April, I at once started a vegetable garden, with the result that the natives had an unlimited supply of English cabbage, carrots, beetroot, lettuce, French beans, cucumbers, celery, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, snake beans, pumpkins, watermelons, and peanuts. English potatoes were grown during the cool months, and did very well. We have also coming on some pawpaws, citrous fruits, mangoes, custard apples, pineapples, bananas, and almonds. Some cotton was also tried, and grew well. Tobacco grew well, but took a lot of looking after, as caterpillars destroyed the leaves. Maize did well, but suffered from strong winds. Millet for bird food was also tried, and did splendidly. Peanuts did the best of all, and took less looking after than any of the other crops. I have also tried the arnotto dye plant, but the wax on the berries seemed too thin to do anything with. Rubber is also being tried, but has been attacked by white ants. Sisal hemp grows very well on any soil, and is being used by the natives to make all kinds of nets, strings, &c.

The work that the natives have been employed at during the year consists of cutting and clearing scrub, grubbing stumps, fencing, gardening, vard building, hut building, timber getting and carting it, bark stripping, and all work that is necessary on the station. The natives worked splendidly, but must be under the supervision of a white man, for they recognise no head man among themselves, nor will they work under the orders of any of their own tribe. I have one man here who I tried to make take charge of a gang, but it would not work. The others said to him, "You are one of us, and you are not going to order us about; we will do what the boss tells us, and you can do as you like; you are not a white man, and cannot boss us."

I have the honour to be, Sir,

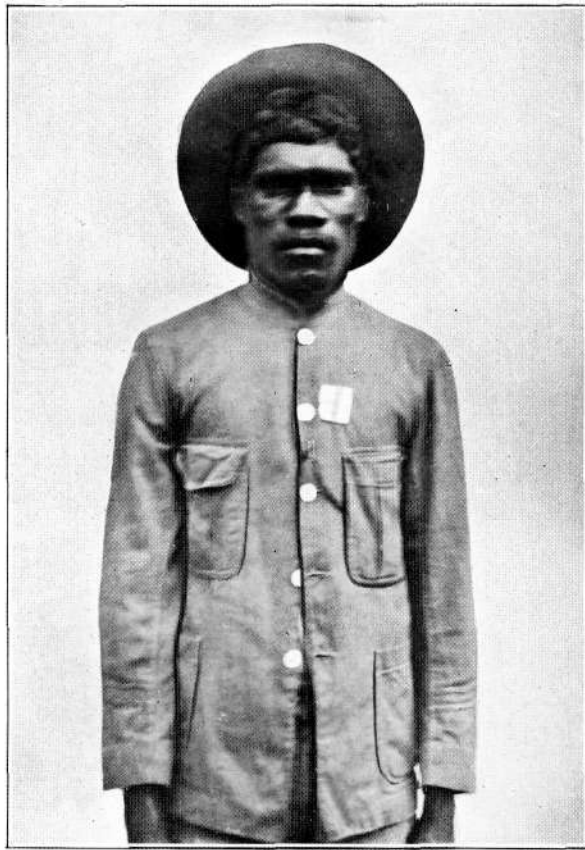
Your obedient servant,

(Sgd.) P. CAHILL,

Superintendent of Alligator River Reserve
and Protector of Aborigines.



"NEIGHBOUR," AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL (NATIVE NAME, MALLYALEGA).
In primitive costume. Recipient of Albert Medal for saving life on land.



"NEIGHBOUR" IN CIVILIZATION.

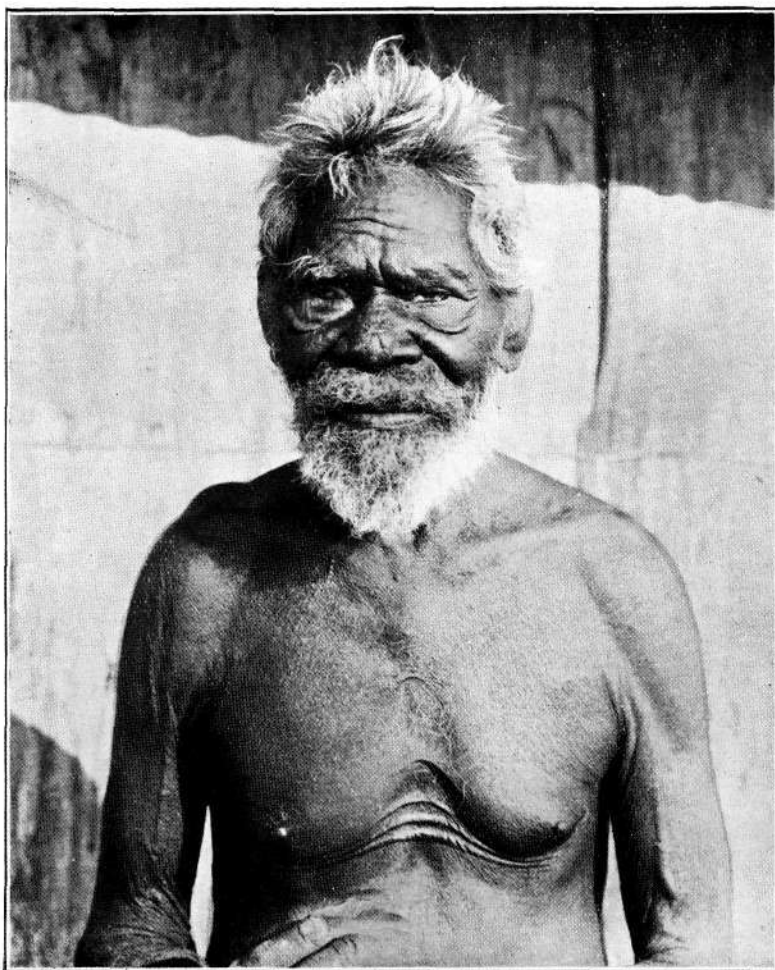


Reverse.



Obverse.

"NEIGHBOUR'S" MEDAL.



JACK DAVIS, OF PORT ESSINGTON

The oldest known aboriginal in the Northern Territory. Is known to be 90 years of age. He saw the first white man arrive at Port Essington Military Settlement, and has exercised a good influence in his tribe in their relations with white men.



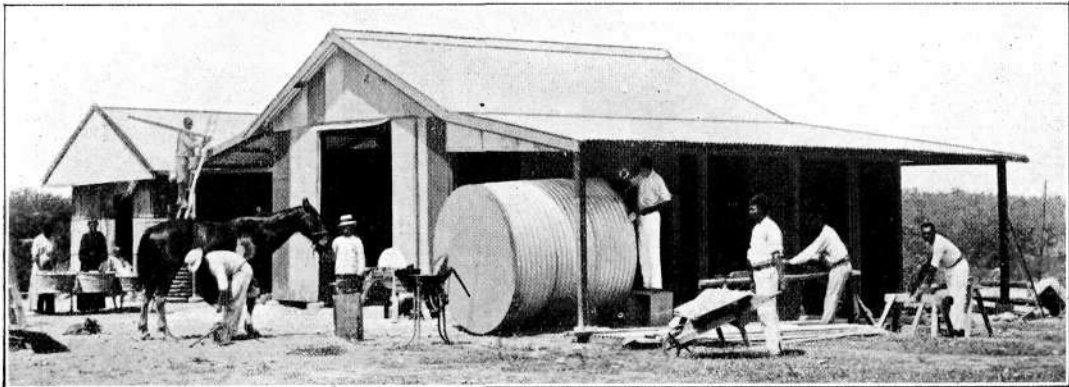
WARK BILLABONGS, NEAR MALAY BAY, N.T.



ABORIGINAL COMPOUND, KALIN BEACH.



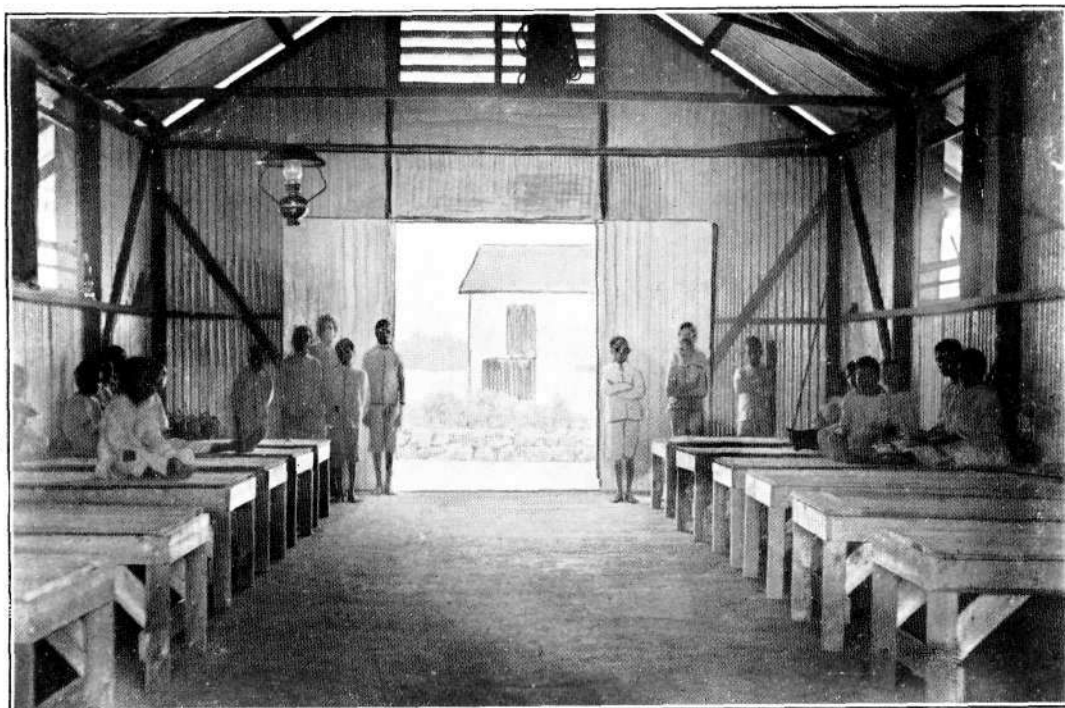
ABORIGINAL COMPOUND—SHOWING GROUP OF SCHOOL CHILDREN AND DORMITORY,
ABORIGINAL SCHOOL.



ABORIGINALS AT WORK IN COMPOUND, KALIN BEACH.



MIXED TRIBES AT ABORIGINAL COMPOUND, KALIN BEACH.



INTERIOR OF THE DORMITORY FOR THE ABORIGINAL SCHOLARS.



ONE OF THE SCHOLARS, ABORIGINAL SCHOOL,
DARWIN.