

1877.
—
VICTORIA.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE ABORIGINES.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS

APPOINTED TO INQUIRE INTO THE PRESENT CONDITION OF THE ABORIGINES
OF THIS COLONY, AND TO ADVISE AS TO THE BEST MEANS OF CARING
FOR, AND DEALING WITH THEM, IN THE FUTURE;

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE AND APPENDICES.

PRESENTED TO BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY'S COMMAND.

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ENTERED on Record by me in the Register of Patents, Book 17, page 483, this twenty-ninth day of January One thousand eight hundred and seventy-seven.
W. H. ODGERS.

Victoria, by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland QUEEN, Defender of the Faith :

To our trusty and well-beloved SIR WILLIAM FOSTER STAWELL, Knight, Chief Justice of our Colony of Victoria, FREDERICK RACE GODFREY, Esquire, M.P., EWEN HUGH CAMERON, Esquire, M.P., GEORGE WILLIAM RUSDEN, Esquire, Clerk of Parliaments, and ALFRED WILLIAM HOWITT, Esquire, Police Magistrate :

GREETING :

Whereas the Governor of our Colony of Victoria with the advice of the Executive Council thereof has deemed it expedient that a Royal Commission should forthwith issue TO INQUIRE INTO THE PRESENT CONDITION OF THE ABORIGINES OF OUR COLONY OF VICTORIA AND ADVISE AS TO THE BEST MEANS OF CARING FOR AND DEALING WITH THEM IN THE FUTURE: Now know ye that We, reposing great trust and confidence in your zeal, discretion, and ability, have authorized and appointed and by these presents do authorize and appoint you the said WILLIAM FOSTER STAWELL, FREDERICK RACE GODFREY, EWEN HUGH CAMERON, GEORGE WILLIAM RUSDEN, and ALFRED WILLIAM HOWITT to be our Commissioners for the purposes aforesaid : And we do by these presents give and grant unto you, or any three or more of you, full power and authority to call before you such person or persons as you shall judge likely to afford you any information upon the subject of this our Commission, and to inquire of and concerning the premises by all other lawful ways and means whatsoever : And We will and command and by these presents ordain that this our Commission shall continue in full force and virtue, and that you our said Commissioners or any three or more of you shall and will from time to time and at any place or places proceed in the execution thereof and of every matter and thing therein contained, although the same be not continued from time to time by adjournment : And We do hereby appoint you the said SIR WILLIAM FOSTER STAWELL to be CHAIRMAN of this our Commission : And lastly, We direct that you do with as little delay as possible report to us under your hands and seals your opinions resulting from the said inquiry.

Witness our trusty and well-beloved SIR GEORGE FERGUSON BOWEN, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Colony of Victoria and its Dependencies and Vice-Admiral of the same, &c., &c., &c., at Melbourne, this twenty-ninth day of January One thousand eight hundred and seventy-seven, and in the fortieth year of our reign.

G. F. BOWEN.



By His Excellency's Command,
JAMES McCULLOCH.

(Extract from Government Gazette.)

COMMISSION OF INQUIRY RELATING TO ABORIGINES.

THE Governor, with the advice of the Executive Council, has been pleased to appoint JOHN GAVAN DUFFY, Esq., M.P., to be a Member of the Commission of Inquiry into the present condition of the Aborigines of this Colony and to advise as to the best means of caring for and dealing with them in the future.

Chief Secretary's Office,
Melbourne, 4th June 1877.

GRAHAM BERRY,
Chief Secretary.

REPORT.

To His Excellency Sir GEORGE FERGUSON BOWEN, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Colony of Victoria and its Dependencies, and Vice-Admiral of the same, &c., &c., &c.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY—

We, the Commissioners appointed to “inquire into the present condition of the Aborigines of this colony, and to advise as to the best means of caring for and dealing with them in the future,” have the honour to submit the following Report:—

The Board for the Protection of the Aborigines caused a special census to be taken of all natives in Victoria on the 15th of March last, and have thus ascertained a fact of some importance in considering their condition. The result confirms the opinion generally held that their number has rapidly diminished. The total, inclusive of half-castes and those of less close consanguinity, is 1,067; of these 527 are on stations under the Board, and the remaining 540 are described as residents of Victoria; but a large proportion frequent both banks of the Murray, visiting sometimes Victoria and sometimes New South Wales, and belong as much to one colony as to the other. A table of the result of the census is contained in Appendix A.

With regard to those on the stations, it is gratifying to report that considerable improvement has been effected in their general condition, and still larger results may be attained. They dwell in houses; are decently and suitably clad; live with their families around them; polygamy is not known, and marriage is respected. They follow employments of civilized people with some regularity—fully as much as can be expected of a race just emerging from barbarism; the vices of drunkenness and prostitution, though not unknown, are exceptional. The young receive sound education in schools, and the great leading truths of Christianity are instilled into the minds of all.

The stations, details of which are given in Appendix B, are six in number; four of these are Mission, receiving aid from the Government, stores, and grants of money for improvements; salaries and all other expenses being provided by the Mission. The other two are under the immediate management of the Board. All are on reserves of Crown lands.

On our appointment, we deemed it necessary to make ourselves acquainted by personal inspection with the actual condition and mode of management of the different establishments; and with this view they were visited by the Commissioners, information having been in the meantime requested by circulars addressed to Local Guardians and other persons interested in the Aborigines, we have been courteously furnished with all the information in their power; the answers, together with a synopsis, are given in Appendix C.

RAMAHYUCK.

At the head, presenting the most successful results, may be placed Ramahyuck. The site, on the River Avon, about fifteen miles from Sale, is well chosen; the land is of fair quality.

The buildings consist of thirteen cottages, missionary's house, church, school-house, and a boarding-house for children. These are arranged so as to form three sides of a quadrangle, presenting altogether a pleasing appearance, with an air of comfort pervading the cottages; most of which had fairly-kept gardens attached.

During a service on Sunday at which some of the Commissioners were present, the natives attended and conducted themselves in a natural and seemly manner, and as if they fully comprehended the act in which they were engaged. The singing was remarkably good, time being most accurately observed; a harmonium was very fairly played by a native woman. The children were examined, and answered with quickness and intelligence questions that could scarcely have been anticipated.

Arrowroot, hops, and vegetables form at present the principal products of the station. Ramahyuck arrowroot is a decided success; it is sold for a moderate price, and its quality is undoubtedly superior.

The natives find sufficient employment on the reserve; the wages they receive, together with rations, house, &c., enable them to support not only themselves but their families, and pay them, all things considered, better than if they left the station and worked as labourers. The system of payment by piecework is generally observed. Thrifty habits are encouraged; some of the men have deposited money in the savings bank; others entrust their savings to the manager. The natives subscribe to the Sale Hospital, whither the more serious cases of illness are sent.

The boarding-house, as it is termed, is a building for orphan children, which seems to be all that need be desired for such an institution. The single men live in a cottage by themselves.

The school is under the direction of the Board of Education. The examinations by the Inspectors of State-schools afford security that sound instruction is imparted and fair progress made by the scholars. The Ramahyuck school was the first State-school in which 100 per cent. of marks was received under the present result system. The excellence of the instruction, as well as the capacity of the children to profit by it, are shown in the testimonies of the Inspectors of schools, which we print in Appendix D. There is a library for the natives; the books are fairly used, but illustrated newspapers are peculiarly attractive to both old and young.

It is right to state that the purchase of a piece of land has been forced upon the superintendent of Ramahyuck for reasons he gives, and that the land is now used in connection with the station; we think it advisable for the future welfare of the establishment that this land should not be excluded from its limits.

LAKE TYERS.

Lake Tyers Station is about five miles eastward of the entrance to the Gippsland Lakes; it is on the further side of the lake, which is there about a mile wide. The reserve is bounded on two sides by arms of the lake, and fenced on the third.

The position of the station, on a promontory extending into Lake Tyers, is in some respects inconvenient. Under the present conditions, horses or bullocks required to transport stores or materials from the lakes' entrance, five miles distant, must either be driven a long way round a western arm of the lake, or compelled to swim across it. To remedy this inconvenience, a portion of land on the western side of the lake should be added to the reserve, enclosed, and used as a paddock. This would prevent both the straying of the cattle and a resort to the objectionable plan of the natives carrying stores from the lakes' entrance.

The buildings are—six cottages, a boarding-house for children, school, store, and houses for superintendent and schoolmaster. Service is held in the school-house.

Arrowroot has been cultivated to a slight extent, about an acre and a half having been planted; the produce last year was 60 lbs. This product might be increased if provision were made for collecting rain water from the roofs of the buildings; that of the lake is not suitable, being brackish, and pure water cannot be obtained by sinking.

Some efforts have been made to burn lime for sale.

During the season the blacks obtain employment in hop-picking in the neighbourhood of Bairnsdale.

In material progress Lake Tyers Station was not found so far advanced as many of the others; nor could this be reasonably expected. The site has been chosen on special grounds; it lies to the east of the Tambo River, which seems to be regarded by the wandering blacks of Maneroo and Bidwell, in a way fully recognised by them, as the limit of their excursions westward into Gippsland, which limit they are still unwilling, for tribal reasons, to cross; it was selected with the view of inducing the wild and wandering natives to visit an Aboriginal station without bringing them into the more settled parts of Gippsland; and it still possesses this as well as other advantages. In the extreme eastern portion of the district, bordering upon Maneroo, there is a certain number of nomadic Aborigines, leading a wretched and, in some instances, depraved life. Uninviting as it may be in some respects, no other station affords such facilities as Lake Tyers for practical efforts to civilize these natives.

At the date of our visit, many of the regular residents were absent ; but, on the other hand, a number of the East Gippsland blacks already referred to had for the first time visited the station. They arrived just before we did, seemed satisfied with their reception, and though not prepared to remain expressed an intention of returning at a future time.

The ordinary diet here does not include meat, except such as the natives themselves obtain by hunting.

The area of the station must be very considerably increased to meet even present requirements ; the land in the neighbourhood is poor, and its extent would give an erroneous idea of its capacity for grazing purposes ; it is unsuited for agriculture. If the number of the resident natives be increased, as may be reasonably expected, this extension should be promptly and liberally made.

The school is a capitation school under the Education Department.

FRAMLINGHAM.

Framlingham Station is situated near Purnim, about fifteen miles from Warrnambool, the River Hopkins forming part of its boundary. The soil is not equal to that of the neighbourhood generally ; there is, however, a tolerable proportion of good land.

The site has been fairly selected. The huts of the natives are moderately comfortable, but are ill-placed ; no order has been observed, nor have any proper attempts at drainage been made. Some slight efforts at civilization are apparent in the cottages, where we observed articles of furniture that had been purchased by the natives with their own money.

Framlingham is one of the stations directly under the control of the Board for the Protection of the Aborigines. The wife of the manager teaches the children, but there is at present no school-room, and no regular system of instruction such as that observed on all the other stations. A building for scholastic purposes was in course of erection when we visited the place.

The enclosing the reserve is an absolute necessity, in order to prevent trespasses and confine the cattle belonging to the station. At the date of our visit some fencing was in progress ; but in order to render it complete and sufficient the river frontage also requires special attention, for, as a boundary, the Hopkins does not, except in time of flood, afford a sufficient protection.

We feel bound to observe that Framlingham station bears an unfavourable comparison with any of the others in the arrangement of the buildings, the management of the land, as well as the efforts to civilize the natives. We by no means consider these defects irremediable ; the soil is fair, the site unobjectionable, and a number of natives have been collected and are now attached to the locality.

LAKE CONDAH.

Lake Condah Station is close to the lake of that name, and on a suitable site for an Aboriginal station ; but a portion of it, and that, comprising some of the best land in the reserve, is comparatively useless. By the judicious expenditure of a comparatively small sum in constructing proper drains, a large extent of rich land might be rendered available for many purposes. The reserve is in part enclosed by a stone wall, erected by the natives ; in part by a post-and-rail fence ; part being still unenclosed. The natives were occupied the greater portion of last year in erecting fencing, which has been executed tolerably well.

Hops, arrowroot, and cattle, form the principal resources of the station.

The cottages present fair attempts at comfort ; but the future re-arrangement of the buildings must be kept in view, and the boarding-house should be enlarged, so as to allow of separate beds for each inmate. The buildings themselves lack ventilation under the floors, and many are out of repair.

The results observable in the school were highly encouraging. There was a marked intelligence in the scholars, and, as distinctly pointing out what may be achieved by careful training, it may be mentioned that two Aboriginal youths were efficiently instructing classes of younger pupils in reading and arithmetic.

EBENEZER STATION.

The station called "Ebenezer," or "Lake Hindmarsh," is on the Wimmera, about ten miles north of Dimboola.

The principal buildings are of stone, well built and well arranged, the whole establishment presenting a clean and cheerful aspect. A good garden is attached, stocked with vines and fruit trees; it is irrigated in the summer by means of an apparatus devised by a former superintendent, and constructed by natives under his direction.

As regards the healthiness of the site, and its distance from public-houses, it is everything that can be wished; but the land of the reserve is of the very poorest description; a large proportion affords scarcely any pasturage; and, as sheep form one of the main supports of the station, this is a great drawback; the grazing capacity is not equal to the requirements, and the number of the stock is only maintained by the generous gifts of neighbours: an increase of area is therefore imperatively demanded.

In order to render it efficient, the station should be fenced as well as enlarged; part has been enclosed, and the whole could be completed by the natives under the supervision of the superintendent. We were pleased with the discipline and general appearance of the station.

It is under the management of the Moravian Mission, at whose expense the buildings were erected; here, as elsewhere, considerable progress in civilization has been attained.

CORANDERRK STATION.

Coranderrk, the other station under the management of the Board, is situated about two miles on the west side of Healesville—a short distance from the Melbourne road. The healthiness of the site is a moot point; the climate is beyond doubt more humid than that of Victoria generally, while the natives at present on the station have been gathered from all parts of the colony.

Whatever opinion, however, may be formed as to the sanitary effect of the climate, the construction, position, and arrangement of the cottages are, it must be conceded, most prejudicial to health. In some there are merely earthen floors; others, although provided with wooden floors, are without any attempt at ventilation underneath. The result of this must be that, during the wet season—in that neighbourhood of somewhat long duration—the inmates necessarily breathe in their habitations a mixture of atmospheric air and the vapors that rise out of the soil: the effect on health must be similar to, if not the same in degree as, that described by the author of "*Old New Zealand*" in the paragraph set out in the Appendix E.

It is necessary that special care should be taken to prevent the casting of offensive or injurious matter into the running water, which has been diverted into the station from the Badger Creek, and passes by the various huts.

Coranderrk is situated upon a ridge, along and somewhat on the slope of which the houses are placed, in a double row, fronting each other: the lower row necessarily receiving much of the drainage. This is most objectionable; it might be remedied by removing all the houses in the lower row to the higher part of the ridge, near the hop-kiln. This removal, as well as the placing all the huts in proper repair, with suitable drainage and efficient ventilation, should receive prompt attention; and these observations as regards drainage and ventilation are applicable in a greater or less degree to all the stations.

There is an extensive and profitable production of hops at Coranderrk which contributes to the support of the station; hop-picking was in progress at the date of our visit; as in the Kent hop-gardens, whole families were to be seen at work. The hop-grounds are capable of being largely extended; but in any case it will be necessary at the time of hop-picking, owing to the rapidity with which hops ripen, to augment the staff of pickers by the employment of some paid labourers from without.

Coranderrk is not fenced; as a consequence, a large proportion of the meat consumed on the station is purchased instead of being produced there.

Greater attention might not improperly be paid to the appearance of the grounds surrounding the settlement—no effort has as yet been made in this direction; the effect of tidiness, and *per contra* of untidiness, on the Aboriginal mind, is very important; the inculcation of tidiness forms part of civilization as well as of discipline.

Large sums have been expended on Coranderrk, but the Aborigines have not made such progress as might have been fairly expected. The physical condition of the residents indicates a very liberal scale of diet: their bearing and demeanor form a contrast with those of the natives on all the other stations.

ABORIGINES NOT ON THE STATIONS.

Five hundred and forty Aborigines are not domiciled on any of the stations; a concurrence of testimony points to their low condition; there are exceptions—such as that of two men, some women, and children who occupy comfortable cottages, and are employed on a station at Carr's Plains; some natives in the Wimmera district, who are dependent on the charity of settlers for their food and clothing; and two at Camperdown, who are kindly cared for; but such instances are few in number. As to the others, one local guardian writes—

“There are about a dozen Aborigines in the locality, including two children. Most of them are given to drink.”

Another—

“There are six natives in the neighbourhood, who refuse to reside at the station; their habits and moral condition are degraded to the last degree.”

Others bear similar testimony; while, as to those in the district of the Murray, the following joint report was furnished, about two years ago, by a member of the Board for the Protection of the Aborigines, and the Board's Inspector:—

“From the very full information we have received from residents on both sides of the river, we have further come to the conclusion that during the last five years the tribes in question have been reduced in numbers by not less than one-half. This will be easily credited when it is borne in mind that the natives are readily engaged by sheep-owners and others as shearers, bullock-drivers, boundary-riders, &c., at the highest current wages, and that almost the whole of these large earnings are devoted to the purchase of spirits either in this or the neighbouring colony, and for doing which there appears at present to be no practical obstacle; though, at the same time, it is probable that, were they really supplied with the amount of spirits which their wages should purchase, a very speedy termination of their existence would ensue. On occasions, particularly of being paid off at any woolshed, it has been pointed out to us, on testimony which it is impossible to doubt, that it is the custom of the tribe, four or five of whose members may have cheques amounting to £70 or £80 amongst them, to adjourn to some low shanty or public-house, or even to some secluded bend of the river, where they are met by appointment by a white man, who has long had his eye on them, with a cart containing a few cases of spirits, when they proceed to dissipate, sometimes in one night, the whole proceeds of their previous labour. On such occasions atrocities are enacted which it would be difficult for those unacquainted with savage life to realize.”

We consider that all credit and thanks are due to the gentlemen who for years Local Guardians. past have discharged honorarily the duties of local guardians, and who have used their best endeavours to benefit the Aborigines; but no other result than that described in the extracts quoted could have ensued from a system which consists merely of the free distribution of stores and clothing, without providing any means whatever of guiding by education or controlling by discipline a people of barbarous instincts.

The Rev. F. A. Hagenauer, referring to the natives supplied through local guardians, says—

“There is one man living near Ebenezer; he writes an intelligent letter; and he says, ‘We prefer this place; we get a bag of flour, a bag of sugar, and have nothing to do for it, and enjoy ourselves.’ It is very natural that they should choose that.”

Another witness says—

“I have long since come to this conclusion, that if it be desired to civilize those blacks, they should all be brought in to one or other of those stations or divided between them.”

Further, it is found, that while this system is inefficacious to raise the condition of those who are the subjects of it, it is necessarily, in all instances, a positive hindrance to any improvement, as it not only detains from the stations those who might be attracted to them, but supplies a refuge for those who will not submit to the gentle but salutary discipline, necessarily part of the home life on a station. The ration depôt at Towaninnie is a marked illustration of this injurious effect on the residents at Ebenezer; the local guardian at Towaninnie himself supports the view that these depôts should be abolished.

FUTURE TREATMENT.

The failure of the few instances in which Aborigines have been afforded the Continuance of stations. opportunity of endeavouring to earn their own living, unaided by supervision, shows that a discontinuance of the existing stations would be unwise. It may be conceded

Hiring out not desirable.

that their absorption in the general population may be looked forward to; but, judging from the past, so long a period must first elapse, it is unnecessary now to enter into the consideration of the subject. Nor do we feel at liberty at present to suggest as an alternative the hiring out or apprenticing of the native youths; from the evidence before us, it seems that they do not possess sufficient capacity and providence to make the arrangements essential for their own support. It is not to be inferred that they have not the power of learning trades, and therefore earning a fair subsistence; but they require, according to all our present information, to be subjected to a controlling and directing influence.

Another circumstance in considering this subject must not be lost sight of. The great object of teaching them trades, boarding-out, and apprenticing, should be not merely to enable them to support themselves, but to mix on equal terms with the rest of the community. Not unnaturally, a certain reluctance at present exists among colonists to associate freely with the natives; this, added to a peculiar sensitiveness on their part to any slight or rebuff, leads them to associate with those who will associate with them instead of selecting the most suitable companions. They may be tolerated, perhaps even petted, as children, but no sooner do they reach adult age, than their society is shunned, and a project which might be otherwise successful is thus marred.

Half-castes.

So far as these objections are concerned, no distinction can well be drawn between the blacks and the half-castes; for, although a general impression appears to obtain that the half-caste is more easily educated and more readily civilized than the Aboriginal native, yet, the evidence given, and our own observation, lead to no such conclusion. The former may perhaps receive instruction more readily, though this seems doubtful, but they are just as liable to temptation, and yield as easily to it; an appearance of civilization is, no doubt, more quickly obtained, but it is only superficial, and fails at the moment of trial. The semblance of attention to outward appearance, and a ready conformity to conventional rules, have probably led to the misapprehension that any sound distinction could be drawn between the Aboriginal native and the half-caste.*

Gathering of dispersed Aborigines.

We have already shown, from the superior condition of those on the stations, how advisable it is that all should be gathered to them. It may be supposed that attachments to localities, and hereditary tribal enmities, would militate against any efforts to bring them in: but the existing local attachments are, it must be borne in mind, of recent origin; on the breaking up of the tribes consequent upon the seizure of their territories, and on the decrease numerically of each tribe, the love of the land on which they were born, and which they considered therefore as theirs, became lessened. The tribes, as tribes, no longer exist, and the individuals yet remaining have formed associations which are not necessarily connected with former tribal boundaries. In fact they are now most attached to the spot in which they are best treated; their motto seems to be, *ubi bene, ibi patria*. The same observation applies to tribal enmities; and our examination of the stations has shown us instances where blacks from different tribes and districts are now living harmoniously together.

It cannot be denied that they look with a lingering regret upon the past; one of them—a native of the Darling—remarked to a Commissioner, that perhaps the neglect by the blacks of their national marriage-laws, and the consequent breach of ancient practice and duty, was bringing about the decay and disappearance of the race. Mr. Hagenauer (questions 1126, 1127) tells of an instance in which an old man, though he would not prevent the marriage of his daughter to a man whom the intricate tribal laws would have forbidden her to marry, was yet so impressed with the reverence due to his ancient faith, that he disappeared on the day of the marriage. There was no personal dislike, for the father was on friendly relations with the son-in-law.

The Australian Aborigines are more a law-abiding people than is generally supposed; in their natural condition, their daily domestic and social life was regulated by well-understood and strictly observed rules. Examples illustrative of this might be multiplied indefinitely; but it may suffice to point out that, among the natives who have come under our notice, we have found that rules obtained respecting marriages in the tribe, forbidding them within a more comprehensive circle of consanguinity than with us, and even dictating those portions of the food obtained by the individual

* Vide answers to question No. 11, in evidence, page 74, and Appendix C., letter No. 18.

which should be allotted to the various members of his family group ; ignorance of such facts has led to the belief that the Aborigines have no rules or laws of their own ; hence, that having no such rules or laws, they would not be inclined to obey ours. From the information in our possession, we would suggest that the collecting the still wandering Aborigines should be under the sanction and guidance of some regulations, and should be carried out by some persons whose authority they would recognize ; while at the same time the white population should be made aware by a regulation authoritatively issued that they were enjoined not to oppose the gathering the scattered remnants ; and the blacks themselves should be impressed with the conviction that those who were engaged in collecting them to the stations were only carrying into execution a law which they (the natives) were bound to obey. Regulations to be framed.

If such a regulation were issued with the necessary formality, we feel convinced that only a gentle but steady and sustained suasion would be necessary to effect the required purpose.

The regulations referred to should specify by a notice the time after which no more provisions would be given, and a formal proclamation should show a positive intention of adhering to the time so fixed.

No false sentimentality as to the supposed hardship of gathering in the Aborigines should be allowed to interfere with this step. It might be urged that they are happy where they are, and that it were better to leave them alone ; but it must not be forgotten that leaving them alone is, in fact, abandoning them to lower and lower stages of degradation.

We are of opinion that many now scattered abroad, and exposed to injurious influences, might be collected on the stations in the manner alluded to in the evidence (questions 1070, 1096 and 1097), a course which seems to have been in contemplation of the Board.

In addition, it may be well perhaps to have some statutory enactment, to make more stringent the measures dealing with vagrancy and drunkenness of the natives, and prohibiting the supply to them of liquor, extending after repeated offences to forfeiture of the license of the offending publican, or of the vehicle and animals of transport engaged. But we do not place much reliance on such measures ; the great difficulty lies in the enforcement rather than the provisions of the statute ; there are almost insuperable obstacles in obtaining the evidence necessary for a conviction. Legislation.

We have fully considered the expediency of forming an additional station for the benefit of the natives who are not gathered to any of those now existing : it seems to us that the advantages of the formation of such a station would not justify the necessary expenditure ; wherever it might be formed the majority of its inmates would have to travel far to reach it, and by kindly inducements, such as we recommend to be used it would be as easy to win them to existing stations as to a new one. By these means also the machinery already established would suffice, with only the additional expenditure required for food and clothing of the new arrivals, and economy might thus be practised.

In recommending a policy of dealing with the Aborigines on stations, rather than of their dispersion throughout the community, the evidence taken before us justifies the expectation, we are glad to state, that such a course would not entail a permanent charge upon the public revenues. The cost per head at the Lake Wellington Mission Station, in 1876, barely exceeded £6 ; and without asserting that the fencing and stocking the reserve would at once make it self-supporting, the manager declares (questions 991, 1151, &c.) that it would be "in a very short time self-supporting." To enlarge the stations whose area is insufficient, to fence them in and stock them, would doubtless involve an increased expenditure for some years ; but this would be the truest economy, and would lead to the best results as regards the natives themselves. Stations may be rendered self-supporting.

They attach importance to the stations being considered theirs* ; this seems to us a natural and proper feeling ; if it were extended so that they entertained a similar interest in the stock on these stations, not merely would they take more care of the stock itself, but we believe a step would thus be gained towards producing a conviction that they could and that they actually were supporting themselves.

* Letter No. 22, Appendix C.

Payment for
labour.

Intimately connected with the question of self-reliance is the mode of remunerating them for the labour which they now perform. The present system works unequally; payments are made only on some, not on all stations; all are fed and clothed, although not alike; where no payments are made, there is no incentive to the able man to work, who sees that he receives no more for his exertions than food and clothing, which are equally given to the indolent and feeble. We recommend that some payment should be made to all who labor, but that, so far as practicable, it should be for work performed by contract, and not by time, thus forming an incentive to industry.

The manager on each station may be empowered to sanction engagements by the natives with employers off the station, but his authority should be supreme in the community he governs; it will be his interest to permit them, if circumstances are favourable; it would be highly injurious to his influence, and to the Aborigines themselves, if, in opposition to his judgment, the practice were allowed under circumstances which he might think unfavourable.

Recommendations with regard to stations.

We have also arrived at the conclusion that when the natives are permitted to engage themselves in service to private employers, it would be well to give the manager of the Aboriginal station power to insist at his discretion that the wages should be paid through him to the native employed.

We recommend, in order to render the stations self-supporting, the following measures:—

First. That each station be enclosed with a suitable fence.

Secondly. Be suitably stocked.

It is imperative to provide stock of a kind that will prove remunerative. Neither money nor trouble should be spared in making a judicious selection in the first instance, and the stock should then be allowed gradually to increase to the amount required; until this point has been attained, it would not be possible to diminish the annual grant. In fact, to meet these requirements, it would be necessary, in addition to the present sum, to allot a sufficient amount to fence the stations and stock them.

Thirdly. (a.) That the area of Ebenezer Station be sufficiently enlarged, viz., to about 17,600 acres.

(b.) That Lake Tyers be provided with a block of land (say 640 acres) on the west side of the lake, as well as a general increase of the original reserve to 10,000 acres.

Fourthly. That steps be taken for the establishment of the following pursuits, where practicable, on the stations; and that where already commenced and found suitable, they should be extended and energetically prosecuted, viz. :—

Growing hops,
 „ osiers,
 „ arrowroot.
 „ olives,
 „ walnuts,
 „ garden seeds for sale,
 Drying fruit,
 Keeping bees,
 Making coir matting,
 „ baskets and wicker-work generally,
 Farming,
 Horticulture,
 Rough carpentering,
 „ blacksmith's work,
 Sewing,
 Cooking and domestic work.

And with reference to this, we would specially direct attention to the growth of osiers and basket-work.

Fifthly. That the Aborigines should receive a fair remuneration for their labour, and that, so far as possible, payment should be made for the amount of work actually performed by contract and not by time.

Sixthly. That the buildings, where necessary, should be re-arranged in a manner conducive to order and regularity of appearance, attention being devoted to ventilation and drainage, especially underneath the floors.

Seventhly. As a means of preventing the blacks from squandering their money, there should be on each station a store at which articles suited to the tastes and wishes of the Aborigines should be kept, for sale to them at cost prices. These stores should contain not merely necessaries, but comforts and small luxuries. The sight of merchandise of this description in a local store would probably tend very much to industry and the saving of money received as wages.

The schools at the stations should be State schools. This is important, not Schools. only in order to have the security of the examinations by Inspectors of schools as to the thoroughness of the instruction imparted, but also that the superintendents of stations should not, in addition to their other multifarious duties, be charged with this responsibility.

With respect to the general management of the stations, success, in our Management by missionaries. opinion, depends in a great measure on the fitness and energy of the manager. An earnest active man imparts a tone to the whole establishment, maintaining order by the influence he exercises rather than by the enforcement of any laws. Such a person must necessarily possess a special combination both of qualities and attainments; he ought to have received a liberal education; be capable of governing others; tolerably acquainted with most handicrafts; conversant with gardening and husbandry and the management of stock. A long and systematic training seems essential to the attainment of these various requisites. Possessing qualifications which would command a high remuneration, he must yet be so thoroughly in his work that he will rest perfectly satisfied with his position. We see no prospect of obtaining such a class of men excepting amongst missionaries who have specially devoted themselves to this occupation. Our own observation has shown us that, without comparison, stations under the missionaries are the most effective. We therefore strongly recommend that all be placed under similar management; and that the Board should be empowered to encourage the coming of trained missionaries from Europe.

We need hardly observe that when a competent manager has been obtained, his authority should in the main be paramount over his charge. Nothing can be more detrimental to his influence than a feeling that his decisions can be impeached by *ex parte* representations. If the Government appoint a Board composed of upright able men, and the actions of the Board are, in the last resort, susceptible of revision, there seems ample security for proper management, without that dangerous premium upon insubordination and discontent which would be furnished by a feeling that the orders of the manager in charge could be lightly set aside.

The fact that a manager is, as regards the range of his duty to the blacks, secure from undue interference ought not to involve his freedom from supervision and control with respect to produce from the stations as well as grants from the Government.

Through the Board for the Protection of the Aborigines, proper guarantees are provided for all necessary checks.

We have found the various managers ready to give all information in their power. There was the most frank communication with regard to the produce of the Mission Stations raised by the labour of the blacks under the supervision of the missionary manager.

We may observe, in passing, that we think it would be well if the accounts of each station were to show annually the amounts thus raised, and expended in maintaining or increasing the comforts of the inmates. The account should not of course be merged in the expenditure of the Government grant, but should be merely a separate statement which might contain much interesting information; the practice of one station thus leading to wholesome improvement in the management of another.

BOARD FOR PROTECTION OF ABORIGINES.

The Board for the Protection of Aborigines is constituted under the Act No. 349.* It consists of the responsible Minister by whom the Act is administered, and who is *ex officio* chairman, and as many members as the Governor in Council may from time to time appoint. As the chairman himself rarely attends, a vice-chairman, annually elected by the members, is virtually the chairman.

The number of members last year was thirteen, of whom a list is given in Appendix G. The meetings, however, are seldom attended by more than six or seven members, and the business practically falls to a minority who take an active part in it.

The Act empowers the Governor in Council to appoint local guardians and local committees. Of the former, a list is given in Appendix G. ; but the power to appoint local committees has not, so far as we are aware, been exercised.

There are regulations under the Act (*vide* copy in Appendix F.) for the following purposes, viz. :—

Regulations.

- I. For prescribing the place where any Aboriginal or tribe of Aborigines shall reside.
- II. For prescribing the terms on which contracts for and on behalf of Aborigines may be made with Europeans, and upon which certificates may be granted to Aborigines who may be able and willing to earn a living by their own exertions.
- III. For apportioning amongst Aborigines the earnings of Aborigines under any contract, or, where Aborigines are located on a reserve, the net produce of the labour of such Aborigines.
- IV. For the distribution and expenditure of moneys granted by Parliament for the benefit of Aborigines.
- V. For the care, custody, and education of the children of Aborigines.
- VI. For prescribing the mode of transacting the business of and the duties generally of the Board, &c., &c.

Although it is desirable that the Board should consist of persons possessed of varied information with regard to the Aborigines and the management of their affairs, it is evident that want of uniformity of action and other evils may result from a large body and irregular attendance. To obviate this, we recommend that the Board should be reduced to seven members, with a quorum of three, and that non-attendance for three consecutive meetings without permission should be held to vacate membership.

The Minister should not be *ex officio* chairman. His multifarious duties prevent his attending to details, and it is therefore desirable that the office should be filled by the vice-chairman, who is now practically chairman.

It seems highly convenient that if any member of Parliament has the time at his disposal, and is desirous to devote himself to the philanthropic labours of the Board, there should be at least one such member of it ; by this means Parliament can receive *viva voce* information of the highest authority if at any time questions should be raised as to the principles or details connected with the management of the Board.

The care of the natives who have been dispossessed of their inheritance by colonization is a sacred obligation upon those who have entered upon the land. Various causes tended to the destruction of the native race ; feuds in the earliest times brought numbers of them to death by violence ; diseases, and the passion for drink, to which all savage races are prone, hastened their decay ; their degradation was no less shameful to humanity than appalling in the sight of Christian men. But for the action of Parliament, the last pages of the history of the Aborigines of Victoria would have been written in characters of reproach to the colonists.

When the revenues derived from the territory of Victoria are compared with the pittance required to continue the policy initiated by Parliament on behalf of the scanty remnant of the natives who are left, it cannot be doubted that the Government will gladly keep alive, on their behalf, the system which has already done so much good.

* Appendix F.

There are those who think it premature to assert that the race must necessarily disappear altogether, and that, though at present they have not the moral force to hold their own in the struggle of life,* they may, in future generations, acquire the resolution and provident habits which would enable them to do so.

Whether this be too sanguine a view or not, none can deny that the colony is bound to temper, as best it may, the injurious effects which the occupation of Victoria has produced on the Aboriginal inhabitants ; a small sum, comparatively, is required to maintain the stations now in existence, and to make them all, or nearly all, self-supporting ; even if the race is fated to disappear, those stations will still be valuable as public property ; and, in any case, there will survive the memory that the Government of the day did not neglect a sacred duty to those who, by no act of their own, became subject to its control.

In concluding their labours, the Commissioners desire to acknowledge the assistance they have received from their Secretary, Mr. E. J. Thomas.

All which we humbly submit for Your Excellency's consideration.

(L.S.)	WILLIAM F. STAWELL, Chairman,
(L.S.)	FREDERIC RACE GODFREY,
(L.S.)	E. H. CAMERON,
(L.S.)	G. W. RUSDEN,
(L.S.)	JOHN GAVAN DUFFY,
(L.S.)	ALFRED WILLIAM HOWITT, } by WILLIAM F. STAWELL, Chairman. }

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

TUESDAY, 24TH APRIL 1877.

Present:

His Honor Sir W. F. STAWELL, in the Chair.

G. W. Rusden, Esq.

F. R. Godfrey, Esq., M.P.

Christian Ogilvie, Esquire, examined.

1. You have been engaged in pastoral pursuits in this colony for some years?—Yes.
2. How many?—About thirty-five, I think.
3. You have observed, in that time, the habits and customs of the aborigines?—Yes, in their natural state.
4. And you have held the office of Secretary to the Board of Aborigines for some years?—General Inspector and Secretary for about eighteen months.
5. That has called your attention more closely to a practical mode of dealing with the aborigines?—Yes, of course.

Christian Ogilvie,
Esq.,
24th April 1877.

6. The Commission are very desirous to hear your opinion as to the present mode in which the stations are conducted, and any suggestions for their improvement which may strike you?—All that has come within my knowledge I have communicated to the Board, as it was my duty to do, and I can only just recapitulate what I have said to the Board. In the first place, the meeting with the aborigines on the stations is a very different thing from meeting with them in the bush, because from their having been brought on to the stations they have advanced in civilization, and they have lost, in a great measure, their original savage modes of life. I think it is a very good thing that the aborigines were centralized, because it has had the effect of advancing them in civilization, and it has enabled the Board to educate the children, which could not have been done if they were in the bush; but I think, this having been accomplished, that just the contrary system should now be introduced. I think the tendency of bringing them on to the stations has been to treat them too much like children, and to destroy any feeling of self-dependence that they ought to have, and I think that they should now be encouraged to labor for themselves, because I imagine the great principle is to eventually absorb them into the general population of the colony. I think of course that, now we have advanced so far, the sooner that system is commenced the better.

7. Do you think that, allowing that that principle should be kept in view, it can be carried out as regards the adults?—No, I think not. I think the only effect of it would be that it would give the missionaries and superintendents more power over them, if the adults became aware that, instead of it being the object and the ambition of those stations to nurse them, the policy for the future would be to let them go, I do not think the adults would go; but it would show them that the whites had no great object in keeping them on the stations. I have dealt with most of the points in the following letter:—

SIR,

“ 69 Temple Court, 10th April 1877.

“ As I am about to retire from my position as General Inspector to the Board for the Protection of the Aborigines, and as I believe it is the intention of the Royal Commission to examine me before I leave Melbourne, I consider it my duty to give the Board so much of my experience as is contained in the following remarks:—

“ 1. I think missionaries necessarily make better managers of aborigines than laymen, because they are likely to throw more heart into the work; and I think this more especially refers to the Moravians, because I believe they are not only educated for the purpose, but are so provided for by their church as to preclude the necessity of their taking any care for their worldly welfare.

“ 2. I think great good has resulted from having centralized a large proportion of the aborigines on the stations, as it has been the means of prolonging many lives, the young have been educated, and all have been advanced to a certain extent in civilised life; but it must be remembered that this system, so analogous to that of a poor-house, does little to encourage self-dependence, provision for the future, and other qualities necessary to make people useful members of a community.

“ 3. I think, therefore, that a system of decentralization should now be gradually introduced on all the stations, by which I mean that the adults should be encouraged, under certain restrictions, to leave the stations in search of work, and that it should be compulsory on the youth of both sexes that they should be apprenticed to responsible masters and mistresses immediately after their education was completed; the stations never being closed against any in periods of sickness or distress, nor to the young when wishing to visit their parents or friends during the holidays.

“ 4. This on the adults would probably have no other practical effect than showing them that, if they elected to remain on the stations, they must be amenable to the discipline there, as I do not imagine many would take advantage of the liberty offered them; but I think by apprenticing the youth a great advance would be made towards the absorption of the whole race into the general community eventually.

“ 5. As Mr. Hagenauer informed me that some of the aborigines on the station under his charge had been placed by him on the electoral roll for the district, I think the Board should consider whether this is an advisable proceeding as long as they reside on any of the stations. My own opinion is that, even if it is legal, it is inadvisable.

“ 6. As the Coranderrk Station will not bear favorable comparison with any of the other stations, either as to its climate or its state of discipline, it may be well to remind you that it was the intention of the Board to counteract the effect of the severe climate there on many of the people by forming a new station in the more genial climate of the Lower Murray, to which any suffering from lung disease might be removed in the winter. * * * * *

“ I have the honor to be, Sir,

“ Your obedient Servant,

(Signed)

“ C. OGILVIE,
“ General Inspector.”

“ F. R. Godfrey, Esq., M.P.,
“ Vice-Chairman of the Board for the
“ Protection of the Aborigines.”

ABORIGINES.

▲

Christian Ogilvie,
Esq.,
continued,
24th April 1877.

8. To carry out your suggestion as regards adults practically what would you do ; would you allow the adult natives to leave the station, taking their wives and children with them, or would you allow the father to go, leaving the rest of the family on the station?—I think the latter course would be the most advisable at first, and let us see what he would do for himself.

9. Do not you think that would be a great experiment as regards his morals ; there would be no restraint on him ; having earned a certain amount of money what is to prevent him, to check him, from spending it on debauchery?—It was suggested by the Board that a regulation should be made, that any aboriginal found drinking in any township should have warning given to him by the police to leave, and if he did not go he should be treated as a rogue and a vagabond.

10. Do you think that practically could be carried out?—It is in the township that the great damage is done.

11. I am aware of that, but whether they would give the information as to the aboriginal ; it would have to be done by some one, and it would drive you to using the police as detectives, which is, in my opinion, very objectionable, or you would have to employ informers and give certain rewards?—If the police saw a drunken blackfellow in any of the interior villages they take him in hand. I do not think there would be any detective in that.

12. A blackfellow may be very drunk, and have spent a great deal of money, and not exhibit himself?—That would be an advance in civilization.

13. You mean having a sense of shame and sufficient control not to exhibit himself in that condition?—Yes.

14. You do not treat the temptations that would be offered to an aboriginal as a serious obstacle in carrying out your suggestion?—No.

15. The suggestions may be very sound in principle but very defective in carrying them into practice, and it strikes me it is beset with difficulties?—At some time it must be done. Suppose these people increase, and they will.

16. We are now talking of the adults, the present generation, the present adults?—Yes.

17. They will do that?—That is my opinion ; but practically, as I have already said, very few would take advantage of it. If you told them that they all might go away, a few would go away ; but I am speaking chiefly of Coranderk now ; but it would show them that they could not do just as they please. There is a law in force just now that they cannot go away from the Station without a pass from the Board—an Order in Council. However, I have let it be known that so long as they get a note from the Manager, that will pass ; but only yesterday a man named Jemmy Barker came, and I asked him for his order from Mr. Halliday, and he said he had none. That man is somewhere in the Deep Creek district now ; and not long ago I stood beside his bed with a tin dish, the man coughed up a great deal of blood in it.

18. Do not you think that the compelling a father to take his children with him, or rather not allowing him to go unless he saw a mode of providing for wife and children, or his wife at all events, would be preferable to a certain extent to his going out on a wild speculation of obtaining employment?—It would be the duty of the Board or of the manager to ascertain that there is something more than the prospect, that he had something specific in the way of an engagement.

19. If he had not would you not allow him to go?—No.

20. Is not that rather in opposition to your idea of encouraging self-reliance?—It would be the foundation of a system of that sort, I imagine, as I have said here—[referring to the letter]—“This on the adults would probably have no other practical effect than showing them that if they elected to remain on the stations they must be amenable to the discipline there, as I do not imagine many would take advantage of the liberty offered them.”

21. I quite see the object to be attained, and it would be most desirable, but to carry that principle out you should allow them to go without any restraint, and doing that is open to the objection that all the attention already expended on them would be thrown away. They are civilised according to your opinion to a certain extent ; if they are allowed to go as they please, humanly speaking, is there not a certainty of their returning to their old habits ; the point is how you can prevent that, and yet at the same time inspire them with the idea that they are at liberty to go as they please ; that seems to be the difficulty?—You refer to the chance of their drinking.

22. Not only that, they with their habits of life are reluctant to return to any submission to discipline ; they are losing what they have acquired at those stations in the way of discipline?—The practical great good that I think has been done by the policy that has been adopted towards the aborigines of this colony is nothing with reference to adults. It has enabled us to get hold of the children, and it is all we must look for as our results. The savage man, as a rule, can never be expected to amalgamate with civilized life.

23. To go to the younger aborigines, you say that apprenticeship should be encouraged to suitable persons?—Yes.

24. For what occupations or trades ; would you confine the apprenticeships to trades only or to occupations of any kind, pastoral or agricultural?—Anything. I would make the experiment now of treating the children of aborigines just as we would white children, as far as apprenticeship goes. If the child showed a tendency towards mechanics he might be apprenticed to a mechanic. The school children are quite as far advanced as white as a rule, and that is a great test.

25. Have you not noticed with regard to those children that have grown up, become men and women on the station, that after they have left the rule of the schoolmaster they have gone back and lost what they gained?—Yes, because they are still in contact with savage life on the station.

26. How in contact with savage life upon the station?—Well, semi-savage life. There was an old “King Billy” at Coranderk. He was living just as he did when we first came here ; and at Lake Tyers there is a large number of aborigines come in from the Snowy River and the mountains. There are camps of people living just the same as they did thirty or forty years ago.

27. But you do not find that the aborigines who have become accustomed to the huts and all the comforts of the station go back to their gunyahs and the savage life?—No, we have not found that actually ; but what we read leads us to know it is very likely. The experience of the Government of New South Wales, I think, has been that there is that tendency.

28. Does not that show that it would be better to keep them in than to induce them to go out?—I think not. Christian Ogilvie,
Esq.,
continued,
24th April 1877.

29. Of course it does?—It depends upon how you look on the people on the stations. I look on them as divisible into classes.

30. Certainly; but the great difficulty in your suggestions is to carry them into practice, how to overcome those practical difficulties is the question. Have you ever known, in your experience, a single instance of a young native adopted, if I may so speak, by a person and educated and trained and taught, who did not relapse into his savage habits, one who continued steadily pursuing the life of a civilized European, after being taught and trained as well as any European in his station would have been?—No. I may say, however, that I have two letters in the office from a half-caste, of the name of Barham, who has married a white woman, and those letters tell me that he has heard that Mr. Goodall is going to leave Framlingham, and he is asking for the situation. I do not know the man.

31. That is the case of a half-caste, and who perhaps imbibes more than half his nature from the European side?—Well, there are a large number of those people half-castes.

32. I know that, but we are speaking of the adults on the stations, and the advisableness or otherwise of their going out and earning their livings away from their families?—I do not assert that it is an unmixed good, but as a principle it is better than this artificial way of bringing them up.

33. But the question is how can you carry that principle with ordinary caution into practical application, even supposing that the boys might be apprenticed in that way; but, as I said, that would be an experiment accompanied with a great deal of risk indeed. How would you deal with the women and the girls?—Something the same as in the orphan schools.

34. Boarded out?—No, educated on the station and made fit for service in a very good house; she would be hired out to some highly respectable mistress.

35. Considering the very early age at which those girls arrive at puberty, what is the prospect of their remaining chaste if they are not married soon?—They could come back to the station. Besides, as far as the girls are concerned, it does not seem so hard on them as it does on the men, because plenty of white men will cohabit with a half-caste girl, but you will not so readily get a white woman to cohabit with a half-caste man.

36. Do you consider it desirable to apprentice these girls and young women as freely as you would the boys and young men?—Yes; only you would need to be more careful as to whom you put them with.

37. Do not you think that it would be a more desirable thing from your experience to encourage them as much as possible to stop on the stations with their families, I mean the adult men, but at the same time to say, "If you choose to go away you can, but if you go you do not leave your wives here unless you contribute to their support"?—That would be equivalent to none going at all.

38. Would not that be better?—It all depends upon what policy is to be pursued towards them for the future.

39. I am not speaking of the children, but of the old people?—That is only my opinion, I may be wrong.

40. We see with you that it is desirable to decentralize and impress on all the blacks that they are at liberty to go, and we might let them, if we could be satisfied they would conduct themselves properly after they leave; but the great obstacle is this, that the apparent civilization which they have now arrived at may all be dissipated and lost in a moment, and the question is, are we justified in carrying out our wishes, subject to these risks, or how can we lessen these risks or avoid them; in other words, how can we safely and sensibly carry these principles into practice. We are bound, I presume, to encourage family life amongst them, and to inculcate respect for and attention to family ties?—Practically the men would hire in the neighborhood of the station. A good man would be away for three months, his wife and family remaining on the station, and then, when he got tired of work, he would come back.

41. Ought he not to take his wife with him?—I think that would be the second stage; I think that would be too risky on the part of the man at first, he might prostitute his wife about the country.

42. Would not the women do that on the station?—No.

43. Why?—I think the other women would look after the woman, and be a check upon her.

44. Are there not cases at Coranderrk of men who have been away, who are good shearers, who can earn plenty of money during shearing—they have been away and no doubt earned money—have they ever contributed to the support of their wives on the station?—One man did.

45. How much?—£6.

46. Only one?—I only know of one, there may have been others; they are not in the habit of doing that. This man's name was Morgan.

47. If I follow you rightly, you think the object is so desirable that we would be justified in incurring the risks which you admit to exist?—Yes.

48. And you do not see any better mode than that which you have suggested of avoiding those risks?—No; that is as far as my knowledge goes. Why we poor human beings never undertake anything without a large amount of risk.

49. No doubt, but if these persons are entrusted to us we ought to be careful not to expose them to any risks that caution and thought on our part could avoid?—You would find as to the practical effect of it, say at Coranderrk, I do not suppose there would be more than half-a-dozen of the men that would take advantage of it for six months.

50. Mr. Hagenauer does encourage their going out to work occasionally, does he not?—Yes, Mr. Hagenauer, when I was down there, impressed it on me.

51. I understood that in that case it was merely going out for such work as ploughing and shearing, and harvesting, a short job as it is termed, a few weeks, about six weeks. That is in itself desirable, and not open to the dangers of the other?—I think it should be borne in mind that, good as these missionaries are, they like having their little flock around them for the sake of the religious influence, and would not therefore be so likely to encourage the natives in going away from the station.

52. That is only natural, and we must not unduly press our views against that feeling. Mr. Hagenauer does not object to the idea of their going out, does he?—In the last report Mr. Hagenauer desires me to "draw the attention of the Board to the necessity of initiating some system whereby all the boys, after leaving school, may, if they object to remaining to work on the station, be apprenticed out to farmers,

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continued.
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tradesmen, or others, as it is evident that it is at this period of their lives that the proper bias can be given to them to become useful members of society, and practically prove the advantages they have derived from the training they have received."

53. Do you not think the experiment might be first tried with the boys?—Yes, if you please.

54. What machinery, if any, would you establish for selecting the persons with whom the young should be apprenticed; do you think there should be some control of the Board, or somebody, as to the character of the persons with whom they were apprenticed?—Yes, certainly. At present there is a system of passes. If the present system was strictly carried out, no aboriginal has a right to be away without a pass filled up on parchment.—[*The witness handed to the Commission a printed copy of the form referred to.*]

55. Is that carried out?—No.

56. You think something of that sort should be done; that is my question?—Yes, the same as the plan adopted in the Orphan Schools, I think at Emerald Hill. But the fact is there has been so little encouragement to us to work these things thoroughly, that it was very little worth while putting one's thoughts down. I have torn up more than I have kept.

57. About Coranderrk, have there been any evils arising from the intrusion of white persons hanging about or trespassing about the place?—No; I should say not. Of course when I first went up there I heard a great many stories. I was sent up to report on Coranderrk, but it does not do to put in reports all you hear. If I had done that I could have given a very queer report.

58. Then you think there have been no evils from the proximity of Coranderrk to Healesville?—Yes, I think there have been; but I object to state as fact what came to me as mere hearsay. For instance, such a story as that, when the roads were being made there, the road party would fire so many guns at night as a signal that so many women were required in their camp. That was only hearsay.

59. I only ask what has come under your own observation?—Nothing in the way of prostitution. I remember only once, when I was called out of my bed at 12 o'clock by the overseer, who had caught two women and brought them to my verandah, one of whom charged the other with having come out of a man's hut.

60. What I ask is, whether any evils have come before you arising from the intrusion or frequenting of that place by visitors or trespassers?—No; those are things that you seldom see, if I guess rightly what you refer to.

61. I do not refer to anything in particular. I simply want to know whether anything has come before you which shows that there has been undue trespass or intrusion by the white inhabitants of the district?—No, not that I am aware of.

62. Is the run fenced?—No.

63. Are the cattle easily managed; do they run loose and mix with the neighbours' cattle?—Yes.

64. Are there no inconveniences with that?—The neighbours are not inconvenienced, but perhaps the Coranderrk people are. Possibly the neighbours get some of the Coranderrk calves, and not a little of the Coranderrk grass.

65. Would it not conduce to the profit of the station if the run were fenced and the cattle all secured for the station?—No doubt. Parliament voted £1,000, part of which was to be spent on that, but then one of the members of the Royal Commission made a to-do, and the money is lying in abeyance now. The contracts were out for it, and then this money could not be spent.

66. Do you think that in consequence of that not being fenced there is a great deal of waste of the labor and time of the inmates?—Yes, necessarily so.

67. You are aware that Mr. Halliday encourages saving by the blacks; has that been encouraged, or does it exist at Coranderrk?—I am not aware of it. I hear from Mr. Halliday that one man is saving money.

68. He does not do it through the intervention of the manager?—No; perfectly independent.

69. Do you think there are any difficulties in the way of aborigines who leave the station to hire out; are they treated on such terms by the whites with whom they work so as to make their work pleasant to them?—Yes; because they get high wages.

70. Are there any difficulties in the way?—No. At the Murray they get as high wages as the white people, and higher.

71. I do not refer to their pay, but this point. Supposing a man engages and works upon a station, is his treatment by the whites there such as to be agreeable?—My experience is that he would be always looked upon as a black fellow.

72. Put it this way, one person may treat a native with kindness, and another with contempt; is their treatment such as to encourage them to work?—[*No answer.*]

73. I observe that you suggested that the Coranderrk natives, who suffer from cold, should be removed to the Murray. Do you mean moved backwards and forwards every year?—No, that is explained by this report.

74. I mean, in your own letter, that the natives who suffer from cold should be removed to the Murray?—Yes, that refers to what the Board said in their report.

75. Apart altogether from the Board, when you mentioned the natives being taken away in the winter, who suffered from cold, from Coranderrk, and removed to a station on the Murray for the sake of the warmer climate, did you contemplate their being removed backwards and forwards?—The idea of the Board —

76. I want your own idea, and what you now think, apart altogether from the Board?—Mr. Curr and I, when we went down the Murray, were instructed to look out a suitable locality.

77. That is not the point. Will you kindly refer to your own letter?—"As the Coranderrk station will not bear favorable comparison with any of the other stations, either as to its climate or its state of discipline, it may be well to remind you that it was the intention of the Board to counteract the effect of the severe climate there on many of the people, by forming a new station in the more congenial climate of the Lower Murray, to which any suffering from lung disease might be removed in the winter."

78. That apparently suggested that they are to be removed back again in the summer; did you contemplate that as a practical thing?—Yes; but that station was the station lower down the Murray, for the benefit of the aborigines, down the Lower Murray, where the Coranderrk natives with weak chests might go down in the winter.

79. Would you move the natives backwards and forwards, then?—Yes, I think the other place would be a sanatorium to Coranderrk. Christian Ogilvie,
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continued,
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80. Would not it be better to take the whole of them, according to your own opinion as a practical man, if it is at all necessary, in consequence of the climate not suiting some of them, to make a total change—transfer them completely?—No, because there are strong aborigines at Coranderrk, and they have become attached to Coranderrk. I think it would be cruel to remove them.

81. Do you think that they are so much attached that if they enjoyed the same treatment anywhere else they would not be just as well satisfied?—Yes, only there must be none of this parliamentary interference.

82. Never mind that. If you gave them the same liberty and food elsewhere, is their love of the locality so strong that they would not be so happy as they are at Coranderrk on another station?—No, they would not.

83. Why?—Because of their love of the place. None of us like leaving home.

84. That is not their home, or else they have acquired a domicile in a very short time. How long have they been there?—I have the original document, which I think will show you what I mean. [*The witness searched amongst his papers.*] At any rate, they would have a great objection to go.

85. Do you not think that that objection rests on this, that they see that the discipline at Coranderrk is not so strict as at other places, and the quantity of food would not be so great in proportion to the work; that it is their love of ease and their love of food?—Yes.

86. And that that is all?—No, they would not be so content.

87. You think there is a proportion of them attached to the place as it stands?—Yes.

88. On what does your opinion rest, for it is not their original place. They have been there a comparatively short time. They are advanced in age?—They have become attached to the place.

89. I want to know your reason for your opinion. Why do you make that statement. How do you discriminate between the attractions of food and liberty and the attraction of their love of the place?—Because they are terrible gossips, and they can always get a white man to gossip with and to write to the member of the district, and he will make a fuss.

90. Then by your own showing that is not locality. What you say may happen to occur there, and if they were afforded the same opportunities of gossip elsewhere your objection would be removed?—Parliament does not care to interfere in any other locality.

91. But that has nothing to do with the love of locality, and I want a single fact in proof of that, and I have not heard one except gossiping in this way and their immediate vicinity to Melbourne, and the consequent ease with which they can make their grievances known, that is propinquity to Melbourne, but not attachment to that particular locality; but I understand by what you say that they have a love of that spot beyond any other spot?—I accept your explanation then, and say I have made a mistake.

92. Then why do you think they would not just as easily go anywhere else?—[*No answer.*]

93. Cannot you call to mind instances of a dozen who have cleared out for a warm climate?—Not a dozen, that was to a station.

94. But was not their idea that they should get back to the country which they liked. I think I could mention a dozen names. Have they not said they would like to go to the Loddon and the Murray?—Yes.

95. Why?—That is love of locality. You are speaking of an exception. I spoke of a rule.

96. Those men who love that locality, are they not gossippers and idlers; those who are supposed to have such a love of locality, are they not the men who are known as the turbulent spirits?—I have made a mistake in using that word "locality;" we will change it.

97. The love of locality is a feeling that ought to be regarded, but in my opinion it is utilized rather by their being kept at Coranderrk instead of their going to the Loddon and the Murray. A large number are kept away from the Murray tribe where they wish to be. They like Coranderrk for numerous reasons, you are aware; but that is not love of the spot for the sake of the spot, but the love of the flesh-pots. Is that so, or is it not?—Yes.

98. Have you often spoken to the natives about their wishes about Coranderrk?—No.

99. Have they made known their feelings to you, and have you talked to them about it in their own language, and as to whether they wished to remain at Coranderrk or not?—No.

100. They have not expressed their feelings as to going or remaining?—No, but I know it.

101. What is your opinion as to the natives who are not on any of the stations; should an effort be made to gather them in on some suitable station?—Yes. Mr. Ralston has been continually asking the Board to have about 20 acres of land about his place set apart for the purpose, but the Board has always set its face against anything of that sort, because those natives would always live in a semi-civilized state, with no chance of getting hold of their children for education.

102. Would you think then practically that those natives wandering about who get food and blankets occasionally ought to be congregated on some station for the future?—Yes.

103. How would you induce those natives to abandon their present wandering life and come into those stations. First, suppose the stations are formed, what would you then do?—What I should attempt first would be to try quietly to get them by persuasion to come in, and then, if I could not get them that way I should try to get them to let me have the children, and leave the adults out, because I do not think that practically much can be done with the adults.

104. Surely you would not snare the young one to get the mother?—Here is a practical instance of it. Before this fuss was kicked up at Ulupna some women and their children wanted to come to Coranderrk, and the Board made arrangements with Mr. Hagenauer to accommodate them at Lake Wellington; but, since this affair in Parliament, the natives, having heard of it, have refused to come down.

105. Suppose you had the necessary stations formed and efforts were made to induce the wandering natives to come in and they still decline to do so, would you still continue to give those who refused food and blankets off the stations as they receive them at present?—Yes.

106. On what principle?—Because they are, to a certain extent, free agents. I should only try to get them; but I should think it very hard if a man would not part with his liberty that you should starve him.

Christian Ogilvie,
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continued,
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107. Surely if you want to induce them to go in what better course could you adopt than to say to them, "Here are food and clothes in the station, and you can get them there, but if you stop out you will not get any"?—You can only make the experiment. In regard to the children, I would not sweep them in like a lot of calves.

108. Suppose you try all those temperate measures and provide a place for them, and they reject it, do you think it would be right still to supply them with food elsewhere when you know it would be better for them to have it on the station?—I would.

109. Why?—Because they have been accustomed to have the food and blankets. It would be most cruel to deprive them of them now.

110. What hope, then, can you entertain of their coming on the station if you continue to pander to their desires and hold out inducements to them to continue their wild and savage life, and remain off as they naturally would; what reasonable hope can you entertain of their coming to these new stations if they were established?—They might look on it as a benefit for their children, and if you once get hold of the children the old people might come to visit them.

111. Is it not a greater cruelty to get hold of children, and then force the mothers to come and visit them; would anything justify the separation of the mother from the child?—That is another question.

112. Have you, from your returns, any idea of the number of blacks outside the stations?—There are about 550 blacks on the six stations. I imagine the census returns give about 800 altogether.

113. Including the stations?—Yes.

114. Then there are only 300 outside blacks altogether?—Yes.

115. Then the number of the outsiders that has been always supposed to exist is very much in excess of the real number?—Yes.

116. So far as has been yet ascertained?—Yes.

117. Where are most of the outside blacks?—I cannot carry them in my mind. Swan Hill and down the Murray.

118. And a good many out Gippsland, Snowy River way?—Yes, about 50.

119. What is the style of life they lead, does it not consist of profligacy, prostitution, and the lowest forms of debauchery of every sort?—So Mr. Curr and I were told, but we saw nothing of it.

120. But then, in just passing through the country, you were not likely to have seen it?—No, our experience is no proof it does not exist.

121. Then do you see any reason to doubt the statement that such is the fact?—No.

122. Is that not an additional reason to try and draw them into the stations; are not those just the sort of men who earn a portion of money and go in for drink and debauchery, and their wives and children are prostituted for the sake of getting money for drink?—I think it ought to be done.

123. What means would you use after asking them and failing to get them in by that means?—I think if a station were formed down the Murray, to induce the people to stop there, it would have to be conducted on the principle of a gaol or a stockade. You have to deal with men who earn £1 a week on stations.

124. Suppose you give them employment and pay them?—I do not think the Government would give them £1 a week.

125. Why not apply their labor to advantage on the station, and pay them a fair amount?—These men I speak of are hunting wild cattle, and the Government could not provide them with employment of that sort.

126. Those are the exceptions. I speak of those who are still leading a wild vagrant nomadic life?—In a word, I think it is impracticable to do anything down the Murray in the way of getting the whole of them; you might get a few.

127. We understand you then that you would offer inducements, but you think it would be wrong to use coercion?—Yes, I do; and I think it would be useless.

128. I do not mean restraining them on the station, but I refer to giving them food and blankets, and thus tempting them to stop away when they could get plenty on the station where they would be subject to the gentle discipline and restraints necessary for the maintenance of due order and their own training?—Yes.

129. You have spoken of the management of Coranderrk and the state of discipline there, as being worse than that of any other station?—Yes.

130. Which station is the highest as regards discipline and management; you have seen all?—Yes.

131. Some frequently?—Yes; comparisons are odious, but if I select any Mr. Hagenauer's without doubt.

132. Which is the next worst to Coranderrk?—The other station directly under the Board, Framlingham.

133. Then the two stations managed by the Board have worse discipline and general management than any of the others?—Yes.

134. To what do you attribute that?—Because in the one case you have laymen and in the other missionaries, and the layman takes his office and holds it because of the salary, while the missionary's principal object is to civilize, and works without reference to his pay. I am an instance of it. I daresay I have done a little good, but I am leaving the Aboriginal Board simply because I am getting a better billet; but a missionary, in my position, would have continued on without reference to money.

135. Do you think it might not be possible, under these circumstances, and considering that the blacks are decreasing in numbers, as I apprehend they are, to as it were concentrate them more or less on those stations which are better managed, and give up those which are worse managed?—I would, if it were practicable.

136. Why would it not be practicable?—My idea is, that if you attempted to remove the people from Coranderrk you would have to send up twenty or thirty police.

137. Suppose you stop their supplies, would not that bring the thing to a very speedy termination?—I have letters here from the natives which indicate the spirit that prevails there. Here is an extract from one. "All the men are anxious to know who own the land—the people or the Board." Here is another, "I am now in my bed very bad, and I asked Mr. Ogilvie if I could go to the Lilydale doctor, and he said, 'No, for you have been drunk.' We would like Mr. J. Green back. That is all. From yours,
JOHN HALL."

138. Suppose you put your foot on these precious productions altogether?—That is the height of the wish of the Board and myself. Christian Ogilvie,
Esq.,
continued,
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139. Supposing it were possible, would not that opposition very soon disappear?—Yes; for instance, if a man, say like myself, could be empowered to go up to Coranderrk and just talk a bit of his mind to those blacks, I would very soon have Coranderrk in the hollow of my hand, so to speak.

140. Then the position of the Board, as regards the management, is the cause of those places being deteriorated?—The Board—

141. Why did you not do that?—I have been as a man dangling in the air ever since I have been in the hands of the Board.

142. Is that the fault of the system?—It is the fault of Parliament.

143. The natives are aware that they only have to appeal from the Board to Parliament, and their supposed grievances will be redressed?—Yes, just so. There was one case of the kind where a deputation waited on Mr. MacPherson, and he was disposed to listen to them, and I told him he would soon get tired of it. They would appeal to the Governor next; and if that failed, go higher on. At the first, when I went there, they used to come down from Coranderrk without the knowledge of the manager, and tell the Board all sorts of stories without the manager knowing, and at last they were advised to go to the Chief Secretary. They made complaints in one case against me in regard to a piece of land; and the Chief Secretary seemed to me to have decided without hearing anything on the other side, and I saw that the ground was knocked from under my feet, and it was no use my trying to have any discipline after that. He afterwards went to Coranderrk, and I believe he made them a very good speech and expressed his surprise.

144. You think the manager of a station like this should have, apparently to the blacks, supreme control?—Yes.

145. You think that is essential?—Most decidedly. I should not think, except in extraordinary cases, that they had any appeal beyond him. There cannot be any discipline without that.

146. Are the salaries paid to the managers by the Board sufficient to tempt men of such character as could be trusted with this supreme control?—One manager gets £120 a year; and another £150, and he brought two highly recommendatory letters; he was sergeant of police at Richmond; letters from Captain Standish and Mr. Hall.

147. The question I ask is, whether the amount is such as in your opinion would tempt men of such character as could be trusted with the supreme control which is necessary over their fellow-creatures. Would the salaries offered obtain a man of such a character as could safely be trusted?—I should say so.

148. What does Mr. Hagenauer get?—£200, I think.

149. What do you estimate that place at; what is it worth in round numbers to the manager, including food and all?—I should make it altogether, speaking in the rough, worth £400 a year to him, taking everything into consideration.

150. Do you think it is worth £400 a year?—If you compare it with the manager of a station in the bush he is placed in the same position as Mr. Halliday, but if you compare it with a man in town it is different.

151. The manager of a station, receiving all the allowances of a pastoral station, would receive a great deal more than £200 under similar circumstances?—I say it would not compare with that.

152. Then how do you think it is sufficiently high to tempt a man of sufficient character and position and education?—Because the present superintendent—

153. Put it this way, supposing you were asked, "I want to get a man who can be trusted with the entire control of this station, and who is not to be interfered with unless he misconducts himself," could you get such a man for anything like the present salary and allowances?—Well, I should think you could get one for £150 or £200. It does not require a very high class man. The Board fixed the salary.

154. About the Board, as to the usefulness of the Board, or the management of the blacks by means of the Board?—I think I have found the Board very useful to myself to refer to.

155. As to the constitution of the Board, do you think that the management of the blacks is better under the present system than if they were placed under some responsible individual or an officer of the Government?—If it were my own case, I would rather work under the Board than have the responsibility on my own shoulders.

156. But what would be best for the aborigines generally; do you think the system of management under the Board is the best way of managing?—Yes.

157. Why?—Because there are more people to consult than there would be if the inspector were left to himself.

158. Supposing you were asked this question—strike the Board out of your mind altogether—supposing you had the power at once of revising the constitution by which the authority would be exercised over the aborigines generally in the different stations for the aborigines, do you think the Board, or a single individual, or any other mode to be the best?—I think the Board, with a single individual doing the work under them. The Board meets every month, and I give in a monthly report of what I have done, and, if the Board does not approve of it, they can check me.

159. Supposing there was one person over you instead of a board, and that you reported to one man instead of to the Board as you do at present, which do you think would be the best?—I cannot answer that as I have had no experience; but I think I should differ with one man, because it would be only one against one.

160. Did you notice any want of proper supervision in the Board when you were first appointed, and went up to Coranderrk the first time; was there anything that struck you there on any one's part?—When I was sent up to report in consequence of there being a great disagreement between Mr. Stähle and the Board, in consequence of my report Mr. Stähle was dismissed.

161. Has the place in your opinion ever been done with what it might have been done with if it had been well managed?—No, not in my opinion.

162. Then to whom may that fault be attributed; is it the fault of the system or is it the fault of any particular individuals?—The fault of Parliament.

163. Do you think the parliamentary influence extends as far back as that?—Yes, I do. If the Board had not been interfered with, it would have carried out many necessary reforms.

Christian Ogilvie,
Esq.,
continued,
24th April 1877.

164. Putting individual opinions of that sort out of view now, do you think that a Board to which an active manager can apply for definite ruling on points is better than an individual to whom he might refer?—I am in a corner. I have had no experience. The Board is naturally slow, but I think it is a great safeguard.

165. Why?—Because it is a great safeguard and check.

166. Would not one person be a quicker and quite as safe a check, or is there safety in numbers, a multitude of councillors?—I do not know how to answer that question, because the Board and I have always got on very well.

167. What you say then is, that is a subject on which you are not very well informed and hesitate to give an opinion, but for yourself you prefer a number of heads?—Yes. The number of heads as a rule have only been three; though there have been twenty members we rarely have more than three at the Board, and ever since I have been there, instead of any great discussion, matters were passed quietly almost as a matter of course.

168. In fact the working of the Board has been confined to three or four or five persons?—Yes.

169. The same five?—About the same five, rarely six, one hour a month.

170. Practically the Board has had the advantage of consultation by five members since you have had to do with it?—Yes.

171. Do you think the opportunity and advantage of consultation amongst those five members is better than leaving the matter to one individual or to the control of one departmental head?—Yes, as a private opinion I think so.

172. But if they do not take an interest in the work?—Then I should have had to run after them.

173. You consider it would be sound economy to fence in all these aboriginal stations?—Yes, it was the intention of the Board to have done it.

174. You think it a good thing?—Yes.

175. Has it not been recommended by every person who visited Coranderrk particularly?—I believe so. If any of those reserves were private property, it would be the first thing a man would do to fence them in.

176. Ought they not to have been fenced in years ago?—Yes, the sooner it is done the better.

177. As to finance, can you make any suggestions in regard to that, as to the monetary management of the Board; is the present the most desirable or judicious plan?—In the gross expenditure of the money?

178. I mean, first of all, the way in which the money is appropriated by votes, and paid out by vouchers by the Treasury, do you think that is judicious?—It is too clumsy a way, and causes frequent delays.

179. What would you suggest?—That the money should be placed in a bank.

180. Subject to the Board's control?—Yes, most decidedly.

181. To account for afterwards?—Yes.

182. You think, in other words, that it would be desirable that the Board should be given the amount voted in such sums as they happen to require it, quickly or otherwise, and spend it as they think fit, and account for it afterwards?—Yes, certainly.

183. What advantages would result from that?—I believe that we are charged a certain percentage more because people do not get paid so quickly as they would by cheque; for instance, in the case of poor people, who have no accounts in town, I have had complaints.

184. Is that difficulty caused by the forms observed in obtaining payment from the Treasury?—Only with a certain class of people, the poor people who cannot get the orders filled up. I have had to get the forms myself.

185. That might be done by an additional clerk?—Yes, that they might send these forms down to him, and he receive the money for them.

186. The fact is, that delay in payment has increased the cost?—Yes.

187. Do you think the amount voted to the blacks sufficient for the requirements of the station?—No, and for this reason, that when I became the Inspector the Board was altogether in debt, and I am sorry to say it is in the same state, or a worse one, now; further behind I expect it is. You see there is that £1,000 that was voted for building and fencing, which has been held back, and in expectation of getting that I very foolishly expended some of the Board's money in building, and that kind of thing, and that has had to come out of the £6,500.

188. I asked you whether the money voted by the Department was sufficient for the requirements of the aborigines generally?—Certainly not.

189. What sum would you fix?—Well, I do not know.

190. There would be a certain sum necessary to fence in all the runs; suppose that was done, what then would be a sufficient sum?—I think about £2,000 more than we get now.

191. Even if the runs were fenced in?—Yes. You see there are 800 aborigines, who only get £6,500—certainly the missionaries get something from their several churches—but you can see that that sum is not much for a rich country to give to 800 aborigines that it has taken the country from.

192. Supposing those stations were your own, what is the first thing you would do after you had fenced them in; would you not spend a large sum of money in stocking them, so as to make them remunerative?—Not with Coranderrk.

193. Take Framlingham, Lake Tyers, and Wimmera, what would you do to make those stations pay and keep the blacks in the future without further pay?—I would stock Framlingham with cattle.

194. Would not that require a sum at first?—Yes.

195. Not the Wimmera?—It requires an increase of country, it is overstocked now.

196. The same remark would apply to all the stations?—Lake Condah is overstocked; they are buying sheep this year for rations.

197. That is not fenced?—It is very nearly.

198. It is only lately; if it had been fenced the cattle would not have been so poor. Did they not suffer from it?—Yes they did.

199. Is not that the system that should be adopted; suppose the stations were fenced in and stocked, what then would be necessary to grant, would not the expense be immediately reduced?—Yes.

200-1. Would it not be possible under good management to make it eventually self-supporting?—You would have to spend a great deal of money for that. Christian Ogilvie,
Esq.,
continued,
24th April 1877.

202. What besides stocking and fencing?—It is only 2,000 acres, and there is no station of that size in the colony that supports more than 100 people; you could not make a grass reserve of 2,000 acres support 100 people.

203. Might not there be other industries, one assisting the others, besides the grass reserve?—Of course there might, but practically there would not.

204. How many cattle would that 2,000 acres carry?—I should say, speaking roughly, 300 head of cattle would be as much as it would carry. Lake Condah, the area is about 2,000 acres, and I suppose it is not adapted for sheep; it would carry from 350 to 400 head if properly managed.

205. Do you think that other industries could be carried on that ought to make the other stations self-supporting or very nearly so. You say a certain amount of grass country will not support more than a certain number of people; the question is, how much would it bring in with a certain amount of labor bestowed on it advantageously in cultivation of various kinds, how much?—Black labor is very expensive. In discussing such a question as this you must have a great deal of experience of the inutility of black labor.

206. Surely the blacks could be taught to make butter and cheese?—Who would eat it?

207. They did it at Coranderrk for some time?—I think if you gentlemen knew as much of aborigines as I do, you would not be so sanguine about their labor.

208. If the stations are to be managed profitably it would be desirable, in your opinion, that a larger sum should be voted for one or two years in order to place them in an independent position, and after that they might get on without so much?—Yes.

209. But you do not think they would ever be altogether independent?—Never.

210. What is the cost at Ramahyuck?—Ramahyuck costs the Board about £6 a head. Mr. Hagenauer states it a little lower.

211. Well, the cost to the public Treasury is about £6 per head at Ramahyuck?—Yes.

212. What is it at Coranderrk?—I should think very nearly double; more than double.

213. What is it at Lake Condah?—A little more expensive than Mr. Hagenauer.

214. And Ebenezer?—The Ebenezer is a very cheap station to the Board; there they do not trouble you with a lot of extra accounts after getting supplies.

215. And Mr. Officer and others have assisted them by giving presents of sheep?—Yes.

216. Lake Tyers is less than any?—Yes, the whole slop account there only came to £42, against £140 to £160 on the other stations.

The witness withdrew.

Adjourned to to-morrow at half-past Four o'clock.

WEDNESDAY, 25TH APRIL 1877.

Present:

His Honor Sir W. F. STAWELL, in the Chair;

F. R. Godfrey, Esq.,

G. W. Rusden, Esq.

Mr. Christian Ogilvie, further examined.

217. I think you said yesterday that the Board's accounts were overdrawn, that they were in debt in fact, and were always more or less in that state?—They certainly were last year, when I took charge. Christian Ogilvie,
Esq.,
25th April 1877.

218. Is not that in a great measure caused by the fact that all the purchases for the whole year have to be effected just now, in fact at the end of the financial year, before we have got our next year's grant?—I hardly think that will count.

219. For instance, at the present moment, is there not enough money to meet all the liabilities of the Board?—No, decidedly not.

220. Not for the current year terminating the end of June?—No, at the beginning of last year we entered in debt.

221. I am aware of that, but was not that because we had purchased the next year's supplies?—Yes, to a certain extent.

222. That is what I want to be understood?—For instance, here is the cost of the slop clothing, that covers for the whole of next year.

223. And that is now ordered?—Yes.

224. It seemed as if you meant that we were outrunning the constable year by year?—Mr. Andrews will be better able to answer those questions than I can. In my position I am the man who outruns the constable, and Mr. Andrews is the man who has to keep me in check.

225. It is this way that this year's supposed debt is met by the power of appropriating funds already voted; you have anticipated to a certain amount, but the instant the money is got the debt will be liquidated?—Yes.

226. Is it your duty to order the slops and other things for the stations?—Yes.

227. Were any complaints made to you when you first went to those places about the quality of the slops that had been sent previously?—Yes, by Mr. and Mrs. Spieseke.

228. Have any complaints been made since?—None.

229. Have you any documents or testimonials on the subject from any of the stations with regard to the supply of stores?—I have.

Christian Ogilvie,
Esq.,
continued,
25th April 1877.

230. With regard to the Lake Tyers station, is there anything that you particularly recommend, any expense that you think should be gone to there to make that station work better and more remunerative in fact?—There should be a herd of cattle or sheep on it to provide the people with rations.

231. Are you aware of the inconvenience they suffer, from not having any land on this side of the lake, in getting their horses and bullocks?—Yes.

232. Do you think it would be desirable to secure a bit of land there?—Yes; and also that the area should be extended.

233. How much should the area be increased?—At Lake Tyers, almost as much as could be got; double or treble; it is very poor soil.

234. There has been an application sent in by the manager there with regard to that?—Yes.

235. And it has been duly forwarded?—Yes.

236. You stated yesterday that all the stations should be stocked in order to place them on a better footing?—Yes.

237. And, of course, that stocking would need a considerable outlay?—Of course they cannot be stocked out of the income; a capital fund would be wanted.

238. There is a report, I think, of yours as well as Mr. Spieseke's in which you speak of the aborigines going out to earn money by their own labor. If you will look at Mr. Spieseke's report:—"That the aborigines go away to earn money; that these, their earnings are in many instances spent in intoxicating drink. Had they inducement enough to stay on the station this would not be the case"?—I remember his making that statement.

239. I thought you had reported the same thing. However, yesterday you said you thought it would be desirable to let them go out; how could you prevent them spending their money in drink?—I think the tendency of my remarks did not go so far as turning them all off the station. There would of course be supervision over them, and if they spent their money in drink they would not be allowed to go.

240. You would only let out the steady ones?—Yes.

241. You would hold it out as a sort of privilege?—Yes.

242. In a station like Coranderrk, how would you manage the station if you let all the natives out? By white people.

243. And pay them?—Yes; white people, as far as necessary.

244. Would not that rather tend to make the blacks less independent than otherwise if they had white people to earn their money for them, and they were to just come to the station when they liked, and go when they liked. Then you would make a station for the aborigines in order to teach them habits of industry, and instead of that you would allow them to go away outside, and leave the white men to do the work?—I deny that those stations do teach them habits of industry.

245. Every work performed is calculated to do that, and instead of inducing the blacks to do the work there you propose that they should do work elsewhere, and that the whites should do the necessary work and be paid for it?—Suppose instead of 140 blacks there were 1,400 there.

246. Very well, other stations would be selected. Have not the blacks on Ramahyuck been taught habits of industry, in your opinion?—Not up to the white standard. They never will on a station.

247. Have they not been taught habits of industry in advance of any other station; they have money saved?—Yes, they are in advance of other stations.

248. Does not that show that they have there, under proper tuition or some system, been taught some habits of industry?—I am considering not only the present, but I am trying to consider the future of these people.

249. No doubt that should be done, and the best way to consider the future is to make them work, not keep what would really be a white station under the name of an aboriginal station. I think it would be destruction to adopt such a plan. I do not see how you reconcile that. The surplus labor, so to speak, on a station might be profitably utilized off the station, but all the necessary work on the station ought to be done by the inhabitants themselves, that is, the blacks. You are encouraging them to go away?—The text I am preaching from is, that we do not do our duty to the blacks unless the policy which is adopted for them be such that eventually they will be absorbed into the whole population.

250. I quite agree with you; but I cannot see that it conflicts with that policy to make them work on the station for themselves?—If they are to be amalgamated with the whites, and at some time they must be.

251. Would it not be easier to find employment suitable for them on the station than to let them go out to look for such work, minding cattle and sheep, and so on?—Yes.

252. Taken in connection with your evidence yesterday, there is a remark in your report that I do not understand. You say, speaking of their going out and earning wages, "That almost the whole of these large earnings are devoted to the purchase of spirits either in this or the neighboring colony, and for doing which there appears at present to be no practical obstacle; though, at the same time, it is probable that, were they really supplied with the amount of spirits which their wages should purchase, that a very speedy termination of their existence would ensue. On occasions, particularly of being paid off at any woolshed, it has been pointed out to us, on testimony which it is impossible to doubt, that it is the custom of the tribe, four or five of whose members may have cheques amounting to £70 or £80 amongst them, to adjourn to some low shanty or public-house, or even to some secluded bend of the river, where they are met by appointment by a white man, who has long had his eye on them, with a cart containing a few cases of spirits, when they proceed to dissipate, sometimes in one night, the whole proceeds of their previous labor." If that was the result of the information you have received there, would it not be rather against your idea of encouraging those people to go out in this same way, would they not be inclined to do the same now?—Considerably against my idea of those people Mr. Curr and I are talking about here had ever been in, but they are the people on the banks of the Murray who have never lived on an aboriginal station.

253. They are people who have been accustomed to be more or less independent, and earning the current rate of wages?—But they have never had the civilizing influence of the stations on them; and I beg to call your attention to my report of 24th January 1876:—"I do not think they indulge in intoxicating drink to any great extent, but I heard of four being drunk at a shanty up the river about Christmas

time, and sent Mr. Harris to ascertain particulars ; he was, however, too late. I am not aware of any steps being taken to prevent them getting drunk except that some time ago a Healesville publican was fined for supplying them with grog." And in the postscript, "Since the above report was sent in, drunkenness has been very prevalent at Coranderrk, but it is confined to about six or eight of the people there." Now in a population of say 70 or 80 adults, I do not think that is much beyond the average of what you will find with white people.

254. I think you alluded to grog shanties in the neighborhood of Coranderrk ; have any steps been taken in order to put them down ?—We have endeavored to put them down, but it is all the same thing, it is hard to obtain a conviction. Within the last three months I got a letter from the schoolmaster further up the road than Coranderrk, telling of one of the black fellows having been supplied by the publican with a bottle of beer. I immediately sent the letter to Mr. Halliday to act upon it, and he prosecuted the publican, who was convicted, and the penalty was £1, at Healesville ; whereas, according to the Act, the bench might have fined that man £20.

255. You recommend that a new station should be formed in the Kulkynne district ; have you visited that part of the country ?—Yes.

256. And you think it suitable for the purpose ?—Yes.

257. What is the nature of the soil ?—It is a plain in the middle of the mallee.

258. Sufficiently good to support sheep ?—Yes.

259. How much of the land do you think would carry 5,000 sheep ?—Of the plain country that we should select it would take six acres to a sheep, but the surrounding mallee that would be required would take thirty acres to keep a sheep.

260. That is the inferior parts ?—Yes. It is on a very large run belonging to the Hon. Henry Miller, I think.

261. Is there water there ?—It is on the lake. We purposely selected away from the river, twenty miles back, because of the grog coming in the steam-boats.

262. Is that lake permanent ?—Yes.

263. From what you know of the habits of the blacks, they are fond of fishing and fish agree with them ?—Yes.

264. Now do you think it would be desirable, if it could be carried out, that the Coranderrk station should be done away with, and a new station formed on the Murray, to which those blacks who were accustomed to a warm climate should go, and that the blacks accustomed to a colder climate might be drafted off to some of the other aboriginal stations ?—Well, in answering that question, I am obliged to revert to my old sore. If Parliament would not interfere I should have no objection to the blacks remaining at Coranderrk, with the arrangement suggested by the Board, that a station should be formed down the Murray for the weak blacks to go to in the winter time. There is no doubt the climate is too severe for them in the winter time.

265. What particular reason have you for advocating the keeping up of Coranderrk at all, is there anything to be said in its favor ?—No, not if you look at it hardly. I have no great affection for the blacks at Coranderrk ; but I would have some little regard for their love of the place.

266. Do you consider that the pursuits at Coranderrk, the hops, are really remunerative, taking into account the outlay ?—Well, I would like to speak specifically on that subject. I suppose this year the expense of cultivating the hops might be put down at about £900, and the profit, so far as we know now, will be something under £2,000.

267. The gross profit ?—Yes, the gross.

268. Then, in fact, the Coranderrk hop experiment there is a success financially as regards Coranderrk ?—Yes.

269. As to the position of Coranderrk with regard to its proximity to the white population round about, is it desirable or undesirable ?—Undesirable.

270. That is one objection to that station ?—Yes, almost all the other stations are more remotely situated from population. Lake Hindmarsh has not a public house within fifteen miles of it. Lake Condah has not one within twelve miles. Framlingham has one within four miles of the station.

271. What system have you adopted since you have had that business with regard to the purchase of slops and other things, where have you obtained them ?—From Banks Bros., Bell, and Co.

272. Do you consider that any saving has been caused by that, or the reverse ?—I know one specific saving in the large item of blankets. We used to be charged by the Penal Department 27s. a pair for them.

273. The same weight ?—The same weight that Banks Bros., and Bell charge 13s. 9d. for, the only difference being that the latter have a little cotton in.

274. What was the saving in that one item last year ?—I should think certainly there would be 350 or 400 pairs of blankets issued.

275. So that there would be a saving of something like £200, or nearly half ?—Yes. With reference to other slops, such things, as petticoats, that I do not know much about. I always took the precaution to tell Banks Bros., Bell, and Co. that I would get skilled reports as to the quality and price, and I have by me those reports.

276. Have they been favorable ?—Entirely so.

277. Have you adopted the system recommended by the Board of sending up the slops in the piece to have them made up on the stations ?—Yes.

278. Does it work well ?—It does, and is much cheaper, and it provides suitable work for the girls.

279. Had that never been done before ?—I think not.

280. There have been a great quantity of slops and stores sent to various places for the blacks outside ?—Yes, under the control of the local guardians.

281. Considering that the number of blacks is now very much reduced, do you not think it is desirable to diminish that supply very considerably ; in fact, to do away, as far as possible, with the supply of blankets to those outside blacks ?—In the first place, the number has not been reduced, it is only that the real number has been found out by the census.

Christian Ogilvie,
Esq.,
continued,
25th April 1877.

282. But the supply has hitherto been based on the assumption that the population is much larger than it has since been found to be?—I am not aware of that.

283. Have any particular complaints been made by the Audit Commissioners as to how the slops have been bought, complaining that the method is extravagant?—Yes.

284. Are those reports you have referred to all in favor of the last system adopted?—Yes.

285. What was one of the complaints made by the Audit Commissioners; would you mention in regard to one thing, wine?—Yes, I had an order for three dozen port wine and three gallons of brandy from Coranderrk for medical comforts. Mr. James Graham provides those things for the Board. I gave him the order, and the price of the port wine was 55s. a dozen and the brandy £1 a gallon. I got rubbed over the knuckles by the Audit Commissioners wanting to know why the Board did not buy their brandy from the Government contractor, whose price was 17s. a gallon, and why we did not buy our port from the Government contractor also, his price being 24s. a dozen; and I wrote back to say that what was bought was for "medical comforts," and I thought that contract port at 24s. a dozen would be a medical comfort to no one, and the same with the brandy.

286. With regard to medical attendance at those stations, are you of opinion that there has been any neglect with regard to attendance or attention to the inmates?—No.

287. Do you approve of the present system?—The present system is that they send for medical attendance when it is required.

288. Do you approve of that?—I do. I approve of the quarterly visits being dispensed with. They cost £40 a year to every station, and they were no good whatever.

289. Were they not very perfunctorily performed?—I cannot say, as they were done away with within two or three months of my coming to town. All are agreed that they were absurd. For instance, the quarterly medical visitor for Coranderrk lived at Flemington, and one day I happened to come across him on the day of his paying his quarterly visit. It was at ten o'clock in the morning, and he said he had been paying the quarterly visit at Coranderrk from about seven o'clock in the morning.

290. And even when those quarterly visits were paid, was it the practice when illness occurred to send for some special medical advice?—Yes. The quarterly visit was only a visit of inspection.

291. So that it did not reduce the expense when they were ill?—No.

292. Did those quarterly reports produce any practical effect; were they of any use to the Board. In their reports you see quarter after quarter the same report that there was no change in the state of the natives, and so on?—I can only speak to what I know since the 1st of September 1875.

293. What do you imagine would be about the expense of carrying out the improvements suggested by Dr. McCrea in his report of March last. Did the Board not take action upon that report, give you instructions to commence some of the improvements he recommended?—Yes, I drew up the contract.

294. What was to be about the price per hut?—The tenders were never answered. This wretched parliamentary affair occurred, and I withdrew the thing by your instructions.

295. Have you any idea what it would cost about if now carried out, the fencing of the station and the erection of huts?—The fencing goes over very rough ground, and if well done I should say it would cost about £750 to £1,000.

296. That is if the whole were fenced?—It would have to be fenced in right across the Badger Creek, because that is where the cattle go.

297. What would be the expense of the huts?—Twenty huts. Taking all the requirements set down by Dr. McCrea, some of which are not in my opinion necessary, I should think not less than £30 each.

298. Is it your opinion that much saving could be effected in the cost if the blacks were encouraged in building their own huts?—They are very slow about it, and all blacks' work is anything but substantial.

299. You have seen the buildings at Ramahyuck?—Yes.

300. They are mostly done by the aboriginals?—I think so. I thought that you were speaking with reference to Coranderrk.

301. No, I speak generally as to improvements being effected; could it be managed, and would it effect a saving if those who are to live in the huts were encouraged to work at them?—Yes, they could put up a good enough hut.

302. Would not the knowledge that they were to live in the huts be a stimulus to them, and lead to the work being done more cheaply?—Yes.

303. You would not be expected to pay a man so much to build his own hut as one for general use?—I am very much afraid that he would expect to be paid for it. At Coranderrk I have had experience that the blacks who have floored their own huts have charged for the work done for their own comfort. They are a class of people who have a very good idea of their interests.

304. You do not think, then, that that stimulus would enable you to get the work done more cheaply?—No, and it would be so very slow.

305. Have you ever looked at that flat at Lake Condah with a view to its being drained?—Yes.

306. Do you think that is practicable?—Yes.

307. What would be the expense?—I do not think the drain would have to be very deep. I think the water comes more into the swamp from the real Lake Condah, and if that were kept out the water to be drained would be very trifling.

308. Are you aware that there is a very good stream running into that swamp?—It is local drainage.

309. No, a decided stream, a running stream?—Yes, now you remind me of it, I remember.

310. That stream in winter must convey a very large body of water, evidently, and all that would need to be got rid of?—That is a subject I am not competent to speak upon, as I am not an engineer; but I should think it would not be very much, as it is a very shallow swamp.

The witness withdrew.

Adjourned.

TUESDAY, 8TH MAY 1877.

*Present :*His Honor Sir W. F. STAWELL, in the Chair ;
Mr. Rusden.

Rev. J. Heinrich Stähle examined.

311. You have charge of the aboriginal station at Lake Condah?—Yes.

312. And you were also at one time at Coranderk?—Yes, and before that at the Wimmera station.

313. At Ebenezer?—Yes.

314. The Board wish to hear any suggestions you have to offer as to improvements in the management of the aborigines or in any other respect?—A list of thirteen questions was forwarded to me some time ago, and I have specially with reference to those questions put down a few remarks which I can read; and of course anything else which the Board may think desirable to know I shall be most happy to answer now. The first question was whether I consider that Lake Condah was a suitable station as an aboriginal station as to health, and in regard to the situation of the neighboring settlements, and in answer to this I say, "I consider Lake Condah a suitable place for a home for our aborigines. 1st. Because it is their native place, most of them having been born at or near to it. 2nd. On account of its excellent natural drainage and pure and good water." Then the nearest township is ten miles distant from the station.

315. What is that?—Greenhills. "Therefore the aborigines are not much exposed to temptations in regard to drink, &c."

316. Have you kept any account of the number of deaths so as to speak of the percentage?—Yes. I have been there eighteen months, and during that time I have kept a particular account of the births and deaths.

317. What is the percentage of deaths?—The number of deaths is about five during the eighteen months, and we have 86 people on the station.

318. That would not be five per cent.?—No, but I wish to note that of the deaths that took place four have been people who came to the station during the time I was there, suffering from consumption—four out of the five.

319. Were they all adults then?—Yes.

320. Are there hunting grounds in proximity to the station?—Yes, right round the station they are allowed to go hunting.

321. Kangaroo?—Yes.

322. Is there game there?—Chiefly on the lake—geese and ducks, fish and eels.

323. Any kangaroo?—Yes, plenty of kangaroo and possum.

324. Then you think the situation especially adapted to them as an aboriginal station in every aspect—healthy situation, excellent water, cool and not too much exposed, and away from any large settlements?—Yes.

325. Any large number of population?—Yes.

326. And possessing hunting grounds?—Yes. The next question was whether I could make any suggestion in regard to the management or discipline of the station. Of course what I say has special reference to the station of which I am in charge. "A certain amount of money, say £60 or £80 per annum, should be granted for the use of each station, and be at the disposal of the manager so as to enable him to make improvements, and to pay incidental expenses. This refers only to such stations as have no income from produce, &c., and should cease when there is a sufficient income."

327. How do I understand that money is to be expended—is it in paying the aborigines?—No; for paying incidental expenses, such as to mend a bullock dray or to get tools mended when the men are working, say at a fence, axes and augurs and all sorts of things.

328. A sort of petty cash to meet emergencies?—Yes; for the number of little things that are required during the year for which there is no money.

329. Do you suffer inconvenience from those articles not being supplied?—Yes, very much. Last year I managed to get along because I got the wattle bark stripped, and got so much money; but the trees are all stripped now, and there is nothing before me to cover those expenses.

330. But you are immediately under the control of a religious denomination, not under the control of the Government?—Yes.

331. We are treating of the question generally?—Yes, I am under the mission committee; they consider themselves merely responsible for the salary of the missionary and teacher. I have no doubt such money may have been granted by the Board for the Protection of the Aborigines in some instances; but in my case, supposing I wanted some tools mended, the men are going to work, I cannot expend money for those unless I have authority to do so; and if I write that "an axe has been broken or a saw, will the Aboriginal Board kindly authorize me to buy one," in the meantime the work would be stopped and the discipline would suffer; so I have managed somehow hitherto, but it would help greatly to the improvement and management of the station.

332. You think that each manager should have the means of supplying those necessaries promptly?—Yes; of course I would keep a very particular account of every penny expended; it might be placed in a bank for those purposes for incidental expenses. "This refers only to such stations as have no income." I have had £15 for the hops, but I am still indebted to storekeepers—one £9, and the other £10—which I have to pay, against which I have still a little bark. "The aborigines should not have power to leave the station on which they are located without having permission to do so." To prevent their knocking about.

333. How would you enforce that—supposing a native leaves without permission, what would you then do—practically what steps would you take?—Perhaps I had better first read the whole of my paper through.

334. Please do so?—"The managers of the various stations should be recognised by magistrates and other officials as the guardians of the aborigines under their care." In the Act of Parliament there is no reference made to the managers of the stations. "No aboriginal should have power to go to law against

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those in charge over them; any case of actual wrong-doing on the part of the managers should be settled by those by whom the managers are appointed, either by the Aboriginal Board or by mission committees. If aborigines, after having been reprov'd, continue to disregard the order or discipline of the station on which they are settled, they should be removed to another aboriginal station for a time or altogether, according to the nature of their offence, and this without their own choice, but after due consideration and communication between the various managers." The third question was, "Do you think it advisable that payment should be made?" In answer to this I said, "Yes." Then the fourth question was, "If so, how; by rations, clothing, and money, or by rations, or by money alone?" And I said, "Clothing, rations, and a little money (say from 2s. to 5s. per week, to be increased when the stations have some increase from produce, &c.), the latter to encourage them to labor on their own homes, and to enable them to purchase necessary things for their households, such as candles, dishes &c." Then the fifth question was whether I considered it advisable that a store should be kept from which the aborigines could supply all their wants. I said in regard to this, "No, I do not consider it advisable unless it would be made compulsory for the aborigines to buy what they would require on the station, and I do not think this would be pleasant, as, like many whites, they would believe that the articles they could purchase elsewhere would be better than what they could buy on the station." I wish to remark here that I would, however, suggest that such articles as boots, hats, dishes, candles, brooms, and small things of that sort which they require constantly should be kept, to encourage them to spend their money usefully, without going away where they might spend it foolishly; and if they spent the money properly I would suggest that the money for clothing should be added to the money paid for wages, so as to enable them to buy their own clothing, but that I would not consider advisable for the present. For the present I should consider it only advisable for them to have a little money. The sixth question was whether it was advisable, if they are employed among whites, that the employer should forward the money the aborigines earn to the manager or whether it should be paid out to themselves. I said, "I would suggest that a rule be made that employers, when discharging aborigines, should forward to the manager of the station to which they belong a statement showing the amount of money earned, the amount expended for them, and the balance due to them, and at the same time forward the balance due to the manager, from whom the aborigines would receive it on their return to the station." In order that the aborigine may be treated fairly, it should be certified by two witnesses that he actually got his money which has been forwarded to the manager. The seventh question was whether orphan children should be boarded out from the station. I say, "No, unless it can be proved that they are not properly trained and cared for on the stations. Besides this, they have relations among the aborigines on the stations who are almost as much attached to them as if they were their own children." The eighth question was, "Do you think it advisable that they should hire out the labor of aborigines to the whites?" I said, "No, unless through agreement made with the managers." I want to say here that if the manager is authorized by the Board or Government to let them go into service or not, according as he considers it advisable, I would leave it to the discretion of the managers to do so, "under the condition that the employer holds himself responsible that they do not get drunk (which is at present their chief ruin when employed away from aboriginal stations), and that they are properly cared for in case of sickness." I know the aborigines are sometimes turned off by their employers when ill without any care. I have had cases where they have been sent back to the station quite miserable. "But if the aborigines get rations, clothing, and a few shillings weekly on their own stations, then I would not deem it advisable for them to be permitted to hire out their labor to whites." But in special cases where the aborigine has behaved himself well, and is desirous to go out for a change (and the manager is aware that the employer would take care of them), let the aborigines have a chance to go out occasionally that they may not feel imprisoned; but at the same time the roaming about comes practically to an end. The ninth question was, "Do you consider it desirable that youths should be sent out to learn trades?"—and the tenth is connected with it, "Whether I consider it advisable that handicrafts should be carried on on the station?" I say, "I do not consider it advisable that lads should be sent out to learn trades, as the present state of the aborigine is of such a nature that none of them would be capable of carrying on business on his own account, unless with a responsible party; but I would suggest that they should be trained to practical work, so as to make themselves comfortable; to mend their own tools—and in order that they may be able to do this, I think it advisable that such managers should be appointed who had a general practical knowledge, so as to teach them on the station those handicrafts, as we do on our mission stations. I have another reason—if they came home they would most likely consider themselves superior to the others, but yet they would be obliged to marry an aborigine and would at the same time consider them below them, and this might create unhappiness in their family life. If the manager is capable of teaching them all kinds of trades on the stations, I should consider that enough. The eleventh question is whether the main object should be that the stations should be self-supporting communities, or whether they should earn their livings abroad. I say, "The main object should be to train and educate them to become self-supporting communities on each station."

335. Not to be absorbed in the population generally?—No, not to be absorbed in the population generally. The twelfth question was, "Whether I could make any suggestions with regard to management as a whole of the various stations." With respect to this question, I do not think that any distinction should be made in regard to treatment of blacks and half-castes, but I would suggest that, combined with payment, rewards for diligence and good conduct should be given occasionally, in order to encourage them. I think this would also help to raise a spirit of manliness in them. I have found this plan to answer very well with the women in regard to keeping their houses clean and tidy, and with the children in encouraging them to be diligent and obedient in school and at out-door work, and I think that it would prove equally suitable with respect to the men. A supply of medical comforts for the sick, such as wine, brandy, meat-extract, sago, coffee, maizena, &c., should be (as has been the case lately) kept regularly on each station." I thought also it might be advisable to have an annual visit—to have two gentlemen of the Board just to see the progress of the various stations, and the manner in which they are conducted or managed." The last question was, "How many aborigines are residing in the neighborhood, not residing on the station—how do you find they are living, and what could be done in regard to them?"—"The number of aborigines in the district not residing on the station is about 12. They find their living by hunting, fishing, and by

working occasionally for whites. After they receive the money which they have earned they spend it in drink, which leads them to fighting and other evil deeds, and causes them to lead a miserable existence. I would suggest that they be compelled to settle on the various aboriginal stations—as of their own free will few of them will do this until their health and strength is gone, and their life ruined. Let them go to any station they may prefer.”

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continued,
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336. In connection with the first question, I wish to know whether you think it would be desirable that the reserve should be extended, or whether there is at present sufficient acreable extent?—Several gentlemen in the neighborhood, men who understand about rearing stock, remark that it is rather overstocked. There are 300 head of cattle on 2,050 acres of land, and there is some land not taken up quite close to the station, where we put up a fence. I think if that land could be added to the station it would be very beneficial.

337. On which side?—On Mr. Cooke's side, higher up on the top of the swamp.

338. The north-east?—North.

339. You anticipate greater improvement from the station being enclosed and fenced, in the grazing capabilities?—Yes, of course.

340. In your estimate have you made allowance for the improvements in the grazing capabilities when the whole shall be fenced in?—Yes, I said the reserve will be able to carry more than; the stock is increasing every year.

341. But making allowance for the increased capabilities, you still think the reserve should be extended?—Yes.

342. What do you think would be the best means of employing the natives after the reserve had been fenced. They are now putting up the fence themselves?—Yes, we have three and a half miles put up.

343. After the fence is finished how would you employ the natives?—My object is next to drain the swamp with the labor of the aborigines.

344. You think they are equal to it?—Yes; they will carry it out if they are properly directed; and after this I thought of fencing in parts of the swamp to make several fattening paddocks, so as to fatten beasts and grow anything on.

345. Do you grow any wheat now?—Six acres of oats have been grown this season.

346. If you had any more fenced in you could grow more wheat?—Yes.

347. Your six acres, how much do they yield; how many bushels to the acre?—About fifteen bushels, but it would have been more if the weather had not been so dry—of course the swamp would grow anything—the produce would be much more.

348. I do not think the swamp would grow grain?—The farmers round about there have drained a swamp and cultivated. One farmer at Hamilton told me he had a splendid crop.

349. But you could easily extend your wheat-growing without going on the swamp?—Yes.

350. The hops did not succeed particularly well?—They were rather small, but the half of the hops were not of the proper kind. They did not do well at all.

351. It was a dry season too?—Yes.

352. In that swamp you might grow willows, osiers, and make baskets?—Yes, I forget to mention in regard to the handicrafts on the station. I do not consider that an aboriginal is capable of carrying on a trade or a business, but in regard to willow basket manufactory I would recommend that as a commencement, because that is work they could do. Every one could take part in it. It would keep every one on the station employed. If a man were short of work it would always be something to follow from time to time, so as to keep them always employed. They have a great taste for basket-making.

353. The women have shown that already?—Yes.

354. The men show great ingenuity, and would succeed in basket-making?—Yes.

355. You suggest that a native who left the station without leave should be sent to another station?—Not at once, it should be always gently done; but in cases where they continually disregard discipline, and in that only after due consideration and communication with the manager.

356. Do you think they would regard that as punishment, being sent from one station to the other?—That is a punishment if they are sent in spite of wishing to remain. They do not like to go, they have a certain feeling of dignity, and do not like to be sent away from the station. They consider that a disgrace.

357. They look upon the station as a home?—Yes.

358. Would not the adoption of that course be injurious to the station to which they were sent?—I think not. For instance, if a single individual is sent to me who has behaved badly, I could keep one under special supervision, so that it would not be possible for him to do any damage. If a man is badly behaved and incorrigible I think it would do.

359. How many stations are there?—Six.

360. You do not suppose that the station itself to which such a man would be sent would be injured?—No. If the manager who is responsibly in charge of the station is willing to accept them, but they should not be sent against his will.

361. Are there occasions when they go away by themselves, or do they go with wife or children?—No, there have been no such cases where they have gone away with wife and children.

362. In all instances have they gone by themselves?—There has been in fact only one case. One man went away without leave, and when I informed the man who employed him of the Act of Parliament about the certificate as to employing an aboriginal, the man was sent back again.

363. In that case did the aboriginal leave his wife and children?—Oh yes, but only for a time.

364. What you mean is that they go in a restless way—go and come as they like, and that it ought to be stopped?—Yes, after they have taken an active part in their original home, and considering their present condition and state. I think that there should be also a distinct rule on the subject. Originally almost nobody believed that they would settle and be inclined to adopt civilization, but it is proved that they will now.

365. As much as possible residence on the same station should be enforced?—Yes, but not to give them a feeling of pressure, and in exceptional cases, when a man has behaved himself well, and is desirous to go for a time to work (or if some one requests labor who is a respectable man whom the managers could trust in other things), there should be a certain authority for the manager to let him go, but the manager should inform the Board of the fact as to where the aboriginal is going and to whom.

366. In those cases would you allow the natives to go by themselves, or would you compel them to take their family with them?—To leave their family on the station, especially that the children should not be interrupted in the school and kept in regular employment before and after school, and for the reason if they are away it is very often the case they are badly used, whilst where the children and wife are on the station they are well cared for. I suggest that no aboriginal should have power to go to law against the manager.

367. I am afraid we could not do that. That would be too strong a course. English law would not allow you to do that. You suggested in answer to the third question that clothing, rations, and a little money should be given them?—Yes.

368. Would you encourage them to deposit that in any way—the money they earn.—Yes, for that purpose there should be certain articles kept for sale on the station.

369. But suppose they have a surplus would you encourage them to put it in the savings bank?—If they are willing to do so.

370. Would you desire to encourage that?—Yes.

371. Have you been able to do that?—There is one case I have referred to.

372. Have you known one?—There was one man who had between £20 and £30 in the savings bank.

373. In your hands?—No, altogether in his own hands.

374. Where is the savings bank?—Portland or in Melbourne. I think in Portland.

375. And you believe that he has between £20 and £30?—So he told me himself.

376. Do the others not see the advantage of that. Have there been any attempts to follow his example?—There was another who had money in the savings bank, but he drew it out and spent it on clothing. We get a grant of cloth, and the clothing is made on the stations, but the younger class of the aborigines who get better taste become more fashionable. They think the clothing on the station is good enough for work, but on a Sunday they like a coat made by a tailor.

377. They are fond of dress?—O yes, they like to appear nice. They have a very nice taste if they can indulge in it; that is, some of them. That does not refer to the old camp people, but those who are under the influence of civilization and Christianity.

378. This man, who drew out his money from the savings bank, were you able to point out to him how much interest he had got?—He had drawn it just when I went to the station, and I know nothing particular about it.

379. Are they aware of the nature of interest now?—Yes. The only reason they do not deposit now is because they have so little money. Suppose if the money would be paid to the managers, which they have earned outside, and they get the money in hand, they then use it sensibly; but when they are away, and get the money, it is often spent in drink, or otherwise foolishly. They have not enough chance at present to put it in the savings bank.

380. Do not you think that nice articles, neatly made clothes, and attractive things, if kept in store on the station, would induce them to invest their money there instead of purchasing at the different shops and places outside?—You mean if they were not provided with clothing by the Government.

381. No, apart from that—you spoke of their taste in dress?—Little trimmings and buttons. O yes, that is just the thing. They would be likely to buy such articles.

382. I now speak with reference to stores on the station—just those things necessary for use are kept there. Do not you think that if articles of taste were kept there they would buy them on the station instead of outside?—No; we have hawkers who come on the stations (and I have no right to prevent them coming), and there are shop-keepers right round the station; and when they know that the aborigines have money they entice them to the very utmost to buy this or that.

383. If no profit was sought to be obtained by the sale of those goods, and they got better bargains from the store on the stations than outside, would not that induce them?—If certain articles were kept.

384. A nice hat or bonnet?—You mean to say to them: "You have bought that hat for such a price—5s.; I could give you one just as good for 3s. 6d."

385. Yes; are they not quick enough to see that?—Yes.

386. The hawker has to get his profit?—Yes, but when the hawker comes it makes more show to buy from him. They like to make a show when they have a little money. I think it could only be tried by degrees.

387. I did not quite catch your idea as to the mode of paying money. First of all, do you think that employers of labor would trouble to send the money to the manager of the station instead of paying the native himself, because there is no doubt that would involve an additional trouble?—Those who would not be willing to take the trouble should not have the aboriginal.

388. You would make that a condition?—Yes.

389. Not having tried it, you can only conjecture?—I hear often, that after earning the money, they loose it foolishly.

390. The question is whether we could practically carry it out; there is no doubt about the desirability of it?—In the present Act there is stated that no one is allowed to engage an aboriginal without having a certificate. Could it not be added that on such and such conditions aborigines could be obtained?

391. What was your suggestion about payment before witnesses?—That when the manager pays the money, someone should be present to witness it.

392. Do you think there is any necessity for that?—I think it would look more fair or honest. Some misunderstandings might arise, and the aboriginal might fancy he has not the money due to him. I would feel more relieved, on my part, if that were done.

393. How is the employer to convey to the native a correct idea of the amount that he owes him and that he has transmitted to the manager for him?—When aborigines are engaged they are engaged either to find their own rations or to receive their rations. In most cases they get 15s., and pay for rations about 7s. a week. If any aboriginal is engaged by any white man he could be under such conditions—there would be the rations which he consumed, and the employers would forward a statement of the balance which the aboriginal has earned.

394. How is he to tell that to the aboriginal?—They would soon understand that. When I tell the aboriginal that under such and such conditions you enter into your engagement he would understand it perfectly.

395. You suggested that the manager should have witnesses present when he pays the native?—Yes.
396. The first step is, how is the native to be informed of the exact amount he ought to receive and which has been transmitted?—The employer will certainly tell him the amount he has earned and how much is yet due to him.

397. That is imposing a good deal of trouble on the employer—he has to strike a balance and show the account to the natives, then he has to transmit it?—I think they should take that trouble, for they get the aboriginal labor at a lower rate than white labor, and for that reason the employers should take the trouble to do this.

398. Do you think there would be any opposition on the part of the shopkeepers and the publicans to that mode?—Yes; there might be.

399. They would discourage that?—Yes.

400. Would not that make it so unpopular that it would increase the difficulties in carrying that out?—No; I don't think so, in the slightest. It would only raise the aboriginal in regard to civilization, and they would be rescued from the temptations to which they are exposed outside the station.

401. You say you would not board the children out?—No; unless it can be proved that they are not properly trained and well cared for. The children are so much attached to their parents and friends on the station.

402. Do not you think it desirable that the children, if equally well cared for outside as on the station, should mix with the rest of the population?—No; because I think they should be self-supporting on each station; and if part of them were raised on the station, and others brought up outside, they would not agree well together in their future life.

403. Why so?—Those brought up outside who had been among the whites would consider themselves superior in such cases—the young men from outside selecting wives on the station or the young women getting husbands. Besides, we have sufficient proof, it has been tried, that aboriginals who have been taken away from their native countries and their own people, and educated among whites, have in course of time had to be sent back to the mission stations, or else they have fallen into the hands of the lowest class of the population. An aboriginal will always be considered an aboriginal, and have too little chance to rise in any respectable society, so he must fall back to the lowest class. It is the same with a half-caste.

404. Holding those views you do not approve of aboriginal labor being hired out?—Only in exceptional cases.

405. Suppose a native could get an engagement with an employer who really paid attention to him, do you not think that he and his family should be self-supporting than that they should continue on the station?—He would not earn so much as to support his family entirely.

406. You think not?—Not any that I am aware of. Even those who go away, and the most steady, if they had to find their own rations out of the money which they earn, in the way of managing which they have for the present, they could not carry on. They would be bound to fall back to knocking about, and to the present state of the aboriginals who are not located on the stations.

407. To what do you attribute that—inability to earn sufficient wages, incapacity, or to unwillingness and reluctance to persevere in work?—We have about three who would really earn the same wages as a white man. Thirty shillings per week is high wages up in our direction, and I do not consider that any aboriginal would be able with 30s. to find himself and his wife and children, and to clothe himself, away from home.

408. Is that from bad management of the money? Supposing that they earned enough, do you think they cannot manage it?—I do not think they are far advanced enough yet, to manage their money in a proper economical way.

409. You said also that there would be no use in teaching them trades, or apprenticing them to trades, because they could not afterwards conduct those trades on their own responsibility?—Yes.

410. Why not? Supposing a young native had been apprenticed to a shoemaker could not he make shoes?—He could make the shoes, but if he were left to himself he would manage badly, for instance lose the run of his tools. To-day he would not know where he left his hammer last; he would have left it somewhere and not know where to look for it. Their labor requires management. I have to look after their tools. There is a certain carelessness or thoughtlessness about them, which shows plainly that they would not be capable.

411. To conduct anything approaching a business?—Not on their own responsibility.

412. Though mechanically they would be able to do the work?—I am quite certain of that. They are capable of learning, but not of carrying their knowledge practically.

413. From carelessness or inattention?—Yes.

414. Is it a natural difficulty on their part to sustain attention?—I dare say it is, and that it has to do with their original life, their manner of living.

415. No discipline in their early youth?—Just so.

416. But those youths brought up on the stations and well taught would not they be so trained as to be able to manage a business later on?—No, there is not enough independence in them yet. In regard to their education at school, they are better educated than many white children, but the latter would after all find their way through the world in an easier manner and more to their advantage than the aborigines.

417. Would not that arise partly from the fact that the white children would be received more pleasantly?—Decidedly, that is a great point; and the aborigines lack a certain spirit of courage and independence.

418. You think they do not possess that?—Yes.

419. You complain of a want of steady application?—Yes.

420. You think that apprenticing to one particular trade would not be advantageous at present?—Not at present.

421. But rather a general practical knowledge?—Yes, such as would be useful on a station—a little carpentering, masonry, smith work and so on.

422. Would you go so far as smith work?—Yes, any of those things. The hop kiln which you saw, the whole of the building, including the plastering, was done by them, which shows they have a certain taste for carpentering, &c.

Rev. J. H. Stähle
continued,
8th May 1877.

423. You complain of want of steadiness and application, do you find this defect existing as strongly in the half-castes as in the blacks?—Yes, just as strongly. The half-castes may be quicker in understanding, but they are not more steady. When I drew the average of our aborigines I could produce as many aborigines as half-castes who showed a certain intelligence and improvement.

424. You see no indication that the mental or physical condition is improved by the cross?—No, at least not in a remarkable and special manner.

425. In regard to those twelve natives in your district not on the station, you say they should be forced to go to some station, you would allow them to make their own selection—how would you practically do it?—I think it could only be carried out by making a law as to it.

426. Supposing there was a law decreed that all those natives should go to some one of the aboriginal stations, how would you carry it out; do you think it would be possible to take them by force?—It would be no force at all. The aborigines have so much respect for the law that if it were made the law that they were to resort to the various stations, there would be no difficulty in gathering them in when the missionary comes and picks them up and requests them to come with him.

427. Do you think you would be able to keep them on the station?—Well, of course, with those brought in from outside, I would have to use special patience, and not deal so strictly as with those who have been there.

428. And you would have to offer them every inducement to stay?—Yes, by special privileges which they do not get elsewhere.

429. And generally bring them to conform to the habits of discipline on the stations?—Yes. In regard to making a law, I think it desirable not so much for its effect upon the blacks, who could easily be got in, as upon the people outside, who for certain purposes encourage them to stop outside. But when any white community knew it was the law, they would not prevent them going.

430. And you think you could induce the aborigines to come to the station?—Yes.

431. How do those natives obtain a living outside?—By hunting and fishing, and knocking about.

432. They are really leading their savage life?—Yes, knocking about, making their mi-mis here and there. Some were found lately near Coleraine drunk, and in a most miserable state. One was lying all night in the rain, drunk, in a wretched condition. We had two natives who came on the station last year in a dying state through knocking about till their life was ruined. On their death beds they expressed their sadness that they did not come earlier to the station, and their appreciation of the care and kindness shown.

433. Are they all men outside the stations?—Men, women, and children.

434. What do the women do?—Make baskets and, cook for their husbands; and very often if they are young they are exposed to many sad temptations.

435. Are the women induced to remain outside by the white men—has that come within your knowledge?—I cannot say much about that.

436. You do not know it?—No, I have no particular knowledge whether they are intentionally encouraged to stay out.

437. I suppose in your long experience at the different stations you have seen some of the aborigines either on their death beds or at other times in such a manner as to enable you to say whether they become thorough Christians at heart?—I am most happy to state that several cases of that kind have come under my notice, where in the hours of death they have been really in a state of comfort and joy. Even those two to whom I referred as coming to the station suffering and sick, though they had had no influence of religion or Christianity before they came, in the short time before their death through the sermons and other means they gathered so much knowledge that it was very encouraging.

438. Were they fully aware they were dying?—Yes, one man told me a couple of hours before that he felt he was going to die.

439. In the management of them do you find that they appreciate kindness?—Yes; kindness and firmness.

440. You think they are to be managed in that way?—Yes.

441. Much better than by mere severity?—Yes, decidedly.

442. Were you at Coranderrk for a time?—Yes.

443. You think that the management in a missionary way is in every way more calculated to improve the condition of the aborigines?—I am certain of that as the result of my own experience. I have seen Ramahyuck, and I have been at the Wimmera, Coranderrk, and my present station, and my sure conviction is that the way in which the mission works is the only method suited for the aborigines.

444. In what points or upon grounds do you say that?—Just the two points—kindness and firmness—love and firmness is the course found in the real teaching of Christianity. The two must be connected, and, with a true missionary, the work is really a labor of love. He studies their condition, and takes regard to every circumstance in dealing with the natives.

445. How long were you at Coranderrk?—I was one year in charge and six months teacher.

446. As to the position of the place and the climate, do you consider Coranderrk suited for an aboriginal station?—I think according to the experience of the last two or three years it has rather appeared as if it were not a healthy place, but I think during the very last year there have been no special cases nor numerous deaths.

447. I speak with reference to your own experience of the station, did you see any ground for believing it to be suitable or unsuitable for a station?—I do not think it is unsuitable. The natives might catch colds by going to the Yarra to fish, but that could be remedied by proper management.

448. Do you think the situation damp?—Yes, it is damp.

449. Was that little runnel taken from the Badger stream when you were there?—Yes.

450. Do you think that added to the dampness?—No; I think it is more the dampness from the flats.

451. About the conduct of the natives there, was it influenced at all by the neighborhood of Healesville?—Yes, they were greatly influenced by Healesville.

452. Did it produce any immorality?—Yes, in regard to drink.

453. Only with regard to drink?—I am not aware of anything otherwise.

454. Were there many cases?—About three.

455. Only three in eighteen months?—That is three in twelve months; and, in two cases, the publicans were fined; in the other it could not be proved. Rev. J. H. Stähle,
continued,
8th May 1877.

456. The opportunities of spending their money were freer?—They spent their money very suitably. The hawkers used to come to the station and offer their goods. Some of them have taken away as much as £60 or £80 at one time. The natives get paid every three months, and on the Sunday after their purchases it was very cheering to see them in their new suits coming to church.

457. What years were you there?—1865 to 1866.

458. Did you observe any difference in the capacity for learning between the children at Coranderrk and at Lake Condah?—I have observed that at Condah the children are altogether further advanced in education.

459. Ramahyuck and Condah seem to be further advanced than any of the others?—Yes, all the people at Condah are advanced further in civilisation and Christianity than at Coranderrk.

460. Is that partly to be attributed to the fact that at Coranderrk they have been brought from different tribes, and at Lake Condah they are nearly all one tribe?—Yes, that is one point. The next point is their manner of treatment.

461. You think the missionary style of management is more adapted to bring out their good faculties?—Yes, I do, decidedly.

462. When you were at Coranderrk I suppose you had a fixed amount of bread and meat? They all got a certain ration?—Yes.

463. Did they run up butchers' bills in addition to that?—No. Sometimes for sick people there might be such a thing as a leg of mutton, but that was quite exceptional.

The witness withdrew.

Adjourned.

TUESDAY, 21ST MAY 1877.

Present :

His Honor Sir W. F. STAWELL, in the Chair.

F. R. Godfrey, Esq.

A. W. Howitt, Esq., P.M.

C. E. Strutt, Esq., P.M., examined.

464. You are a Police Magistrate?—Yes.

465. You have been some time living in the Murray district?—Yes, several years.

466. You have had opportunity of seeing the aborigines there and also at Coranderrk?—Yes; I was Guardian of Aborigines on the Murray. I had, consequently, considerable intercourse with them, and I have also seen them at Coranderrk.

467. First of all the chief object of the Commission is to ask you for any information with regard to the natives about that part of the country, in the Murray district, and then to hear any suggestions you may have to offer on the subject generally. How long have you lived in that district?—It is eight or nine years ago since I left the district; I had lived there about ten years.

468. Up to that time were there many blacks that might be said to be Victorian blacks living along the Murray?—Just on the frontier there is no very great distinction between the Victorian and the New South Wales blacks; they go to either side of the river indifferently, but at the same time they have all a certain district beyond which they do not go.

469. What was the style of life of those natives?—Well, they used to live in their own camps, but they were mainly dependent on the whites. They would do a little work now and then, but not keep to it regularly. There were a good many employed as shepherds and stockriders, for which class of work they seem particularly qualified. The natives are not fond of hard work. Some of them would do some fencing and do it very well, but only for a time. After doing a small amount of work they would invariably go home for a change. They like to wander about in the woods, hunting and fishing and so on.

470. Was the money they earned generally squandered in drink?—No doubt it was to a degree. We always had to regret that. We prevented it as much as possible, but it was not always possible.

471. How many blacks were there in that district, say within fifty miles of Echuca on both sides of the river?—The number has decreased a good deal. I suppose when I was first there there might be perhaps a couple of hundred, as far as I can tell, but when I left there were not more than half that number.

472. Do you think, from what you have seen of the natives there and at Coranderrk, and at other places, it would be a desirable thing to establish a station, say lower down on the Murray than Echuca, and try and bring them in?—The further any such station could be from any large place the better, and also the further back from the banks of the river, on account of their getting drink and other vices.

473. Can you suggest any means for preventing their getting drink?—I do not see that we can do much. We have done all we can to prevent their getting it at the public-houses, but the drink is brought to them by travelling swagmen, and we cannot prevent such things, because the blacks have their camp in any places they find favorable for fishing, and these travelling men find them out. That cannot be remedied, as there was no means of ascertaining that the natives had had the drink till after the damage was done, but whenever possible to establish the charge, those persons who supplied the drink were punished by fine or imprisonment, and the blacks imprisoned for getting drunk and committing assaults or other offences.

474. Do they not obtain drink from other places besides those men you speak of?—No doubt; for instance, sometimes from the bush publicans.

475. If a station were formed on the Murray, lower down, away from civilization as far as possible, —the place proposed by the inspector was about 40 or 50 miles below Swan Hill—and back from the river, would it be possible to get them to go to the station there?—In my opinion the success or otherwise of such a station would depend on the tact and management of the superintendent in charge of it. I have had blacks in the service of my family for a long time, and I have had every reason to be satisfied with them.

C. E. Strutt,
Esq., P.M.,
21st May 1877.

476. Do they not become restless?—Well, they would stop for a year at a time, and then go off for hunting and amusement, but they would come back again.

477. Do you think it would be desirable in any way to legislate to compel them to come in?—I think, if you passed such a law, the difficulty would be to carry it into effect. In my case when the natives wanted to go I used to let them go, and they would come back pretty soon, and glad to be taken on again.

478. Did you try to prevent them going?—No, it was no use, and, moreover, after all the attempts you might make, they would go in any case. I know in other instances in the case of my neighbours, that when they attempted to keep their natives they would be found missing one day, and then they would not come back for a very long time, or not at all.

479. You think the same difficulty would apply to any effort to restrict them to the station?—I think it would, if you tried to restrict them there by force. If you have the station there much would depend, as I have said, upon the character, and management, and tact of the person who had charge. In any case they would require to be allowed out, say for a fishing or hunting expedition, now and then; to be always at work is hardly in accordance with the black disposition.

480. Supposing a station were formed there, and it was so situated that they would be asked to do very little work; suppose you had sheep there which they could tend without much labor or trouble, and if they were near a river and able to fish, do you think it would be desirable to form such a station?—Yes, certainly I do.

481. And you think that they would remain in that case?—I think they would.

482. Even though they were not natives of the place?—Yes; in regard to that you may remember that the tribal distinctions are nearly broken down. Fragments of tribes would be collected together, and there would not be the same causes of local feud as in the old days when one set of blacks used to encroach upon the lands of another tribe, which frequently occasioned wars.

483. Do you think they would be likely to go out to their own haunts?—Their own haunts have been broken up by the whites, and there would not be the inducements now that there used to be; it is no inducement for two or three to go where there are no other blacks.

484. Except perhaps to see the whites and get drink?—As to their going out, I think it would not matter unless it was a very long way; in that case you might take steps to see who brought them there, and who is harboring them. I should feel more inclined to make legislation for the whites than the blacks themselves. I think if such a station were formed it would be well to let a periodical return be forwarded to the superintendents of police and likewise to clerks of courts, as to what blacks are received in the place, and whether any are missing. If any idea is entertained of legislating on the subject, and if the natives are found a very considerable way out of their districts, say if they had wandered to Sandhurst from Swan Hill, the police should see who is harboring them, and whether they got there without permission. When I speak of not restricting them, I mean as to their going a long way, but they should be free to go out fishing or hunting on a fine day, a thing they very much like, especially in a warm country.

485. Can you suggest anything with regard to general management of aborigines from what you have seen?—I should suggest that they should be employed as stock-riders; they are fond of that, and they also make good shepherds; and, generally speaking, they will do any sort of work about the place that does not require long-continued hard bodily labor. I do not know whether it is that they are not equal to it physically, or whether it has to do more with inclination; but, for instance, they may work one day without stopping, but not on another.

486. Have you seen the Coranderrk station?—Not lately; not for the last two or three years.

487. You observed the work there?—Yes; and there is one matter I wish to speak of. I think if the aborigines were to get some sort of wages in proportion to their work it would be well. As it was, those worked that liked, but there was no means of paying them.

488. If you are speaking of Coranderrk, they have since been paid?—That will be since my last visit then.

489. You approve of that system of paying wages?—I think so, as otherwise there is no inducement for them to work; and if the gross profits of their labor are divided amongst the whole, and those who do not work get just as much benefit as those who work, it is a direct premium upon idleness. I think there are several persons on the Coranderrk station who are not full blacks, who might be found useful in service in the neighborhood round about Coranderrk.

490. Do you think it is well to send them out into the world?—Yes, particularly the women; and the men too, if they are intelligent enough to undertake work.

491. In what capacity could the women be suitably employed?—As servants, cooks, and laundresses?—I know they can wash very well, many of them.

492. Do you think, from what you have seen of the half-castes, some of those more intelligent ones, that they have stability of character sufficient to make it safe to trust them out in the world?—I think so; they might occasionally want to go back to Coranderrk for a little while, or to take a turn with their friends the same as the white people do. Even the whites do not stop very long in one service unfortunately. I have known several of the black women very good laundresses.

493. But do you think they have stability of character enough to prevent their falling into evil courses?—Of course it must depend a great deal on the family with whom they are placed.

494. How long is it since you were at Coranderrk?—Two or three years.

495. You have not been since then?—No; not since the recent alterations.

496. Can you suggest any legislation or any plan for legislation which would be more effectual than the present law with regard to supplying drink to blacks; the present law is broken every day?—I do not think it is very often broken at Coranderrk. At any rate not so frequently as elsewhere; we had some cases, but we always dealt with them pretty sharply.

497. But there are many cases that you cannot sheet home?—Yes, we cannot fine a man unless the proof is sufficient; but then we punish the blacks for drunkenness. The main thing that appears to me necessary in the conduct of any station for the blacks is to gain their affections; that is not done by harshness or knocking about, nor, on the other hand, does it do to give way to all the whims that they may have, but with a mixture of kindness and firmness they generally get on very well.

498. I suppose when you were a guardian on the Murray you had a certain supply of blankets?—Yes, the usual supply.

499. Did they avail themselves of them?—Yes, regularly.

500. Do you think they were in the habit of pawning those goods in any way, selling them?—Now and then they did, but generally not. Of course to remedy any evil of the sort it might be rendered illegal to buy or receive the blankets from the blacks; for that purpose they should have some particular stamp or pattern worked on them, something that could not be taken out of them.

501. Do you think it advisable that the men should be encouraged to go out and obtain work?—Those that could be trusted, I think so; some are very decent men; some at Coranderrk I think might be trusted safely.

502. Would you let them out on certain terms or as they please, like any other men?—If they are capable of looking after themselves I would not make any difference between black and white; but otherwise, and as most of the blacks are at present, I think that it would be preferable for the Superintendent of the place to have something to say in the matter, it would be well for him to see that there was an agreement properly drawn up, and for him to witness it.

503. You would, in fact, place them in the same position as the white laborer?—If they are capable of being so dealt with, but others not capable of looking after themselves I should treat as children.

504. How could that difference between them be known?—It could only be known by the Superintendent of the place, he is in the best position to estimate the character of the men.

505. That agreement should be drawn out, you think, on the recommendation of the Superintendent?—I would nominally leave the Superintendent in charge of all the blacks on the place, but he would be guided in what he did as to making any differences by the character of the natives. There was one native named Barak who could be safely trusted as sober and industrious.

506. He may be sober and industrious, but do you think it would be fair to him to allow him to go out and engage perhaps say with a dishonest employer?—No, certainly not; he should consult the Superintendent first, and inform him of his intention, and if the Superintendent objected to the character of the employer, he might advise the aboriginal, and refuse to furnish him with the printed form of agreement.

507. How could you protect him from that?—As I have just said, the Superintendent should have a voice in all such matters; for instance, his signature as a witness might be required to every agreement to make it valid.

508. In what form should the payment of the man's wages be made, under those conditions?—A great deal depends on the character of the employment. If he can be permanently employed on the stations round about, the native would be in the same position as a white man.

509. And he would have the money paid to him direct?—Yes, and then he would provide for his own living, and those few in that position need not be on the station at all; at the same time Coranderrk, or any of the other stations, could be looked upon by them as the places for them to have a right to go to in case of sickness or other causes.

510. You would only permit those who came within the class you define to go out for work?—Yes, those who are fit to be allowed out, and the Superintendent is to be the judge of that, as I have said. Those who are able to go out I should allow to go out, with the option of returning in case of sickness or any special or extraordinary cause.

511. All others you think should be kept on the station?—I think there might be between what I may call the full labor class and those living on the station proper, an intermediate grade; for instance, at shearing times the men might take a turn out, get their wages for the time, and return; and if the Superintendent finds that they are not safe to be trusted out, he should keep them in as much as he could.

512. Then for this second class of men, would you have the money paid direct to the men?—No, part of it should be paid to the Superintendent, and it would be a good thing if he could induce them to put it aside in the bank as a gradual accumulation for their old age.

513. Can they understand it?—I think they might if they are in the hands of a man who has gained their confidence, and one who will explain the advantage of it to them, they would see they will have the benefit of it afterwards.

514. Did you form any opinion of Coranderrk as a station for aborigines from what you saw of it, as to its suitability of climate or otherwise?—I have thought that a warmer part of the country would be better for them.

515. Do you think they would, as a rule, be better on a station on the banks of the Murray?—I think so. I think the neighbourhood of Healesville is too wet and damp for them in winter; I think from their habits and tastes they would much prefer a warmer part of the country, and it would be better for them.

516. Have you seen any other stations besides Coranderrk?—No.

517. And have not had an opportunity of comparing with others?—No; but I have seen a good deal of the blacks in their native state at their own encampments and elsewhere.

518. I think you said you thought it desirable to pay the men for work that they did on the station; would you pay them in money, or partly in money and partly in goods?—I should prefer to pay them in goods, not in money.

519. Why so?—Because if they have the goods it is the best expenditure that can be made for them, and if they have the money they may more likely spend it in getting drink.

520. Do you think in that case it would be desirable to have a store on the station?—I think it would.

521. A store supplied with all sorts of goods, where they could be supplied to the natives at the Melbourne rates with the carriage added?—Yes, get what they like and pay them as they would at the store, or at a shop in Melbourne.

522. And you think they would take up a thing of that sort?—Yes, I think so. If a man had earned £5, he could spend the money at the store as he liked. Some would like sugar, some tobacco or anything else; in this way they could get say £5 worth of goods, of such articles as were permitted to be sold at the store. The store would be, of course under the supervision of the manager of the station, and they would not be allowed to sell any articles that were considered inappropriate. The Superintendent might receive the money so earned, and the man be allowed corresponding credit at the store.

523. What kind of things do you think would be appropriate?—Nearly everything except spirits and beer; such things as clothes and shoes, and food of various kinds.

C. E. Strutt,
Esq., F.M.,
continued,
21st May 1877.

524. They are fond of little ornaments?—Yes, any little gay things might be on sale at the store.

525. In fact you would have anything except drink?—Yes, anything that would not be prejudicial to them; and when you have kept out beer and spirits, and things of that kind, all the other matters may safely be left, I think, to the discretion of the Superintendent. It would also be desirable to establish some means of buying the product of their industry and work; for instance, they are good hands at making baskets of particular sorts. If there was a ready sale for as many as they choose to make, even though it required a few pounds as a grant by the Government, it would be a very desirable thing, and would tend to encourage industry among them. They are good hands at making baskets and nets.

526. Can you suggest any occupation of that kind, any work?—They make very good baskets, very useful baskets.

527. You suggest basketmaking, in fact?—Yes; and they make very good nets; in fact I would make it apply to whatever they could make.

528. In a country suitable they can get opossums and make rugs?—The skins might be bought; but they do not tan their skins, so that their rugs do not answer so well in wet weather, they do in dry weather; but something might be done in the way of buying skins in the season, and generally to encourage industrious habits on their part by enabling them to derive a profit from them. My own opinion of the blacks is that when they are properly and kindly treated they are a trustworthy and good-tempered sort of people.

529. You have no means of knowing whether there has been any very considerable decrease of the blacks on the Murray since you have left?—No; but I should think there must have been, the numbers were decreasing when I was there; they have had the vices of the whites to thin their numbers, and likewise their own feuds.

The witness withdrew.

Rev. Robert Hamilton called and examined.

Rev. R. Hamilton,
21st May 1877.

The Witness stated that he was the convener of the Presbyterian committee on aborigines, and that he had prepared a statement which was separate and independent from the one to be presented by the church committee, and testifying to what he had himself seen.

At the request of the Chairman the witness read the following statement:—

Paper on the Aboriginal Station, Coranderrk, for the Commission of Enquiry appointed by the Government of Victoria. By Robert Hamilton, Minister of Presbyterian Church, Fitzroy.

While I express my full concurrence with the paper forwarded to this Commission by the Heathen Missions Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, of which I am joint convener with the Rev. M. McDonald, yet it was deemed advisable by the committee that I should furnish a separate statement on my own responsibility, inasmuch as I was thoroughly acquainted with the rise and progress of this settlement, and could give opinions and testimony to which they could not be expected to subscribe.

I may state that I have been a visitor of the aborigines in the Yarra district ever since they were wanderers in the bush, before the Government attempted to settle them on the Goulburn or formed the station on the Badger at Coranderrk. In June 1861 I visited their encampment at Brierty's station on the Upper Yarra, and preached the gospel to them in the open air.

THE SANITARY CHARACTER OF CORANDERRK.

Not having visited any aboriginal station in the colony excepting Coranderrk, I can give testimony only in regard to this locality.

In a sanitary point of view I consider Coranderrk to be very favorably situated, and to have peculiar advantages. It stands high and dry, and is well sheltered by neighboring hills. It has excellent natural drainage, and there is at hand an abundant supply of superior water running all the year round. At the same time, no matter how good the situation, efficient means require to be in constant operation for carrying out the laws of health. In estimating the sanitary character of any station it is necessary to bear in mind the contrast between the habits of the aborigines previous to settlement and those which they are trained to form in civilized life.

Previous to the congregating of the aborigines at Coranderrk they had their health in many instances undermined by intemperance and exposure. They became thereby unable, in some degree at least, to sustain without injury sudden climatic changes. Besides, their habits were altogether changed through the loss of their lands and the curtailment of their liberty to roam wherever they pleased and obtain the food on which they had been accustomed to subsist. Hence, from a variety of causes, the natives settled at this station with their constitution in many cases seriously injured.

Then, when they did make up their minds to exchange a wandering for a settled life, the huts which they erected with their own hands, under direction of course, were, as might be expected, of an inferior character. They were slab huts with earthen floors, the doors and windows and sides of the house admitting abundance of ventilation. They might be in some respects an improvement on the old mia-mias, and they were regarded as an achievement in the path of civilization, considering their previous inveterate love of a wandering life. But in other respects they were perhaps not better than the thick-set branches of mia-mias, which did not expose them so much to draughts.

Still further, in speaking of the sanitary nature of the locality, besides the insufficiency of the dwellings and the impaired vigor of the natives, there requires to be taken into account the total ignorance which the aborigines naturally display of the proper means to be used for preserving health. They have no idea of the danger arising from suddenly passing from a roasting fire to a cold atmosphere, from becoming heated, as e.g. in exciting games, and then getting quickly cooled down, from exposure to draughts of chilling wind, from partaking of ill-cooked food, from indulging in spirituous liquors, &c. It is very difficult to convince them of the necessity in order to good health of constant care in regard to food, raiment, and atmospheric as well as other influences.

In the case of aborigines, natives of the northern and warmer parts of the colony, who are brought to settle here, the danger to health must of course be all the greater if sanitary laws are not wisely and faithfully observed. In order to the preservation of the health of these, it is evident that additional clothing is indispensable, and greater caution generally is required. It must be very specially noticed that if intemperance, which has been the fruitful cause of disease and premature death, is not suppressed with judicious and faithful management, then, no matter how healthy any settlement may be in point of locality, physical energy will be ruined and life shortened.

NEARNESS OF STATION TO TOWNSHIP.

In regard to the proximity of Coranderrk to a population of white people, this question can only apply to Healesville. As a general principle it appears desirable that aboriginal stations should not be situated too near a township, especially if it is one of considerable size. Healesville is over two miles distant from the settlement, and is not large or populous. The proximity of any small township, particularly if it is well conducted, seems to me to be a subordinate point. The greater question, and one which is paramount, is the quality and efficiency of the management, the moral training and wholesome discipline administered, and above all the religious superintendence exercised. The essential thing to be aimed at in the management of the aboriginal heathen here, the same as in the reclaiming of the heathen in other parts of the world, is to make it a fundamental principle to educate them in Scripture truth, to teach them pure morality, to train them to act at all times as responsible and immortal beings, and thereby to furnish them with the power to resist temptation when it is presented and not unnecessarily put themselves in the way of evil.

SETTLEMENT SHOULD BE MISSIONARY.

With a view to these all-important ends, I regard it as indispensable to successful civilizing of the aborigines that they be in every case put under the teaching and management of a Christian missionary.

Rev. R. Hamilton,
continued,
21st May 1877.

MISSIONARY'S WIFE.

The manager's wife should also have the spirit and qualifications of a missionary. This seems to me indispensable, in order that the usefulness of her husband as a Christian teacher may be maintained. She requires to take a careful and faithful management of the girls, teaching them all manner of household work. The utmost vigilance ought to be exercised in regard to the morals of the young women, and good principles can be fitly instilled into them by a Christian matron in her daily intercourse. All the measures which skill and affection can suggest should be adopted by her for protecting them from harm and fortifying them against temptation. She needs to be well fitted to minister to those who are in sickness and trouble, and, by her prudent and consistent conduct, she should be a constant lesson for good to all on the settlement.

INTERCOURSE WITH WHITES.

I am strongly of opinion that it should be enjoined as a special duty on the managers to do everything in their power to guard the blacks against all intercourse with white people which might be corrupting or injurious in any degree to their moral and Christian life. Travelling men who might visit the station without business and of whom suspicions might be reasonably entertained should not be allowed to remain. No white man should be ever engaged to reside among the aborigines, in order to teach them trades or for any purpose whatever, who cannot produce testimony of good moral and Christian character.

I regard it as an exceedingly objectionable and injurious thing for any manager to allow the aborigines to attend horse races, cricket matches, or other occasions on which they might be needlessly exposed to temptation, and be far more likely to contract evil than obtain good. At the same time I would recommend innocent native or English games and sports among themselves, and every recreation at reasonable times which might help to make them contented and happy.

MANAGER SHOULD BE WORKER.

The aborigines can be led, but they will not be driven. They will follow an example, but not obey imperious commands. The manager, therefore, needs to put his own hand to work if he would succeed in training them to habits of industry. They have everything to learn in the arts of civilized life, and require to be taught by patient self-denying example. The manager would require to be not only a man who can humbly adapt himself to the low social condition of the aborigines in order to raise them by the slow process of teaching them lessons which are to them very irksome to learn, and also one who is capable of instructing them in fencing, carpentering, house building, gardening, agriculture, hop-growing, the cultivation of arrowroot, or in any kind of industry which the peculiarities of the station may require. Of course a skilful superintendent will always plan so as to keep the aborigines regularly and systematically at work. Then they will not be so easily tempted to wander from the reserve, become unsettled in mind, and be drawn into temptation. I would suggest, also, that they be remunerated for their labor at rates which would encourage industry and secure attachment to the settlement.

ENCOURAGING RESULTS TO BE EXPECTED.

From long correspondence and intercourse with missionaries laboring among the aborigines, I have the utmost confidence in the good results which we are warranted to expect from earnest Christian work and skilful management. The children, according to age, make as much and as rapid progress in acquiring the elements of education as those of English parentage. They have capacity for excelling in drawing, and have a special aptitude for music. One of these girls has been in my house as domestic servant a period of three years. She is a member of my bible class, and displays a knowledge of scripture quite on a par with the others. She sings in the church choir, and has become a certificated member, having passed successfully all the examinations required on the tonic-sol-fa system.

My personal observation of the results of mission and educational work at Coranderrk, extending over a period of fourteen years, enables me confidently to recommend that in every settlement there should be a resident missionary and a Christian teacher. If a well-qualified agent cannot be got amongst Englishmen, then I would suggest a Moravian missionary to take the management, as having, for the most part, the qualifications required. In order to strengthen my recommendation, I may state that within a few years from the commencement of the station on the Upper Yarra the change in social condition and in moral character was remarkable. Those who had been savages, with the white man's vices superinduced, when I first saw them in 1861, in their unsettled condition, became meek, docile, sober, and well-behaved. Their vile habits in all respects became changed. Their weapons of cruelty were laid aside, and the reign of peace was established. Implements of war were manufactured henceforth only as articles of trade. There were exceptions of course. Where are they not? Still, results were gratifying in regard to adults as well as to children. The large schoolroom used as a place of worship was filled from Sabbath to Sabbath. A number assembled night and morning for prayers throughout the week. Quarrels were few, drinking was rare, gambling was not known, and many of the adults were eager to learn to read, that they might be able to peruse the bible. And it was not mere routine to which they had been trained. From conversations oftentimes held with them, I am confident that many of them were intelligent worshippers of the true and living God. This was, in many cases, verified when in sickness, and at a dying hour they testified to their trust in the crucified Redeemer, and rejoiced in hope of a coming immortality.

LIBERAL ALLOWANCE FOR IMPROVEMENTS.

I should respectfully suggest that it would be well if managers were not too much stinted in the supplies granted them for necessary improvements. Allowing that they are Christian men laboring from real love to their work, considerable latitude might safely be given them to judge of the requirements of the stations. It would be easy to put a check on extravagance.

The witness withdrew.

Mr. Joseph Parker called and examined.

530-2. What are you?—I am in the Government service at present.

533. Residing in the country?—My residence proper is Echuca; at present I am stationed at Castlemaine.

534. You have some acquaintance with the aborigines?—Yes, more particularly in the early days of the colony.

535. You were residing then on the Loddon?—At Mount Franklin.

536. Your father was assistant protector of aborigines?—Yes, for a number of years.

537. Have you had much acquaintance with the natives since?—I have seen a little of them along the Murray, and conversed with a few of them.

538. Have you any idea what number of natives there are about, within a few, residing in that district in and about the Murray?—I could not say with any certainty. There appears to be a party or tribe about Lake Moira, roaming from one side to the other. They frequent the Honorable John O'Shanassy's station; and there is another party lower down the Murray, and I am informed these tribes never meet.

539. About how many?—Including adults and children, I should suppose about sixty altogether.

540. What is the style of life they lead generally?—Those on the Upper Murray are generally engaged in fishing. They catch quantities of fish, but get very little for them. The fishing companies take them from them, send them to Melbourne, Ballarat, and other places.

541. What are their habits?—Most of them, I am sorry to say, are rather intemperate when they can procure drink.

Mr. J. Parker,
21st May 1877.

Mr. J. Parker
continued,
21st May 1877,

542. Do you know the lower Murray down below Swan Hill?—No; I have not been there since 1858.

543. Do you think it would be a desirable thing to form stations anywhere on the Murray, say below Swan Hill?—I am under the impression it would be. The Murray district appears to be a remarkably healthy district.

544. If a station were formed there, do you think that the natives roaming about as you have described could be induced to go to the station?—I think the younger members of the tribes could be induced, but I do not think many of the older ones would care to leave their own locality. In fact, there are some about Sir John O'Shanassy's station that appeared to me to be permanent cripples, hardly able to move.

545. They would be the sort we ought to secure?—I had a talk with a few at Gannawarra. I asked them if they would like to go to the Coranderrk station, but they did not appear to like leaving their own districts.

546. Is there not a private station on the Murray?—That is done away with. The building is there, but no interest is taken in them.

547. How did that answer?—I do not think the party had the means of carrying it on. It was commenced before I went into the Murray district. I know Mr. Matthews, and he told me he had to abandon the idea. He intended to have formed a mission station, but he had no encouragement.

548-9. From what you know of the habits of the blacks, do you think that it would be desirable to allow them to go out as laborers, apprentice them out—not, of course, the blacks on the Murray, those that are more civilized, those that have been on the aboriginal stations for some time?—I think if they could be kept in a central position, and their labor turned to account, the institutions might be made self-supporting in time. I saw a few of the Coranderrk natives at Wyuna, and my impression was, if they got mixed up with those roaming about it would not be beneficial to their habits.

550. They go back, in fact?—I think they would if they were left.

551. In fact you do not think it would be safe for them to be trusted out?—I do not think you could in any country district. It would not be an advantage to them; even the influence of the young stockriders and station hands; it would not be beneficial to their welfare at all; at least, when I say that, I speak from experience. I have no knowledge of the progress the natives have made at Coranderrk; I have never been there.

552. Those natives you have seen were natives that came from there?—Yes.

553. Lately?—Yes, during the last shearing. Most of them were very steady, with one exception; but there were one or two at Moira from the school for a time. They were with the others, and it did not do them any good. They were strangers to me, but they told me they were from Coranderrk.

554. What sort of labor (for instance, if the station on the Murray were formed) would they be suited for?—The only labor that I could suggest would be grazing or agriculture. I do not think there is anything else. Below Swan Hill would be too far to encourage fishing—fishing as a source of profit.

555-6. For amusement and food only?—Yes, they can get plenty of that.

557. If the station were formed there for grazing, and they had some sheep?—I think that it could be made ultimately self-supporting.

558. And they are quite fit to work at that kind of employment, shepherds and stockriders?—Yes.

559. They make very good shearers?—They are fair shearers and reapers, but bad ploughmen. As a rule I have found them so.

560. Do you know any of the other stations?—No, I have never visited any of the stations.

561. Have you ever met any of the old aborigines that were on your father's station?—Yes, I have met two or three on the Murray.

562. Did you observe whether they were better or worse than those who had never been on the aboriginal station?—There was one; he was a comparative stranger to me, but the squatters told me he was very steady, and never drank at all; about the only one, they said.

563. Do you think that the hope could be entertained of those men ultimately being absorbed in the population generally, or that they will always require a certain amount of supervision?—I think they will always require supervision as long as the original natives are in existence. It may not be so as regards the half-castes.

564. I am afraid they are as difficult to deal with as the others?—My experience has been, that whenever they have been left to themselves they have gone back to their old habits.

565. You have known some brought up on your father's place partially civilized?—Yes.

566. We have been told that an aboriginal who has learnt a trade, and who can execute the work of that trade skilfully and efficiently, will still not have sufficient energy and perseverance to conduct the business himself?—I think that too.

567. What do you attribute that to?—They do not seem to have the power of endurance.

568. Perseverance rather?—Perseverance.

569. Have they not ability to manage a small trade, making boots and shoes, say an easy trade?—Yes; I think they could conduct that themselves, but I do not think you would ever find an aboriginal a successful blacksmith.

570. Suppose a man can make shoes, would he have capacity to carry on the trade, to buy and sell and support himself?—I have known instances of that in farming, a few about Mount Franklin, they supported themselves entirely for years.

571. There was a supervising power?—No, not any. My father, or the aboriginal schoolmaster, had nothing to do with them; they did it themselves entirely, disposed of the produce themselves, invested themselves, and bought and sold.

572. What became of them?—They died from consumption and various internal diseases, all with the exception of one, Tommy, who is at Coranderrk now.

573. Where do you draw the distinction as to what they could conduct and what not?—I am under the impression they might be taught tailoring and shoemaking; some easy trade like that, where their physical strength will not be tested.

574. My question is rather in reference to their mental capacity to organize or carry on a trade?—I cannot say positively whether they would stick to anything. They have a roaming disposition. Those I speak of were there seven or eight years; there were five or six, and four of the men died of consumption.

575. It was suggested to us that a native might make a pair of boots very well, but he would not know where he had left his awl or his waxend, and in that way he would lose time, in short, be so careless and indifferent that he would not make a profit?—They would be attentive to work so long as there was novelty in it. They are naturally proud of mechanical work. I have known some of them to be fair carpenters, and certainly I have not known them to be particularly careless as regards their tools.

576. And give it up?—Yes.

577. Then as a livelihood it would fail?—Yes. They seem to me to take well to mild work, like cultivation and grazing.

578. In those instances you spoke of how long did it continue?—Seven or eight years.

579. How did they end?—They all died, with the exceptions I have alluded to.

580. Did they continue working their farms till they died?—Yes; and their children were removed to Coranderrk.

581. Were those farms any way their own?—No; they reverted back to the Crown. They were granted to them for the time they occupied them only.

582. Those persons of whom you spoke as decrepid along the Murray, how are they supported?—I am under the impression they are supported by the station proprietors, and selectors generally.

583. Why are they specially fond of that locality; there is nothing like tribal rights I suppose?—I talked to several, and asked them if a home were built for them would they like to go to it, they said no.

584. Say a station was formed along the Murray?—They might be induced in that case. I asked those natives 20 miles west and others 20 miles east of Echuca, and they said they had never met each other, and they were only 40 miles apart.

585. You spoke of the young being likely to come, would you separate the children from the parents?—The children seem very willing to go where they get clothes and attention.

586. What age were the children?—From six to ten, most of them. When older than that they are employed on the stations.

587. Do their parents express themselves as willing for them to go?—Yes, they said they were willing for them to go to school as they called it. I am under the impression that they would be controlled with far less trouble if we could only keep the influence of the white people from them. These bushmen and people in the country persuade them that everything that is done for them is done for the interest of the superintendent, or management of these stations, and that they will be cheated and robbed, and they are in bodily fear something is going to happen to them.

588. And the natives believe them?—In many instances they do.

589. You find that drink has a very bad effect upon them?—Yes, it is very bad up there.

590. You think they are less capable of resisting the inclination to drink than whites?—I think so, but the older men are decidedly affected by drink, they rush to it. They get their living by fishing, and in some cases making rugs and different things.

591. What do they do with the money?—They buy clothes and food, but most of them in fact spend it in drink.

592. Those natives are on the New South Wales side?—No, on the Victorian.

593. At Gunbower?—Yes.

594. Those others receive a certain amount of food and clothing?—Yes, those that are on the Moira.

595. Not those at Redbank?—They are not receiving directly. It is a matter of sufferance at the discretion of those who like to give. The Moira natives are, I am informed, well supplied by Sir John O'Shanassy's station people, although I have no proof of this.

596. If they came across the river they could get supplied?—Yes, they come across in the flood season in their canoes, and fish and sell the fish to the Murray Fishing Company, and the money generally goes to the public-house.

597. They are very good at catching those fish?—Yes, very good indeed.

598. If they were 30 or 40 miles below Swan Hill they could catch fish there, there would be no very great difficulty in getting those fish to Echuca?—No, but it would be a long way to travel. There was one case I might mention in reference to a native woman, a widow with two little boys. She had two horses running about the forest, and she used to hire these horses out at 10s. a day. She was very good at getting the money, and would get the money before they took the horses, and she seemed to manage the money very well and clothed her children.

599. Where did she reside?—Near Gunbower or the Gannewarra station. They have no settled home, and just roam from one place to another. I am under the impression that a station on the Murray would be much more beneficial as far as regards their health.

600. That must be pastoral, you could not cultivate there?—European selectors are cultivating and getting fair crops down there, near the junction of the Loddon and the Murray. I presume what can be done with Europeans may be done with the Aborigines under proper management.

601. That is too wet for permanent residence?—That may be, but the people have had some wonderful crops there.

602. They could not live there?—I cannot say anything about the country below Swan Hill, because I have not been there. The locality about Swan Hill is rather poor.

603. What trades would you particularly recommend that they should be taught, taking into consideration their aptitude and their disposition?—I think for the men tailoring and shoemaking, and brush or basket-making, the same as in the Blind Institute. Some of them are very good with the carpenters' tools. I have seen them make very useful things, boxes and yokes, and anything of that kind, and even a window sash; but they do not do very well with the blacksmithing. It is rather too laborious for them.

604. Any light trade?—Yes.

605. Requiring some skill?—Yes.

606. Are there any other small industries besides basket-making that you would recommend?—No, not except shoemaking and tailoring, and things of that sort. Those that I had to do with were very fond of tanning and working up skins.

607. And net-making they are good at?—Yes, they are very good at that, at least the older natives were.

608. In their wild state they made good nets?—Yes, those on the Murray make beautiful nets.

609. That would be a useful occupation?—Yes; but it is hardly a thing that would pay in itself. People prefer making their own.

Mr. J. Parker,
continued,
21st May 1877.

Mr. J. Parker,
continued,
21st May 1877.

610. I suppose you do not know the history of any of the blacks that were on your father's place, except those one or two who were at Coranderrk?—No, the rest have all disappeared. I do not know that I should know any of them now.

611. You could not now lay your finger on any blackfellow who was brought up at the Protectorate who has survived, or whose children are making their way in the world?—No I could not.

612. I suppose some of those at the station were educated up to a certain standard?—Yes. I have known some read and write very fairly; but I generally found that the most intelligent were those that were the most industrious and, unfortunately, not very careful of themselves, and they were carried off by some consumptive complaint.

613. Did you not find that even on the station, and those that had a certain amount of education and intelligence, they were still very childish and needed a lot of looking after?—No, some were not at all childish.

614. I do not mean as regards their intelligence, but as to taking care of themselves?—Yes, they were not very particular in that respect. They seemed to me to take European diseases quickly, and they were carried off rapidly. Of course when I was a boy it was a great difficulty to manage them, as the station where my father was the protector was a penal establishment as well, and that made it very bad in my opinion.

615. Physically you think their condition is better along the Murray. It is a healthy place?—Yes, I think it is remarkably healthy; in fact everybody speaks of it as wonderfully healthy.

616. Suited to the blacks?—Yes. It is hot four months in the year, but with a fine clear atmosphere, and you do not seem to suffer by it.

617. In their native state I believe they were particularly fond of fish food?—Yes, the natives of the Murray were. Some of those along the Murray now earn a good deal of money by hunting and selling skins, mustering sheep for a day or two, and the squatters find them useful in the flood season to assist in getting stock out from the frontages, but they do not keep the money long.

618. All expended in drink?—Yes, principally in drink. I have never been in the Barmah district, but I found them drunk.

619. You do not find they have any difficulty in getting drink under the existing laws?—None at all; it is put in their way.

620. And there is a good deal of prostitution?—I cannot say. I do not notice any half-caste children about.

621. Have they children, some of them?—I noticed one or two adult half-castes at Barmah when I was up there.

622. Where is Barmah?—It is the name of a village on the banks of the Murray, between Moira on the Victorian side and Moira on the New South Wales side. It is a large bend in the Murray, about seven miles beyond Mr. Kinnear's station.

623. Looking back, do you think Mount Franklin was as healthy a district as the Murray for the natives?—I think the Murray is healthier than Mount Franklin. It is not so damp, and the climate is a better climate altogether.

624. For them?—Yes, for them. In fact I have seen older men on the Murray than I have ever seen before; very old men some of them.

625. That is a very good test?—Yes.

626. Do they observe their old habits or dress as Europeans?—More or less they dress like Europeans. They carry their rugs and blankets, they wear trousers and shirts, and some of them boots. They take their boots off when they go to travel.

627. Have you not noticed, physically, the blacks on the Murray, up and down, were always a finer race than blacks in other parts of the country?—No, I cannot endorse that. Some of the natives on the Loddon, when I was young, were some of the finest men I have ever seen. There are some fine specimens of men on the Murray, but the women are just the reverse. Some men that I have seen on the Lower Murray are very fine men, but not many of them.

628. I suppose there are very few on the Loddon now?—I have not seen any blacks higher up the Loddon than Kerang. I believe there are one or two knocking about away to the westward, but none much beyond that.

The witness withdrew.

Adjourned to to-morrow, at Two o'clock.

TUESDAY, 22ND MAY 1877.

Present:

His Honor Sir W. F. STAWELL, in the Chair.

F. R. Godfrey, Esq.

G. W. Rusden, Esq.

A. W. Howitt, Esq., P.M.

James Edgar (aboriginal from the Coranderrk Station) called and examined.

629. How long have you been living in Coranderrk?—Five years.

630. What part of the country did you come from originally?—The Loddon.

631. Lower Loddon, Boort, and Edwards' Plains?—Yes.

632. Some of the aborigines at the station were anxious to be examined by the Commission?—Yes.

633. They held a meeting?—Yes.

634. And you were one elected to represent them?—Yes.

635. What were the particular things that the aborigines wanted to mention to the Commission?—About the station.

636. Just tell the Commission generally what were the views of the aborigines that they wanted brought forward by you and others?—That we were quite satisfied with the station as it is—the management of the station.

James Edgar,
22nd May 1877.

637. You have nothing to complain of?—No, nothing to complain of.
638. There was a good deal said not long ago when Mr. Green left you that the blacks were very dissatisfied with losing Mr. Green; is that the general feeling among the natives?—Perhaps so. It is not with me. There was a few that were dissatisfied.
639. Why were they dissatisfied at losing Mr. Green; why did they not like Mr. Green to go away?—A few of them.
640. Yes?—I do not know. They did not like to see him going away. I do not know.
641. Have you ever had any conversation amongst the aborigines there with regard to any other matter—change of residence, or anything with regard to wishing to go to any other part of the country?—Some of them.
642. Suppose there were a station formed on the Murray, do you think you would have any objection to go to it?—I dare say I would.
643. If there were a station formed on the Murray, would you prefer to go there or stop at Coranderrk?—I think I would rather go down the Murray.
644. I believe you are a teetotaller, are you not?—A teetotaller.
645. Are there many blacks that are or have been in the habit of getting drink near Coranderrk?—I believe some place. I do not know where they get it from.
646. I do not ask where, but have there been many cases of their getting drink?—Not many.
647. Only a few?—Yes; only a few.
648. What are you employed at. What is your position on the station?—Overseer on the hop plantation.
649. What pay do you get for that?—Ten shillings a week.
650. All the year round?—Yes; as long as I remain there.
651. And your food?—Yes.
652. One ration or three rations?—Three rations and a half.
653. You have a wife?—Yes; and two children.
654. Have you ever felt that you would like to go out and get your own living, like white men, away from the station?—I have felt that I thought I would make more somewhere else.
655. Was that before you got paid wages?—Before.
656. Would you care to go out now if a gentleman offered you a situation, or would you rather stop on the station as you are?—I would rather stop on the station as I am.
657. Will you tell me what you do; what is your usual work on the station; how do you begin the day; are the blacks called together in the morning every day in the schoolroom?—To go to work.
658. Before they go to work?—The bell rings at nine o'clock.
659. What happens then?—They go to work.
660. How long do you work?—Three hours in the forenoon and three in the afternoon—six hours.
661. What do you do before work—before nine or after work—when you knock off?—We do not do much after we knock off.
662. You do what you like?—Yes; at five o'clock the bell rings—at five in the afternoon.
663. And after that you can do what you please—amuse yourselves, and do anything you like?—Yes.
664. And what is done on Sunday; do you have any services there?—Yes.
665. What time?—Eleven.
666. Is any school held?—Yes, on Sunday.
667. For the children?—Yes, for the children.
668. Do you have a service in the afternoon after that?—We have a service at seven o'clock.
669. The blacks, I believe, are now healthy at Coranderrk?—There is not much sickness now.
670. There was two years ago?—Yes.
671. A great many died?—Yes; a great many died.
672. Did they get the doctor to attend them when they were sick—when they required it?—At that time?
- 672A. Yes?—Yes; they got the doctor.
673. Were there any complaints amongst the blacks about their not getting enough attendance or medicine?—No; I have not heard so.
674. If there is anything you wish to say to the Commission, if you have been deputed to say anything, speak your mind?—I have not got anything to say.
675. How did you settle at Coranderrk who should come down to speak for you?—Called a meeting.
676. A meeting of all?—Yes.
677. Did they nearly all attend?—Yes; every one of them attended.
678. And how many did they choose?—Four.
679. Did you talk with them since as to what they wanted you to say?—No; we just had a meeting in the morning and came away.
680. Not much talking at the meeting?—No.
681. Soon settled it?—Yes.
682. You did not want any ballot papers?—No.
683. How long did the meeting last?—Twenty minutes.
684. You have got a schoolmaster there now?—Yes.
685. He teaches the children every day?—Yes.
686. Do you think the children are getting on well?—I think so.
687. Have you got any children going?—Yes.
688. Do they get on well?—Yes.
689. As well as before, or worse?—Better than they did before.
690. You can read and write?—No.
691. Did you never go to school there?—No.
692. You came in too late?—Yes.
693. You told Mr. Godfrey just now that there was not much drinking amongst the blacks now?—Very few.

James Edgar,
continued,
22nd May 1877

694. Well, some time ago, was it always the same as that ; did more of them get drunk ?—I think there might be more before I came there, but since I came there there have been very few.
695. On the station you mean ?—Yes.
696. You do not know what they get outside the station ?—No.
697. You mean there have been only a few who have got drink on the station since you have been there ?—Yes ; there might be more.
698. You do not know what they do outside the station ?—No.
699. And it has always been the same since you have been there ?—Yes, just the same.
700. And the place is quiet and orderly ?—Yes, good order.
701. Now, as to the parents—the fathers and mothers—do they send their children to school, and take good care that they go to school ?—Yes ; some of them may take their children away for a few days, I suppose.
702. As a rule, most of them, do they take care they go to school ?—Yes, they do.
703. If they do not go to school, does some one look after them. If they are kept away, who comes to see when they are away ?—Sometimes the schoolmaster goes round to see what they do.
704. How old were you when you came to the station ?—I was twenty-two when I came to the station.
705. What had you been doing before that ; living on the Loddon, in the bush, or in service with any person ?—Most of my time I was on my own hook breaking in some horses.
706. What induced you to come to Coranderrk ; did you come of your own accord ?—I did not come of myself, I was forced to come.
707. By whom ?—Mr. Green.
708. When you say “forced,” what do you mean ?—He told me I would have to come or else he would give me in charge.
709. But you say you would rather remain there now with wages than go out on your own hook again and earn your own living ?—I would rather remain where I am now at present.
710. How many children have you ?—Two.
711. Do they go to school ?—Yes.
712. You take care they go to school ?—I take care they go to school.

The witness withdrew.

Alexander Campbell (an aboriginal from Coranderrk) examined.

Alex. Campbell
22nd May 1877.

713. What is your occupation at Coranderrk ; are you stockman ?—Yes.
714. What wages do you get ?—The same as the rest.
715. How much a day ?—A shilling a day.
716. And your food—rations ?—Yes.
717. Have you got a family—a wife and children ?—Yes.
718. How many children ?—Four, two my own, and two my wife's before I married her.
719. How old ?—One is three.
720. What rations do you get ?—I get three and a half.
721. How long have you been at Coranderrk ?—Getting on for four years.
722. What part do you come from ?—Lower Loddon.
723. Boort ?—A little bit further down, Kerang way.
724. What induced you to come to Coranderrk ; when you first came, did you come of your own accord ?—Yes.
725. Had you heard of the place ?—I came of my own accord. I came down there to get married.
726. And you got married and stopped there ?—I could not get away.
727. Why ?—I was living with Mr. Fisher at the time.
728. Why could you not get away ?—I asked Mr. Green when I came first, and he would not let me go.
729. Did you not see Mr. Fisher some time ago ?—Yes.
730. Did you find any difficulty with the Board then as regards getting away ?—I asked Mr. Ogilvie whether it was settled, and he said it was settled, but there was a letter that Mr. Fisher had not yet signed his name to.
731. The difficulty this last time was with Mr. Fisher, not the Board ?—Yes.
732. Would you like to go. If you had an offer of remaining at Coranderrk or going back to Mr. Fisher, which would you choose ?—I would go.
733. What prevented you from going when Mr. Fisher offered you the situation. You say Mr. Ogilvie told you something ?—Yes.
734. What did he tell you ?—He said he took a letter to him, and he would not sign his name till the Board would meet some other time ; and I waited and waited ; I did not like to bother him.
735. Mr. Ogilvie did not say he had any objection to your going ?—No ; he told me if he had authority I could go at once.
736. What would you do with your wife and children ?—Mr. Fisher would keep them, and keep me too. I was fourteen or fifteen years with him—brought up with him.
737. You would not go without your wife and children ?—No.
738. Your children are not old enough to go to school ?—Two eldest go to school.
739. Are there any complaints at Coranderrk about the way the children are taught—any complaints ?—No, I do not think there are.
740. Quite satisfied with the school ?—Yes, quite satisfied with the school.
741. Can you read or write yourself ?—No.
742. You were one of four blacks selected to come down to speak on behalf of the blacks ?—Yes.
743. What were you to tell the Commission ?—Well, we came to say we are agreeable there with regard to the management and the clothing that we are getting there.
744. Was not there a great talk some little time ago, many of the blacks wanted Mr. Green back again ?—Well, there is some of them wants him back.

745. Some of them, not all?—No.
746. Were there only a few?—Only a few.
747. Well now, supposing that there was a station formed, and now in existence, somewhere down the Murray—say low down the Murray, in that country—and just the same sort of management as at Coranderrk, and you were told you could go to that station on the Murray or stop at Coranderrk, which would you do?—I think I would go to the Murray.
748. Why?—Because it is too cold for us that have come from that part.
749. Those that came from the Murray?—Yes.
750. Do you think it too cold for all the blacks, or generally?—I think it is too cold for them.
751. In winter?—In winter.
752. Is that one reason you would like to go back to Mr. Fisher?—I would like to go back.
753. Is it because you would get to a warmer climate you would go?—Yes.
754. What salary would Mr. Fisher give you?—That was to be arranged.
755. What did you get?—One pound a week, before I was married.
756. And rations?—Yes, and rations.
757. What did you do with the money?—I kept it, and bought horses, and one thing and another.
758. Where are they now?—I sold them when I came away.
759. Have you got any money put away anywhere?—No.
760. Cannot you put any money in the savings bank?—No; we get candles, and one thing and another, and that takes all our money. Those that came from the Murray, it is too cold for them; the ground is quite damp.
761. Then if Mr. Fisher would take you back you would go at once?—I would go at once. I was looking for him to-day at Kirk's Bazaar.
762. Do you like riding horses?—I have been boundary riding and travelling sheep.
763. You are the stockkeeper at Coranderrk?—Yes.
764. Are the cattle increasing now?—Yes.
765. A good many calves now?—Not this year.
766. How is that?—There is no grass hardly for them.
767. The run is not fenced?—No.
768. Many strange cattle on the run?—Plenty.
769. They eat up the grass?—Yes, they eat up the grass.
770. Have the cows had no calves this year, or do they lose them?—Some of them got calves, those we are milking.
771. The others have not?—No.
772. Did they miss or had they calves?—"Miss," I do not know.
773. Have you seen any cows not belonging to the station with three or four calves occasionally not belonging to the station?—There are plenty of strangers.
774. How many calves had they?—One.
775. Two?—Only one I see.
776. Do you know the meaning of "duffing;" do you think any of the station calves have been duffed at any time?—No, I do not think so.
777. But the run is overrun with strangers?—Yes.
778. Does that drive your cattle into the ranges?—Yes.
779. That gives the horses more time and trouble?—Yes, drives them away.
780. If you were away at Mr. Fisher's, how would you have your children taught when they were away. Can your wife read and write?—No; I would try and put them into a school.
781. Is there a school at Mr. Fisher's?—Yes. There are farms right round, and there is a school two or three miles away.

The witness withdrew.

Martin Simpson (an aboriginal from the Coranderrk Station) examined.

782. How long have you been at Coranderrk?—Twelve years.
783. Can you read and write?—I can read a little.
784. Cannot write?—No, not very well.
785. Where did you come from—your part of the country?—Jim Crow.
786. What brought you to Coranderrk; did you come of your own accord?—Mr. Green brought me there.
787. Did he persuade you to come?—He did not persuade me to come. I came of my own accord.
788. How old were you when you came in?—I have no idea.
789. Do you know how old you are now?—I am supposed to be about twenty-two.
790. Then you must have been about ten when you came in?—I was a boy then, but I have no idea how old I was then.
791. You had no whiskers then?—No, I had no whiskers then.
792. Were you living at the station at Jim Crow?—Yes, Mr. Parker's.
793. Who were you living with there—had you any parents there?—Yes, I had parents there, at Mr. Parker's. They were there for a day or two, and then they came to Castlemaine.
794. Did they come with you to Coranderrk?—Yes, they did.
795. Did they remain at Coranderrk?—Yes, for a while; and then they went back.
796. Why did not you go with them?—Mother and father said they had best leave me there at the school.
797. It was with their consent?—Yes; I did go to school there when I was a boy, for a time.
798. Do you ever read of a night now?—Yes.
799. You have not forgotten how to read?—Oh, no.
800. Do you read the newspaper?—I can read the newspaper.
801. Are you married?—Yes.
802. Have you got any children?—No.

Martin Simpson,
continued,
22nd May 1877.

803. What were you sent down here to tell us—you were chosen by the natives up there?—
Principally—we had a meeting up there—that all were satisfied with the station; with the management of the station; and we said we were all satisfied with the management of the station and Mr. Halliday.
804. Was that the opinion of the meeting or just your opinion?—It was most of us.
805. Well, now you are satisfied with the station and Mr. Halliday; but when he came first you were not satisfied, and wanted Mr. Green back?—That was those that laid the complaint; those that were for Mr. Green at that time.
806. How many of them?—There was Bob Wanding.
807. Was he at that meeting the other day?—Yes, he was there.
808. Many others there?—Yes.
809. It was a large meeting?—Yes.
810. Most of them there?—Yes, we collected every one that was there; every man on the station attended, only Willie Parker, and he happened to be in the bush.
811. Supposing there were a station like Coranderrk, managed in the same way, down on the Murray, and you had the offer of going to it: would you prefer stopping at Coranderrk?—I should think I would rather stop at Coranderrk.
812. You have got fond of it now?—Yes.
813. You do not think it is too cold for blacks?—Certainly it is very cold in winter time; because I should think if we had proper good buildings we should be far more comfortable than now.
814. And not mind the cold so much?—No.
815. You do not like the cold weather?—No.
816. You prefer warm?—I like warm.
817. You have never been down the Murray?—For a month or two.
818. Did you like it?—It seems very dry down that part of the country.
819. Are you a teetotaler?—Yes.
820. Are there many on the station teetotalers?—Not so very many.
821. Are there very many the other way?—Yes.
822. Are there many that you think do get drunk—do you see many drunk?—There were two or three drunk at the station.
823. How long ago; lately?—Soon after the hop-picking.
824. You have been there twelve years; there is a few of them that drink now?—Yes.
825. When you first went there as a boy, was there much drinking then—more than now?—I dare say it is just the same as it was at first.
826. There has never been very much drinking?—No.
827. Are they well behaved in the camp?—I think they seem to be better behaved now than they were once.
828. And contented and orderly?—Yes.
829. And peaceful; no quarrelling?—No, no quarrelling.
830. Who was schoolmaster there when you first went there as a boy?—Mr. Lang.
831. Can you do any arithmetic, and work out a sum?—Yes, I could work out a sum, multiplication. I could not do very well now.
832. Why have you not kept it up?—Well, soon after we were gone up a little bit we were taken out for work.—[*The witness was requested to read, but could only make out a few words.*]—I could read anything in the Second Book very well, or the Third. I might stick at the long words.
833. Supposing you were getting wages, you can calculate your wages?—Yes.
834. If you had a shilling a day, how much would you have at the end of the week?—That would be only six bob.
835. At the end of the month, four weeks, how many “bob”?—[*After thinking for some time*]—Twelve. No, twenty-four.
836. Before you came in you were a little boy; have you ever been working out on your own hook for any one?—No, I have not done any work on my own hook.
837. Would you like to go out, or would you rather stop on the station and get what you are getting?—I would rather stop on the station. There is another complaint that they made up there—that is the only one complaint that I was to lay down here—that we do not get sufficient meat.
838. How much meat are you getting?—Each working man gets 6 lbs. a week.
839. Are they not all looking pretty fat on it?—[*The witness laughed.*]
840. How many rations do you get?—Four rations for two boys and my wife.
841. How old are your boys?—One is nineteen and the other fourteen. They are not my own children, one is my wife's brother.
842. You get a holiday on Saturday afternoons to do what you like, and after five o'clock on week days you can do what you please?—Yes.
843. Is there anything to prevent your going out at those times and getting wallaby and 'possum, and fish and game—ducks, and those things. Could not you do that if you want more meat?—Yes, but if you go out a whole day you might not get anything.
844. How much meat would you like?—A couple of pounds more in the week.
845. That would make 8 lbs. in the week?—Yes.
846. You get 6 lbs. How much does your wife get?—I get 6 lbs. of meat in the week.
847. How much does a woman get?—She gets 6 lbs., just the same as the men.
848. And how much the boys?—All over seven get 6 lbs. each, under that 3 lbs.
849. How much flour do you get?—37 lbs. a week, and 16 oz. of tea for myself, wife, and two young men.
850. Do you eat all your flour, or could you do with less?—I go on very well with the flour. I can keep enough to last me the week.
851. But not the meat?—But not the meat.
852. Do those boys work all day?—Yes.
853. In the hop field?—Not just now; we are getting poles just now,
854. Do you get a shilling a day now?—Yes.

855. Whether you work or not?—No, I have to work ; it is according to the poles.
 856. Some go out job working?—Some go out job working.
 857. And then they are not paid wages out?—No.
 858. How much can you get for cutting poles?—Two shillings a hundred.
 859. How many a day can you cut?—We could cut a hundred.
 860. Stringy-bark?—No, wattle.
 861. You get beef and mutton change about?—We did at hop-picking time, but not just now.
 862. What are you getting now?—Beef.
 863. Is there anything else you wish to say to the Commission?—There is nothing else I could think of, only the houses—they might be better.
 864. About the houses. Supposing a house is made comfortable, made nice and dry, could not the blacks that live in the other houses try and make their houses more comfortable, and keep them dry now?—I can see no way of making them comfortable unless they get floor-boarded.
 865. But outside the hut the blacks have heaped up the earth, keeping the air out ; they bank up the earth all round the ground plate. Have you seen that?—I have seen one—the hut you have been in.
 866. If the blacks were given the stuff now, do you think they could put up their own huts?—Yes, they could put up their own huts.
 867. And do it properly?—Yes ; and I was told, if there was anything asked about that, to tell you what I have—that they wanted them more comfortable.

The witness withdrew.

Tommy Farmer (an aboriginal from Coranderrk Station) examined.

Tommy Farmer,
22nd May 1877.

868. How long have you been in Coranderrk?—Thirteen years.
 869. What were you before you came there?—Brought by Mr. Green.
 870. When you say "brought," do you mean that he asked you to come, or carried you on his back; did he make you come?—Well, Mr. Green went over to where we used to be—Franklinford, on the Jim Crow. He went over there to the Colac station, and there were eight or nine of us, women and all ; and those others went away back, and they wanted me to go back ; but I said I will stop till I can see how the station stands ; if the station will satisfy me, I will stop.
 871. And the station did satisfy you?—Yes.
 872. Are you a married man?—Yes.
 873. Have you any family?—No ; I lost two or three children.
 874. At Coranderrk?—I lost three at Coranderrk.
 875. Were you married when you came to Coranderrk?—I married at Coranderrk.
 876. How old are you now?—It is over fifty.
 877. Do you know how old you were when you came to Coranderrk. Had you any whiskers?—Not so grey. I had the whiskers then, but not grey.
 878. How was it you were not married at Jim Crow?—I was married at Jim Crow, and my wife died at the Castlemaine Hospital.
 879. Had you any children at Jim Crow?—I had two children that died, my first wife's.
 880. Was Mr. Parker's station given up before you came to Coranderrk?—I believe a good bit before that it was given up.
 881. How did you get your living?—I had a piece of ground what I got from Government in Franklinford, and I fenced it and that, and I had no tools to start with.
 882. No plough?—I ploughed it myself.
 883. How did you get a plough?—I borrowed a plough from several friends.
 884. How long had you been living on this piece of ground?—I believe I may say six years.
 885. Did you support yourself?—Well, I used to keep myself.
 886. By the crops?—Yes.
 887. What did you get?—Potatoes and wheat. The wheat that I grew I took to the Castlemaine mill and ground it to flour.
 888. And sell some?—Yes, and sell some.
 889. And keep yourself?—Yes, I did keep myself ; but a great number of my own people came and camped round me and eat me out.
 890. If you had not been eaten out by your own people, could you have kept yourself?—I believe I could, if they had not camped there. It was the same as the Government feeding them ; they used to be with me.
 891. Was that the reason you went with Mr. Green to Coranderrk?—Well, this piece of ground I had I lose all my team, my bullocks. I lent it to Mr. Parker, and they took the lot of bullocks I had, and lose nearly all my bullocks.
 892. How did they lose them ; did they die or stray?—Two died and another one I lose.
 893. And that ruined you?—That broke me down, and I could not get on.
 894. Would you like to go and live on your own account now ; earn your own bread by wages from somebody?—From the Government?
 895. From anywhere. Or would you rather stop where you are, and go and do what you were doing before?—I do not believe in that ; I have been too long living with the white people. I used to live with the white people when I was a boy, and I was brought up by the white people.
 896. Would not you like to go on a farm, and have a farm of your own?—Not on Coranderrk side.
 897. Why?—That will not grow me wheat, and wheat is a valuable thing to grow bread.
 898. Where would you like to go to grow wheat?—I cannot say.
 899. Supposing there was a station formed on the Murray like the one at Coranderrk, and you had your choice of going there or staying at Coranderrk, which would you do?—I would sooner stick at Coranderrk.
 900. You like Coranderrk?—We are used to Coranderrk ; and it is rather hot in other parts, the climate is rather warm for some people.
 901. And some of the natives cannot stand heat?—Some of them cannot stand heat.
 902. And some do not like the cold?—They are not used to it.
 903. Where did you ever see a native that cannot stand heat?—Well, I could not stand it myself.

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904. Where did you try it?—In my part. It is nearly as bad as the Murray side.
905. How long were you at Mr. Parker's place?—Oh! that was ever since I was a boy.
906. You do not like the heat?—No.
907. You were sent down here by the blacks; what have you got to tell us?—We did come down to say about that we are satisfied with the manager. We have—and, as far as we understand, the people of Coranderrk says that we are satisfied with what manager we have. "What more can we want?" they says.
908. Do you think that is the opinion of most of the people at Coranderrk?—That is what we heard from most of the people.
909. And no one said anything contrary?—Well, there was some fell back again according to Mr. Green.
910. Why did they like Mr. Green better?—That I cannot tell you.
911. Have you not got some idea of what you think is the reason?—Well, I ought to know a little about it. Well, that is why we are satisfied, because we are getting more clothing from this manager.
912. More than Mr. Green gave you?—Yes.
913. Better clothing?—Better clothing.
914. And more food than you used to get?—We are getting more food than we used to get; only the thing is we are short of meat, according to when we work in the hop ground, and so on like that.
915. Have you heard any complaints about the children not getting well taught at the school?—No; but what we have seen ourselves, they are better as it is.
916. Than it used to be?—Well they are in school, and well looked after, I believe.
917. Do you think the parents, are they well satisfied?—Yes; because the children are well clothed and kept clean.
918. And taught well?—Yes.
919. Have you heard any complaints either about when any one is sick not being properly attended?—Not lately.
920. Did you hear that before?—Well, there was a meeting there, but I was not in it.
921. You have been thirteen years there. How long ago was it that there were some complaints that they were not treated properly when they were sick; who was manager then?—Mr. Halliday was manager then, I believe.
922. Just after he came?—Yes.
923. Mr. Halliday has altered it now?—Yes, I think so.
924. You say you were managing for yourself, and had a farm. Do you think that blackfellow, generally, are able—if they were given a farm to-morrow, could they manage their own money and business properly. Do they understand enough?—If they had their own farm?
925. Yes, or would they be cheated by the white men?—That is the worst of it.
926. Do you think they would be cheated?—I think so. That is, we have got no proper understanding how to manage this business.
927. You think the white men would take advantage of you in the dealing?—The white?
928. You want to be helped?—Yes.
929. Where about is your hut—in the main street?—Yes.
930. Which side of it, the same side as Mr. Halliday's or the other?—The same side as Mr. Halliday's. The lower part of the building goes down to the house.
931. Is the floor damp?—Yes.
932. No boards?—No.
933. Supposing the hut was boarded, would you try and keep it dry?—I would be very glad.
934. You would not go and put the earth all round the ground plate. That is what makes it damp?—Earth is what makes it damp. I want a little high block.
935. To let the air go under?—Yes.
936. Do you think that if they were made dry the blacks would try and keep them dry, and not put that earth round them?—Yes, I understand now what you mean.
937. You see it is a bad thing to put the earth up as you used to do in olden times?—Yes.
938. Is there anything else you want to tell us now?—Well, there is nothing else to say except what I said.

The witness withdrew.

Mr. Hugh Hamilton Halliday examined.

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939. You are Superintendent at Coranderrk?—Yes.
940. When were you appointed?—On the 28th March 1876, and I have been in charge since.
941. You sent in a full report on those questions submitted to you?—I have.
942. Do you wish to add anything else to that?—Nothing at present.
943. You have reported in that how the blacks on that station are conducting themselves well under your management?—I confined myself to the questions; I do not know whether that was one.
944. How are they behaving, as a rule; are they amenable to discipline?—Yes, they are.
945. Easily managed?—As a rule, yes, they are easily managed.
946. Grateful for kindness?—They are.
947. As a rule, are they well behaved. Are there many fond of drinking?—Drinking is confined to a few on the station. I made out a list of the number of cases of drunkenness that occurred during the last fourteen months. There are about twenty-nine adults on the station that I never saw the signs of drink on since I was there. I should say drinking was confined to about seven or eight individuals. I never knew but one woman to be drunk on the station, about a week after I went.
948. Is she well behaved now?—Yes, ever since.
949. How do they get the drink?—I believe they get boys in Healesville to go into public-houses and buy it for them.
950. They do not get it themselves?—No.
951. It is not supplied to them personally?—I applied for a summons for a hawker who gave drink to them on the day of the election, the 11th of May. I wrote to the Clerk of Petty Sessions for the summons. I questioned the natives where they got it, and they told me.
952. Do you find the natives truthful when you speak to them?—Yes.
953. When the natives at Coranderrk do work they are paid for work?—Yes.

954. What wages do they have?—Twopence farthing an hour.
955. At whatever work they do. Occasionally they work at piece-work? At hop-picking they get 3d. a bushel, and they earn, for four weeks in the year, about 15s. to 20s. a week, besides what they may earn at shearing time.
956. Do they get rations in addition?—Yes, rations and clothing for themselves and family.
957. What are the rations?—A man, 10 lbs. of flour, 6 lbs. of fresh meat, 4 ozs. of tea, 2 lbs. of sugar, a couple of pannikins of rice for the family, and a couple of pannikins of oatmeal if they require it.
958. That is for each man?—Each man gets 10 lbs. of flour, 6 lbs. of fresh meat, 4 ozs. of tea, and 2 lbs. of sugar.
959. Does a woman get the full?—7 lbs. of flour, 6 lbs. of fresh meat, 4 ozs. of tea, and 2 lbs. of sugar, besides oatmeal and rice as much as they want.
960. The children get half rations?—Yes, all under seven.
961. Is that sufficient for them?—Yes; I think so.
962. You have not heard any complaints?—No; when I first went there, adults had only 7 lbs. of flour, and it was considered insufficient, and increased to 10 lbs. for working men.
963. Neither as to flour or meat do they complain?—The meat ration they consider insufficient.
964. Do you think it insufficient?—No; I think it is quite sufficient. When we kill station cattle they generally get 1 or 2 lbs. extra weight, if the beast is over 4 cwt.
965. Do they supplement their meat ration by buying meat in the neighborhood?—Yes, and by fishing and hunting.
966. And now they can buy from the butcher?—Occasionally they do buy from the butcher.
967. Have they not some spare time during the week in which they can hunt?—They have every Saturday.
968. Independently of those rations?—Yes.
969. Do they take advantage of that?—Yes, they do, and on moonlight nights.
970. Is their game all that they can eat?—Yes; wallaby, 'possums, and wombats.
971. And fish in the creek?—Plenty.
972. How is the school progressing?—Under Mr. Dean's management, I think it is progressing favorably. I have noticed an improvement since he has come there.
973. Are they attached to him?—I think so; I have heard no complaints, and the average attendance is very good. I am in the habit of going into the school and examining the scholars. The full number of the pupils is forty-five, and the average forty-one.
974. Are the girls boarded in that house well behaved girls?—Yes.
975. Nothing to complain of?—Nothing whatever. They do what they are told. They are very good working girls.
976. Make their own clothes?—Yes; they are cut out for them, and they sew them.
977. Is the work of the schoolroom, the culinary work, done by them?—Entirely.
978. And are they good cooks?—Very good; they can bake well.
979. Would they be able to go out and take a situation as domestic servant?—I believe they would, that is some of the older ones.
980. Do you think it would be desirable to send them out in that capacity?—There are twenty children altogether, but there are only five large girls.
981. I mean the principles; from what you have seen of them, their habits and nature, do you think that they could be trusted out in domestic service, that it would be safe to engage them out?—They would require to be in very good service.
982. Some care should be exercised as to the persons who should be allowed to engage them?—Yes, clergymen for instance.

The witness withdrew.

Adjourned to to-morrow, at Four o'clock.

The witness subsequently stated by letter that there are several aborigines at Coranderrk who he considers should be licensed out to responsible people, being well able to earn their own living.

WEDNESDAY, 23RD MAY 1877.

Present:

His Honor Sir W. F. STAWELL, in the Chair;

G. W. Rusden, Esq.,

F. R. Godfrey, Esq.

A. W. Howitt, Esq., P.M.,

The Rev. F. A. Hagenauer examined.

983. We wish to have the benefit of your long experience in managing the aborigines, and any suggestions you wish to offer?—I shall be most happy.

984. In reference to management or conduct of the stations or any matter, and then we will ask you any questions? I understand. I propose to make a statement first of all. I thought it would be more advisable in the first instance to answer the printed questions. The first question is this—"What is your opinion of Ramahyuck as a place for an aboriginal station?" "In my opinion the Ramahyuck station is admirably adapted as a residence for aborigines. 1. As a sanitary station? From past experience I am able to state that no better place could be found in a sanitary point of view." You have inspected the station yourselves; since the establishment we have never had any great illness among the aborigines; they are very happy and are all very healthy. Different diseases have been about in the district, such as scarlet fever and measles, and not one of our natives have had them though the measles were within two miles of the place. The rate of deaths is two or three a year, so that rather an increase is taking place than a decrease. The next question is about the stations in respect to temptations, and I am happy to say that there are no such temptations to our black people. In days gone by they used to be given to drink, but all

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the settled aborigines on the place have given it up. There are only two or three who take to it still. The first means I used was to see the publicans themselves and speak to them in a kind way and to show it was not wise to give them drink, and then if they still supplied them I would give notice to the police. In regard to the blacks I used religious and moral influence over them, showing them how foolish it was; and we have succeeded so far that, with the exception of those wandering ones, there is no drinking, and I can let them go to any place and they will not take intoxicating drinks. I have said here "the inmates of Ramahyuck are no longer exposed to temptations by reason of its proximity to the surrounding white population." I do not believe, on the whole, the other mission stations can do much against the influence of drink except by moral and religious influence. It is far better to train the natives themselves to resist the temptations, and that that can be done is proved by my place. The natives there were said to be the worst in that country, and they have given it up. "2. Can you make any suggestions for improvement of its management or as to maintenance of discipline at aboriginal stations?" "The patriarchal system carried out hitherto has answered satisfactorily, but it might be desirable for the future to have some simple rules for the management, and scales to regulate the supplies, which could likewise be applied to the maintenance of discipline." I believe the patriarchal system carried out hitherto is the only way to deal with them. I do not think that even a law passed would settle the point—the influence of the managers must be the thing which keeps discipline and order; of course I think it would be advisable that either through the Aboriginal Board or through this Commission, or perhaps through the Parliament, some rules might be laid down for the guidance of both parties, the managers as well as the natives themselves. These rules ought to be very simple: for example, in handing over the Government supplies they would have to know what is their quantity they receive every day. In regard to provision the scales ought to be clearly defined, both for the natives and the managers, so that there could be no misunderstanding, and also who is to give it out. I would suggest that sick among the people, and old people and children, should be wholly supported from the income of stations, or from the Government if that is not sufficient. Our able-bodied men and women do work for their Government grant, or for the income of the station. A very simple rule can be easily laid down, as I have done so for many years—men to work a certain amount for the Government provision. There is a rule in the old regulations of 1860, which I suggested then, and have acted upon that, that it is not expected able-bodied men to be supported by the State wholly, but to endeavor to earn their own living on the station or elsewhere. If that rule is laid down, men settled on the station with comfortable homes must do for that provision and clothes a certain amount of labor, and then, besides, to be paid according to their labor, and also women and youths. Our rules at the different stations are all the same. The women are expected to help in sewing, instead of getting the made clothes from the Government. We get the materials and work them up; each woman is supposed to do a certain amount of the clothes besides keeping her house, say making a shirt or pair of trousers for her children or other children, and this gives them the satisfaction of thinking, "We are not living here as paupers;" they do it in a willing and cheerful way, and when Saturday comes they bring their work and know they have earned their living. I think it advisable to have some simple rules drawn up. It may happen that a drunken man may complain that he did not receive his full amount when he thought he ought, and this leads to correspondence. Only about a week ago a case occurred. A man was employed with my consent at a neighboring place for a fortnight. He earned a pound a week, and spent all that money in the forenoon of one day at Bairnsdale, and got drunk, and was put in gaol. On being let out he came to the station to get his provision, and I said I would give it to him if he worked to-morrow, and when the morrow came he did not, and I refused to give the provision. The man walked off and complained to one of the local guardians at Sale, who wrote a most impertinent letter to me, claiming the right to direct me to supply the man with all the necessary things that the Government provided for the natives, and stating that he was communicating the facts to the Royal Commission. If rules were laid down such cases could not happen. Those rules will greatly help in carrying on the discipline. We have no other means but the withholding of payment. We should then have the power to enforce discipline by withholding the reward if a man be lazy. That is the only case where disobedience will happen. I cannot complain in my own case, but on some of the other stations I believe the natives join together and annoy the manager by threats as to what will be done to him. Now my people and others said in the case I have just referred to—"If that man gets the provisions by the instructions of the local guardian we do not see any reason why we should work." The discipline would of course be put down in those rules, and I should be happy at any time to assist in drawing up a set of rules if the Aboriginal Board wish it. The next question is—"Do you think it desirable to pay for the labor of the aborigines?" I say, "I think it very desirable to pay according to their labor if funds are available." If we want to raise these men to live on their own intelligence and labor we ought to pay them. I have done so from the very first on a small scale. For the little labor I wished they got a small payment, and now we have a little income from the station. They are paid the best we can; but not yet according to the value of their labor, because the means have not yet been forthcoming. Nevertheless the question is easily answered—that they ought to be paid. Some of my men for a time, when we had not a sufficient income, did not take Government supplies. Letters came from the late Board stating there were no funds, so we threw the matter out altogether, and lived on their own income. For the future, I do think it is very desirable that they should be paid. The next question is—"If so, in what manner; whether by money alone, or by money and rations and goods, and at what rates or prices?" Before answering that I have to put a question myself—where would the funds come for paying that labor, from a Government vote, or by putting the stations in sufficiently good working order?—but they ought to be paid.

985. The latter should be aimed at?—Then my answer is "In a few cases it may be of advantage to pay by money alone, but in most cases by money, rations, and goods at current rates and prices." I had three or four families who for a time had a sufficient income and supplied themselves. I kept a sufficient quantity of stores myself, and always do so. I got them from a wholesale store in Melbourne. The natives felt quite happy in supplying themselves. They bought their chests of tea and bags of flour and sugar, and were quite contented with it. But that would be only in a few cases in the present state of the aborigines; with the others it would be needful to pay by money and by rations and goods. I do not know whether it would not be desirable to state clearly to them the value of the goods they get, because the old idea amongst them was—"The Government gives us these goods, and we can do with them what we like." In many cases they would take the clothes and sell them, though this has not happened in later years on the stations

I am acquainted with, and not at all on my place. They ought to be made to fully know the value of the goods they would receive as payment for their labor besides their rations and clothes. That could be put in the rules. But we must pay them a little for their labor in money, and the more they rise in civilization the more they need comforts in their homes. On the whole, I find they use the money very well. Of course the amount to be fixed need not begin high. I pay from 1s. 6d. a week up to 10s. a week, according to the labor done. One of my young men (Donald Cameron) is so capable that he virtually manages the station in my absence. He sends me all the letters and looks after all the stores. I can with confidence leave the whole in his hands. Now such a man as that deserves a higher payment than one who only goes on for two or three hours, and perhaps will not work even then. The sick and infirm should of course not be included in that rule. The next question is—"Do you think it advisable that rations and goods should be purchased on the station, and a store kept for that purpose; and, if goods, of what kinds should a supply be kept?" I say, "I think it advisable that goods and rations could be purchased on the station by those who receive wages, but the aged, infirm, and children should be supplied free." But to have a general store, and to supply all, I am afraid we would come in some difficulty yet—that is for all, because the sick and the others would have to get it for nothing, and those who work would justly complain—"You give us the money, and then afterwards make us give it back by buying things from you." The aboriginal mind works in that way. He says, "I take the money in my pocket, and it is mine." I have had this experience with some when I have paid them and expected them to buy stores; they would not do so. They said they had earned the money and could do what they liked with it, and that is quite right; but the money would be spent foolishly. How to meet the difficulty I cannot at present see. I do not see how those who receive very small wages could purchase sufficient rations with the money. At the same time I believe thoroughly in having a store. For years past I have done so, getting clothes and goods wholesale from Melbourne, and the natives can see my accounts and the prices paid for the things, and know that there is no profit gained by it, and they are glad to buy. At all the stations I believe that it could be arranged and would be a great advantage. The next is—"Would it be practicable to pay to the managers of the stations the wages earned by aborigines instead of to the aborigines themselves, and thus encourage a resort to the stations for what they want, instead of squandering their money elsewhere?" I say, "This would be a good plan, but I do not think that it can be carried out all through. As regards Ramahyuck, it does seldom happen that blacks are working away from the station." If we have to deal with good men employing the aborigines, we will receive the money the same day. A neighbor of mine employs a young man who has about £30 in the bank at the present time. I make it a rule that after they have passed the standard of education any young man who wants to settle should provide for himself. For the one I have referred to, I am going to buy building materials for his own cottage; and the gentleman with whom he is will gladly hand over the money, but many will not do that, and there is no law to force them, and they say, "we are not obliged to." Besides it is no satisfaction to the blacks except they are induced to agree to the money being handed over, and in many cases it happens that the man employed has drawn out all his wages before reckoning-day comes. That is the general experience with the natives.

986. And at the end they still think they have the money coming in?—Precisely so; that is the general experience. What is suggested in the question would no doubt be a good plan, but I am afraid it is not practicable. At Ramahyuck it seldom happens they want to leave to work away, the reason being that they see they earn more at the station with the rations and money, and have all the comforts of a home. I can make no further suggestions on this head; and would only add that I think if it were made law and then found that it could not be carried out it would be worse than not having a law at all. "Do you think it advisable to board out orphan children?"—No; the reasons are, of course, many. Several cases have shown that the children do not prosper away from the stations. Colonel Anderson had a little boy, who for a little while was a pet in the house; but he grew disobedient, and after a time they could do nothing with him. He was a very wild child. His parents had been shot in Queensland, where he was rescued. I was asked to receive the boy, and he is now getting on very nicely in every respect; and the arrangement is that after he has passed the standard he is to be given back again; and no doubt he will go on very well after that. Now, if such a child as that were to be boarded out I do not think you would find many people take sufficient interest in the child; it is almost unnatural. In this case the greatest attention was paid to him, but he was like a fish out of water, and needed influence such as is to be met with only on the station. I know several cases of girls. Captain Phillips, a squatter in the western district, had one. The child was prospering very well; got a good education, and was in every way looked upon as a child of the family, but when she came to a certain age—thirteen or fourteen—the black nature got so strong in her that her mistress was glad to get her to my place out of temptation, away from the men on their station. I could give many other similar instances. Another reason is that if the stations are to be kept up, we must have a boarding-house for the children, and it would not be more expensive to keep them there than anywhere else. The next question is, "Do you think it desirable to encourage the aborigines to hire their labor out to employers in the country, either for long or short terms?" My answer is, "Past experience has shown that, with very few exceptions, hiring out to employers has rather been injurious to their moral and physical condition than otherwise, for which reason I do not think it is desirable." I would not say they shall not be hired out. I would just leave it an open question. Some good and able men and even women at times may do very well. It depends to which place they go; but on the whole I do not think it a good plan. They would just wander about, change their masters frequently, and at last return to their old state. At certain times their labor may be very valuable. Down our way at hop-picking, for instance, it would be a great benefit, and perhaps also during the harvest. The next printed question is, "Having regard to the disposition and habits of the aborigines, do you think it desirable that the youths should be apprenticed to learn trades or occupations?" Now, my opinion on this I have already given to the Aboriginal Board, and it is this, that "the Aboriginal Board ought to have the power, in cases where youths wish to leave the stations, to apprentice them to a trade or occupation." The Board of course to authorize their managers to take action when any case presented itself; but it would only be needed in very exceptional cases—only perhaps where a boy happens to be very lazy or dissatisfied on the station. For a time when they have left school they think they must be men and see the world, and if one sets his mind on leaving the station we have no power to keep him. Then it would be a better plan for the Board to have the power to apprentice them to farmers or any other business. Such a case, however, would only happen once; when they see they are to remain at a place, a second

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case of going away will not occur. The next question is, "Do you think it desirable to encourage handicrafts at the stations, and of what kinds?" I must say I think it is rather early to think of that. "I do not think that the time has come for doing it, but it may be kept in view for the future." On all our stations—Lake Tyers, Ebenezer, and Ramahyuck—we have very few youths. At my place there are only six or eight, and if we want to make the station self-supporting we must have young hands to do the work. I would not prevent one going if he likes to go, but they generally like to remain, and with hops or arrow-root or olive when it comes we must have hands to do it, and it is just these young men who want to settle by and bye that we want. I do not think you would get one to shoe-making. Carpentering or blacksmithing is good, but I think it would be injurious to take a tradesman to the stations to teach them or to send them out to learn. I speak of the mission stations. The missionaries generally know a little of every trade. You have seen the buildings at my place. They do that as far as it goes—the carpentering and all that sort of work can be learned from the missionaries; but to keep it in view for the future I do think would be desirable. The next question is, "Should the main object of a station be to train the aborigines to earn their living abroad or to form self-supporting communities on each station." The answer is very easy—that "the main object should be to form self-supporting communities."

987. For all future time?—I do not know that it should be as long as the world lasts; but we have only to deal with the generations we have. There may not be many following generations. I fancy that would be the only good way to let them have a home now, and to make those places self-supporting instead of scattering them about. Their moral status and their self-control is not strong enough for scattering them abroad yet—it may be in the future, but it cannot be done now—they would fall back into their old state. The next question is—"Have you any suggestions to make as to the treatment of the aborigines?" I answer, "A kind, firm, just, and business-like treatment ought to be carried out." All those can be combined together very easily. We all know you cannot force a black man to do anything; he needs coaxing, and when it is done it must be done in a business-like way, pointing out the advantages, such as—"If you leave your home you will fall into temptations or fall into evil hands, you will be better off at home." Just use persuasion of that sort, but if any plans are adopted they must be justly carried out. The last question is, "Can you give any information as to the aborigines who are not at the stations, the number in your district, their condition, and mode of obtaining a livelihood; and can you make any suggestions for the amelioration of their condition?" I can only answer for my place, and I am happy to say, "There are only few who are occasionally absent from the station, but when away they live mostly by begging which could easily be stopped by the police. There are only about four or five who absent themselves from my station. They will wander away sometimes, though they have the station as their home. Two or three of them are married and of course their wives follow them; and the wives go about begging and supply the men with food; and if they can earn a shilling here and there they spend it in drink."

988. Those are persons who are never on the station?—Oh, yes, they come for a time, perhaps for a fortnight at a time. Now that begging I believe could very easily be stopped by the police if they were to be punished for begging when it is known that they can be supplied at the station. I have adopted this mode: the moment one left I wrote to the police inspector that a man or woman had gone with the evident intention of begging, and this has answered very well. As to the drinking difficulties I hardly know what to suggest. I have gone to the publicans and pointed out to them that it was folly to supply the aboriginals with drink; and I spoke to the aborigines as a whole about the folly of it, and all with the exception of the few I have mentioned do not drink anymore; but how to punish them I do not know. I fancy the aborigines ought to be punished too. If they want to enjoy all the privileges of white men, they ought to know that if they continue drinking their punishment will be increased. They laugh at being put in the lock-up for a day. I remember one time it happened twice with a man. He behaved rather in a bold way with the policeman, and he got a month in gaol, and was employed to split firewood, and the man told me it was the worst time he ever had—to go in there and split firewood—he would never drink again. Such a cure would be an immense benefit. That finishes the questions. The first general remark I have to make is in relation to the education of the children. I believe that the State school system is the best. From the very first I have advocated that. I met with great opposition from certain quarters, but I went at the time to Mr. Higinbotham, the Attorney-General, and he said, if the law prevents you from doing it, I will move an amendment in the House that you shall be put in the way of enjoying the same benefits as all the people in the country. After that the matter was put right by the Education Department, and the result has shown that the black children can be educated like any other children. I do not say you will get the highest percentage, though we did for several years. I have two reasons for wishing that the native schools be in the enjoyment of the State school system. The first is, we get the benefit of the public inspector regularly, who comes and examines the children in the way it ought to be done. That relieves the managers, or the general inspector, or the Aboriginal Board, of a very great responsibility. Secondly, the teacher, knowing he has to give an account to the Education Department, will look out to do his duty, and receive his remuneration from the State. I do not think that the secular education from the State will in any way clash with the religious element on the station. It does not. We have the children all day, and we have sufficient time to teach religion and morals, and philosophy if necessary. This I can say from experience: if the stations under my superintendence had only station schools, without the State inspector coming, I would find a great difficulty. Sometimes I would have to examine the schools, and to examine the teacher, which would be unpleasant sometimes, if he wants to go his own way. In every way I believe it is most judicious to have it under State inspection. The benefit I have received has been very great. Of course there was never any interference in the religious element by anybody—we can teach as much as we like. At present Lake Tyers is a capitation school; that will cease at the end of the year, and steps will have to be taken as to what is to be done in future by the committee. There is another question which I think a very difficult one, which should, if possible, be settled—if the position between the missionaries and their committees and the State could be defined. There is of course no definition in any way. Originally the thing commenced in this way:—We Moravian missionaries came out to the colony, and in 1858 a parliamentary committee sat, and I gave evidence then; but the question was never raised what is the difference between the State, or what are the functions of the State and of the missionaries. The fact is the State did not take any interest except to help us a bit. All we received was a grant of land, and a little provision, not sufficient. There were several enquiries after that, up till 1860, when I got a petition presented to Parliament, which was favorably received,

and, after several conferences, the plan was adopted, that a board should be appointed in Melbourne, and district boards all over the colony, and afterwards correspondents took the places of local boards; yet neither the commission from the Governor nor the Aboriginal Board ever defined our position. At this time I received a grant of money by a vote in Parliament; and when the Treasurer gave me the cheque, I said, "Well, I am very thankful, but I rather feel awkward with that money, and there is not a soul to whom I am responsible." Afterwards, talking the matter over, he said if I got trustees appointed for the land in the Wimmera district, we might fall back on the trustees. Mr. Service said that was the best plan, and the trustees were appointed several days after; and I handed the cheque to them. Now this reserve was given to the Moravian mission. I know nothing about the law, but it was advertised in the *Gazette* as a grant to the Moravian mission, in trust, and it still is in trust. When the land was stocked with sheep, the State never gave a penny to it. Subscriptions were collected from all parts of the world; and the income from the sheep is handed over to the aborigines. We have agreed well yet; but it may come to pass that the State may claim the whole property some day, and I think it very advisable that some provision should be made in this case. In Gippsland again, I was asked, in 1863, to establish that station. I went there. Mr. Duffy was Commissioner of Lands, and refused to give any land. A select committee was appointed, and I was examined. Mr. Heales was chairman, and the committee agreed that the reserve should be given; and the understanding was that the State allowed us to live on the land, to build houses, to fence, and to stock it, but to account to the State for it; and should the land be taken up by the State at any time, the State would remunerate us; but I never got a document about it. In later years a good deal of money has been spent on fencing—I have the accounts—and the old members of the Aboriginal Board were quite agreeable to pay for the work, but they had no funds. Other stations got fresh meat for the aborigines; and I stated to the secretary of the Board that if he would give me the money, instead of buying butchers' meat, I would very shortly raise a small stock on the station. Instead of buying meat, he sent a small amount, but not enough to pay for all that was put on the station. I keep accounts of everything what is my own or the blacks; but there ought to be some understanding; and it ought all to be in the hands of the Aboriginal Board. I do honestly hope that I may get refunded for the boundary fence for two paddocks, which I myself put up at the expense of the mission. The church committee, thinking that the property belonged to them, arranged for the work—fencing to cost £800—but I had to sign the bill of agreement. A little while after the district surveyor wrote and told me that I was in a great difficulty—that I had no security; and that if I went on there was no claim for the £800 except on myself. So I went to the Commissioner of Lands, and he said he hoped I was not a fool to go and erect fences which would not be mine, as no church had any claim on the land. As there was then a possibility of the land being selected, the work was stopped; but there were already two paddocks fenced, and the bill was in my name, and in the course of years I had to pay it; but I hope to be refunded some day.

989. How much did that amount to?—The one was £154 and £50 interest, and the other was about £150 or £160. Of course I have the receipts of the bills.

990. Were those accounts paid out of the mission money?—No; out of my own salary. My committee threw it up, and though rightly I could have claimed the money, I did not want to fall out with my committee, in which case I would have run the risk of losing the salary.

991. I understood you to say that those paddocks were fenced and let?—They were not let; it was proposed, but it was never carried out, owing to what was done. The next thing is about the buildings on the stations—of course the State has given to my place a little. They have assisted in the erection of the boarding-house, and now it has been enlarged, but I cannot finish it, though I still hope to do so. For the future—I speak for my station—it could easily be put into a self-supporting position; there is very little wanted. It is not fully stocked. A small sum, I cannot say how much, is required, or if we wait a year or two the cattle will be sufficiently increased.

992. What would you require to make it self-supporting?—I would fully stock the land with cattle. There are not many required. I would, secondly, improve the hop plantation. If we had had irrigation last year we would have had a large crop—that would not be very expensive. Then, for the benefit of the natives, we have splendid iron roofs, and we ought to have under-ground tanks.

993. In fact, the station put in proper working order?—Yes, the station put in proper working order, and a few more cottages built—that is all that is required for my station. That completes all I wish to say.

994. Have you the means of giving an approximate statement of the total expenditure on the station—whether by the mission, the Government, or yourself, giving the items in detail?—I could if I refer to my books. I will send up such a statement.

995. There is a piece of land, I believe, on the station which, I believe, is private property?—Yes, it has been sold over and over again till I bought it.

996. How was it not first included?—While negotiations were going on to secure the whole of the land for the station, a man paid his deposit and selected the land mentioned.

997. And it had to be bought again?—I had to buy it. The man was a great nuisance and wanted his roads, and sent a petition about it, and on my applying to the President, the advice I got was to buy out the man and settle the point.

998. And you did?—No; I applied to my committee and others, and twice to the Central Board and to the Commissioner of Lands, from whom I received the sure answer—that the man was the rightful owner of the land, but the department would exchange it. But when it came to the point, none of my applications were successful. Then it went to the hammer, and I bought it afterwards.

999. How long was it between the time it was selected and the time you had to buy it?—Twelve years; and it changed hands several times, and rose greatly in value.

1000. What amount had you to pay to get it back?—£2 12s. an acre, and the other expenses would bring it up to £450, but I think I would get double that price if I sold it by auction now.

1001. Have you got any interest for the outlay?—Yes, I have a small flock of sheep feeding on the land to enable me to pay the interest. The land ought ultimately to be included in the station.

1002. The rules you spoke of would be, I presume, for enforcing discipline on the different stations, and to be applicable to all?—Yes, to secure discipline on all. The first is in regard to the provision how much a man is to receive—the sick, the healthy, and the children. Each ought to be laid down, though it might be a hard matter for the Aboriginal Board to fix. It is not satisfactory at present.

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1003. You wish those rules, in fact, to enforce discipline on the natives, and at the same time to be a protection to the managers and to the public?—Yes, and to ensure uniform management and thorough impartiality; it can easily be done.

1004. In connection with those rules, would you prescribe the amount of remuneration to be given to the natives?—Yes, I would.

1005. You think there should be a maximum and a minimum?—Yes, I do.

1006. Would you draw any distinction between the artisan and the simple laborer?—Yes.

1007. Supposing that a native had learned to make himself useful, say at rough carpentering or rough masonry?—Yes, I would do that, and, if practicable, I would make it approximate to the scales of white people.

1008. To what extent would you pay a native—for the full value in proportion to the work he performed, as compared with the work of a European, or would you make any reduction?—If a man does his work fully and well, he should be able to support his wife and family.

1009. Would you make that man purchase his own food and for his family, and at the same time supply others gratuitously?—I know the rations would be counted as payment—part payment.

1010. You would estimate rations and lodging?—Yes, and clothes.

1011. How would you meet the difficulty that might be raised—a willing, industrious man may say, “I am obliged to work to an extent sufficient to support my family in food, clothing, and lodging, and there is a man in the next cottage who has received quite sufficient for himself and is doing not half the work which I am performing;” how could you reconcile the difference?—My practice has been to tell the man, you work on, you are not sufficiently paid, but when we have more income from the station we will raise your wages.

1012. But the difficulty will increase the greater your income?—No.

1013. How will you deal with a man hardly able to work, though willing, whose labor would be worth scarcely anything in the market?—Those who are not at all able to do the work would get food and no wages. Those who do a little work would get small wages. They have a sense of justice, and would be satisfied with that.

1014. I can see that, if his inability proceeded from infirmity; but if it proceeds from a certain amount of indolence and incapacity, there is a vast difference?—I do this. I give them a certain work in contract. One man may do the work in three days which another does perhaps in a week. Then of course the work is to be paid so much for, and if he works a week on it, then he has less. I pay by the job; there are very few I pay by the time.

1015. But there may be some men working by the job who never earn enough to support themselves?—Yes, that is true too.

1016. I want to provide against their drawing invidious distinctions and getting dissatisfied?—Well, I do not know how to meet that case.

1017. If you increase their pay according to their intelligence; they are getting more valuable, and getting to know better the value of money, and they may reflect: “I can earn three times as much as that man, and I am getting comparatively little more than he.” Is that just?—No. In this one answer I have said that a kind, firm, just, and business-like treatment is needed.

1018. But that is not business-like. Supposing you were really to award to them the full rate of their several values in the market, one man would be starving, and the other comparatively in opulence?—Hitherto I have had no difficulty, but I suppose it is the future you are looking to. I suppose you must do on the station as you would do outside.

1019. You trust to paying them by contract?—Not all through. Some get by the week, but I do as much as possible by contract.

1020. Then you should start with this provision: all are to be fed if they work, and of those who do not work only those who are ill and incapable are to be fed?—But if they refuse working altogether—able men—I would not give them any food. A lazy man would not get anything.

1021. What would be your maximum—would you give an able-bodied and willing active man the full value of his labor?—I would do so ultimately. I wish to do it, and look forward to it.

1022. With reference to the payment to the manager of the wages earned outside, the desideratum being that the money shall be expended not in the public-houses, but profitably, on the station, in clothing or useful objects, do you think a store could be established on the station itself, furnished with the articles which the natives usually wish to purchase on earning money?—I do.

1023. Would the fact of the articles being sold at cost price be a sufficient inducement to make them buy on the station, instead of paying more for the articles outside?—I believe if the articles were on the station they would prefer those on the station.

1024. It has been suggested that when a hawker visits the station there is an attraction to the natives—buying and showing the articles about?—The thing is this, that if the goods are on the station they will buy immediately after they get the money, but if there are no goods they will wait till the hawker comes.

1025. Do you think that would induce the men to spend the money, when they have earned it, off the station?—Yes; practically we have carried that on.

1026. Only on a small scale?—Only on a small scale.

1027. Would somebody be needed to take the store?—You mean a storekeeper. No, it would not take much time during each day.

1028. By getting goods at wholesale prices in Melbourne you are able to sell at lower rates than the hawkers?—Yes.

1029. You have encouraged the natives to put money in the savings bank?—Yes.

1030. Could you give us a statement showing how many of them have availed themselves of that encouragement, and how much?—It is only small amounts. I keep for all the young people money boxes. There all their wages go on Saturday evening or on the first of the month, and from those boxes they pay small expenses that they want. That is the first step towards a savings bank. There is only now one who has an account in the savings bank. I dare say it has been up to £14 or £15—that is at the Post Office Savings Bank at Stratford. Another young man has about £30. He gives it to me, and I put it in my name in the National Bank, to prevent him drawing it out, and to get the interest. I dare say that there are on the whole about twelve or fifteen who deposit their money under my care, and they get their interest.

1031. Do they intelligently understand that they gain the interest—that it does not touch their capital?—Yes, thoroughly.

1032. And you think you can get them to explain it to their fellow natives?—Yes, there is no difficulty. One of them bought mining shares, and got dividends; but I believe the shares have gone down.

1033. You said this shop or store would be of special advantage in a place like Lake Tyers?—Yes; and it would at my place too.

1034. But there they are at too great a distance to go to the temptation?—Yes.

1035. Do you think they have sufficient control over themselves when they go hop-picking and to other work to keep their money, and bring it to the station, and buy in the shop there?—No; I think it is generally spent before they get home. They take it out in provisions.

1036. They go in for living comfortably?—Yes.

1037. Do their wives accompany them?—Yes.

1038. Have they no influence over them to buy something for the house when they get back?—There is very little money comes back; it is all gone before they return.

1039. Then this working off the station is very unprofitable?—It is. My men do not go.

1040. Although not actually practicable with all, yet I suppose there are some managers who send the balance, if any.—Yes.

1041. That ought to be encouraged?—Yes; I agree with that fully. It ought to be enforced. If we get good men to deal with we are right enough. But, on the other hand, it is difficult. The aborigines themselves want to get the money. They want to get it even from ourselves when they do contract work. They will give it back to put in their boxes, but it must go through their hands; and the inferior class object to paper. It must be gold or silver.

1042. They invest no other way than in the bank?—No.

1043. Would you encourage them investing in stock?—I did, and I was pleased with their progress, but they got careless, and I had to draw in, and buy the stock back. Even the best are not ripe for that. The only way that answered was to give them a piece of ground to work for themselves, and let them have the income from that.

1044. We examined four natives from Coranderrk, and two of them said they were teetotallers?—Oh, yes; there is nothing new in that. Most of mine are teetotallers—not signed the pledge, but they abstain entirely from drink.

1045. You can trust them?—Thoroughly.

1046. You object to the boarding out of orphans?—Yes, I do.

1047. In addition to the reasons you have assigned, do you think there is any affection amongst the natives themselves for the orphans even on the part of those not related to them?—Yes, they all objected to the idea. Before I left I had all the people before me, and I explained it in a kind way, saying that the Government only wanted to do the best for them; and I asked their opinion, went through all the questions, and this one they most decidedly objected to hear. They felt it cruel to the children even that their brothers or sisters should be taken away to another place.

1048. There is a great affection amongst themselves?—Yes, not to let the children be sent away. I remember one case of a little child who had been adopted by a white family which turned out at eight years of age a wicked little child, and the man who adopted it brought it before the police and wanted it sent to Sunbury. I went to the police court and saw the child, and the natives whom I had explained it to besought me not to let the little black child be sent to Sunbury. The child was handed over to me on the guarantee that it would be cared for.

1049. How did the natives know of this?—They know of every one in the district.

1050. Did they themselves speak to you?—On every account they begged me to go and get the child, and she is turning out a useful girl.

1051. There cannot be a doubt but that it would be a mistake not to cherish that affection?—Yes.

1052. As regards the hiring out; if you hire out those men who can work, you state that it is a loss to the station; and if, in addition to that, they come back no better?—They always come back the worse.

1053. Then, in connection with this subject, comes in the question of the absorption of the natives in the community generally—I mean as a point to be looked forward to. Do you think that, humanly speaking, we may entertain any hope that that will take place—that we can improve them so that they will subsequently take the same place as the rest of the population?—I believe that is a great speculation. I believe that the race is dying out. They do really decrease very fast.

1054. Supposing that they still continued, whether few or many, can we look forward to their attaining such a degree of civilization, and such a capacity for business, as to enable them to take their own position in the community generally?—It would want generations. It would not be in the present generation; and even those who are educated and brought up well, I do not think they would be able to fight their way.

1055. Following up that very expression, do you think they have energy and capacity to support themselves, and to fight their way amongst other people generally?—They may for years, but they will finally break down. I know one man who was employed and independent for over twenty years, earning £50 a year, but finally he broke down, and was glad to have a refuge on the mission station.

1056. What did you attribute his break down to?—He is getting old and failing in health.

1057. That might happen to a European?—Yes; but the question would then be what would be done with the natives; the whites can go to the Benevolent Asylum.

1058. But it was not his lack of strength of character?—I am not sure of that.

1059. It is asserted that they would require some one to look after their buying and selling—that they do not possess what we call a business capacity?—I think not.

1060. That is a conjecture?—Yes; we look forward to that; but at present they must be guided—old and young, and all of them.

1061. Have some of them been entrusted by the Government with land which they farmed for years?—Yes, there are some men still who would not take any support. They go as cattle drovers, and support their wives.

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1062. You have been more than twenty years amongst the blacks?—Close on twenty years.
1063. And you have, no doubt, read statements as to their incapacity of their appreciating and taking to heart religious instruction in the Christian faith—now, what is your experience upon that point?—You mean conversions to Christianity.
1064. Yes?—I believe I could give you over a hundred instances of men consistent Christians to the end, really and truly from first to last—their moral life and whole habits have proved it.
1065. So that you are quite of opinion that statement is an error?—That is an error founded on an old supposition. I have just had a tract printed on the subject of our first convert, in which there are facts bearing on this point.
1066. Your life has been spent among them during those years?—Yes, and for their good.
1067. And that is the result of your observation?—Yes.

The witness withdrew.

Adjourned to to-morrow, at Half-past Two o'clock.

THURSDAY, 24TH MAY 1877.

Present :

His Honor Sir W. F. STAWELL, in the Chair ;

G. W. Rusden, Esq.,
A. W. Howitt, Esq. P.M.,

F. R. Godfrey, Esq.

Rev. F. A. Hagenauer further examined.

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Hagenauer,
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1068. We were on the gathering in of outsiders. Well, now in connexion with that there are several points. I will enumerate them briefly, and ask you then to express your opinion. There is a difficult question in connection with that, whether it is advisable, having formed the station, to stop the present supplies of food and clothing delivered by the guardians of the aborigines. These men receive it and the natives receive it from them, and I believe it is very judiciously given, at the same time it is encouraging them to stay away from the stations ; if there is a suitable station to which they could go, is it wise to continue that supply, and, on the other hand, how is it to be stopped without inflicting privation by stopping it hastily. Also connected with that is the formation of a new station, and where would be the most suitable place ; we thought somewhere on the Murray. Also as to severe punishment for confirmed drunkards, that is an increased punishment for continuous offence, likewise the stopping of begging. First of all, where would be the best place for a station?—I suppose this has only reference to the Murray blacks ; the stations already in existence would cover all other parts of the colony, I think. I might perhaps ask this question—How many natives are there along the Murray ?

1069. Well, we have not ascertained exactly, but it is much smaller than we anticipated?—I stated that before.

1070. There are not more than 300 blacks altogether away from the stations?—That is according to my calculations. They are not all along the Murray ; I scarcely think you would get more than 150 along there. I stated my views to the Inspector that if it could be managed, that if those natives could be induced to come to the existing stations without going to the great expense of forming a new station, it would be better ; but if that could not be done, I believe the best way would be to form a station on the Murray ; but it would have to be considered in two ways :—1. Should that station be a station only for sick or infirm, in fact a sanatory station, or a station for the black people in the neighborhood only, or for all others, as a sanatory place. I do not think there would be much difficulty in inducing young and strong men to come and settle at the stations now in existence. I have also been asked by the Inspector if I would be prepared to receive the children from the Murray into my school boarding-house, and in fact the boarding-house was partly enlarged to receive all the children along the Murray. It seems that the parents as well as the squatters in the neighborhood where they mostly lived were all inclined, and pressed the point, to get these children to the school. Mr. Ogilvie communicated with me, and I arranged to make the journey with him and see for myself, and then get the children in a friendly way without using any force. There would not have been a great difficulty ; it was also arranged that the mothers should follow the children over to me. We chose Gippsland as the best place, away altogether from the temptation to return to their places. We have some of the Murray blacks with us now, and there is never a wish to return to the Murray.

1071. Is it not too cold?—No ; it is not cold ; it is very little different ; in fact, the climate is very mild ; very different from Coranderk ; and so the question was left open for further consideration between the Aboriginal Board and myself. However, now as it comes before you, it is right to inquire into the matter, whether the proposed plan for the children and the mothers who would follow should be sent to me or the new station. The children would, however, come under proper care and instruction sooner if they are sent to me, as it would take some considerable time before a new place could be formed.

1072. On this point, would it not be more easy to induce them to come to a station on the Murray, not so far as Gippsland?—It will be to get them, but it will be also an inducement to go home again ; you could scarcely keep them there so near. It requires great persuasion ; the same work as we have had on all the stations. It takes years to persuade them.

1073. Do you think that the Gippsland Station is more advisable in consequence of the distance?—Yes ; being separated from this part, I believe so.

1074. Do you think, apart from that, it is better to induce them to come to a formed station, more likely to get them to stay than at a newly-formed station?—Yes ; I think so, especially the young ones.

1075. You would not take the young ones without the mothers?—The mothers want to follow, and they asked it themselves.

1076. And the fathers?—I was not asked to take the fathers, but I said if they would come, and the Board would give assistance, I would take them. However, if a station could be formed it would be all the better, I suppose.

1077. If I follow your views, it would be better to enlarge the existing stations?—That is number one; but if that could not be carried out if the Government would not do that, then the second point would be to form the station. I think it best to divide them among the others, or to bring them over to us, out of temptation altogether.

1078. You select Gippsland, as more separate?—The fact is, I do not want to put myself forward in any way, but after Mr. Ogilvie inspecting the stations, and the difficulty he had at Coranderk, he proposed that if I was willing to receive them it would be best; and we concluded that it would be better for ourselves if we could get them; the more we get the better our aim as missionaries is carried out—to do good to the people to whom we have been sent.

1079. Do you anticipate any dispute between those you already have and the new ones?—No; those tribal differences have ceased long ago with us; there is no idea any more of that.

1080. It has gone out by the force of circumstances?—Yes, died out.

1081. It was suggested to us that if the whites were aware of the desire of the Government, and that it was made unlawful for them to retain the natives, and they were in that way led to offer no opposition, then the natives will leave comparatively easily; do you concur in that?—Yes. A squatter, Mr. Rutherford, has about 30 at his place—spoke to them and to Mr. Ogilvie, and it seemed almost the day fixed when they should leave, but I believe the unsettled state about the blacks and the former and present inquiry left the matter undecided.

1082. All of them?—That was the children and mothers, and it was expected the men would follow in a friendly way, and it was left that I should go with the Inspector and see them first.

1083. We are told there are some on the western side of Victoria?—There cannot be many, it must be very few; they would come to Lake Condah from Mount Gambier, and I believe settle for good.

1084. Then, following out your views, they would leave Lake Condah and go back to their own haunts?—That may be, but they, being so few, would soon remain.

1085. Would it not be better to induce them also to go far away with less likelihood of their returning?—That is correct in one sense of the question, but when you had the stations already near, I would not try to bring them to Gippsland, because those from Tataiara, North-west Wimmera, are already going to Ebenezer; they have fixed that as their home, and could be induced to remain.

1086. The wandering remnant of the Murray tribes scarcely ever visit the stations?—That comes to the next question of the stores. It is only those that are altogether out of reach of the stations I am speaking of at this moment. From Swan Hill they have been occasionally at Ebenezer, but you will hear from Mr. Kramer that the main reason is that they are almost better supplied by the local guardians or correspondents.

1087. And they have nothing to do for it?—And nothing to do for it. There is one man living near Ebenezer, he writes an intelligent letter, and he says, "We prefer this place; we get a bag of flour, a bag of sugar, and have nothing to do for it, and enjoy ourselves." It is very natural that they would choose that. If that was stopped, and they were first informed, "You shall get it for half a year longer, but in the meantime this is to be your future home," and no more provision to be sent to these places, then they would naturally fall back on the stations. I speak this from experience of the blacks in Gippsland. There were a good many depôts—one at Port Albert, one at Bushy Park, one at Snowy River, one at Bairnsdale, and the amount of rations sent to those places was very much more than we get now or ever received. I took possession of a great deal of flour at Bushy Park Station which was not fit for food for pigs. I sold it, and could not get more than 30s. for the whole lot. I had great difficulty in persuading the Central Board not to send to those gentlemen any more; they were very nice gentlemen, but the things were wasted by the blacks or often sold. The blacks would not come to the station until it was stopped altogether, and the result was that they have all come and settled down.

1088. Conceding that to be quite right, supposing you gave six months' notice, do you anticipate they will come in at the expiration of that time?—Not all, but some will; and ere long all will come, and I suppose the Government would be quite excused if you say, "You must make up your mind to come and receive it there, or you will not have it at all."

1089. The only difficulty is that some may be attached to some particular localities and be unwilling to come, and though you might deprive them of the supplies they have hitherto depended on they would not leave that spot and come to the station; and if you make an exceptional case, you make a risk of the system not being carried out?—No, that is not needed at all; it is not a hardship at all. That clinging to the locality vanished soon away in Gippsland, even with the oldest men, like old King Jimmy. He would come and say, "Upon Mount Wellington is my home, give me a little ration;" and he would travel home, see his country, and in a fortnight he would come back. Those were extreme cases of attachment.

1090. Old kings?—Yes, old kings; young men are not affected by that, except drawn by the love of drink given to them by white people.

1091. Do you not think they would follow the food to where it was to be obtained if it was not to be given by the guardians?—I think so, as a rule; I think almost entirely.

1092. Then the fact of stopping supplies would have the effect of bringing those people to the stations?—Yes, and the only means of keeping them in discipline.

1093. From your knowledge of the Ebenezer station, is there any need of opening a new station on the Murray?—I would only increase the existing station; if there is any need of a station it is higher up.

1094. There are just as many lower down as high up?—Yes.

1095. Excepting those natives you refer to on Mr. Rutherford's station, I do not think there are any about Albury?—Yes.

1096. And from the upper Murray you could take the children easily?—Yes, I have been informed so.

1097. You are quite willing?—I am. I will go myself if I am instructed to do so by the Government in company with the Inspector and perhaps one of my own Murray blacks.

1098. As to those who have been on stations, do you anticipate any opposition on the part of the station masters?—That would only be in regard to the able, healthy men who could do some work; they would not care for the others.

1099. Do you think there are many healthy men?—I do not know for myself. I do not think you would meet with much opposition from the squatters and selectors, because the natives are a nuisance; they quarrel and fight and have lazy fits.

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1100. Then with reference to this punishment for repeated drunkenness or some means for stopping begging, do you think that is necessary, following out the views you have already expressed?—I stated a little yesterday, but it belongs to this particular question again. When they know here is a place that they get provision, where they are cared for physically and in every way, then it is not more than right, if they go begging, that they should be stopped from doing so; they ought not to go begging.

1101. Do you think that the habit of begging is not so inveterate but that it might be stopped?—I do.

1102. How could that be done?—Easily, without any great punishment to them. I have practised it. When they went to neighboring townships I have gone to a policeman and I said, "You do me a favor and yourself; if you keep these begging men over-night you will have trouble; you just tell them to clear out and go home," and generally the police have willingly assisted me, and I do not think any case came before the court; they generally followed when they knew the policeman was instructed to do it, and was in earnest.

1103. Then instructions to the police would be the thing?—Yes; I have tried that, and always successfully.

1104. We were told that some on the New South Wales side of the Murray were very much attached to the locality, and were supported by the gratuities of the squatters; they go backwards and forwards from the north to the south side?—Yes, they do.

1105. Do you think if they were spoken to, and the advantages explained to them, they would be induced to come to the station?—I believe so. There is this difficulty—they are cunning enough to say when a policeman or man in authority speaks to them, "We do not belong to this side," and cross the Murray for a short time; but I think that by kind persuasion and urging they are open to argument; when they are not drunk they will be induced.

1106. Then it was a mistake establishing those depôts?—It was a mistake. I have said so always to the Secretary of the Board, and I have had strong arguments with gentlemen who kept such depôts.

1107. Until the stations were firmly established, as they are now, it would not have been so easy to attract the natives as now?—It is right the reverse. The moment a station was established, or before it was established, when I travelled through the country they were all willing to follow me at once, but those depôts were just the thing that kept them back. I believe it was a great mistake from the first, and even till now, to have them.

1108. Would the blacks that did not know you follow you?—There is not one black that does not know the places and know of the stations. They know me pretty nearly everywhere. I do not think we would meet with any great difficulties in this respect if the depôts were stopped and begging, and, of course, drunkenness must be punished.

1109. And with this six months' notice you do not anticipate any suffering?—Not a bit.

1110. You think that simultaneously with the six months' notice action might be taken to get them in before the six months had expired?—Yes, that should be done.

1111. I suppose the managers of the different stations should be requested to go round and gather in as many as they possibly could?—And they would be very willing to do so, I believe.

1112. They would not go without?—No; in the first place, it would be the Inspector's duty to look to that.

1113. Would they be as willing to go on the suggestion of the Inspector as yourself?—Of course I do not know. I have not seen the new Inspector himself, but I believe joint action would be the best.

1114. If the Inspector went, having authority, would that influence them?—Not in a bouncing way.

1115. I mean the fact of his being a man in authority, would that influence them?—Yes, I believe so.

1116. Are they not more easily persuaded by those who are accustomed to their ways than by others?—It would be very difficult to get those men persuaded.

1117. I ask are they not more easily persuaded by those who are accustomed to their ways than by others?—You mean like the managers from the stations or squatters?

1118. My question is this, a person who is acquainted with the ways of the aborigines could persuade them more easily than one who is not?—Of course that is very natural.

1119. Are you able to say from your own experience whether you think the aborigines have respect for authority for the laws, if it is explained to them that it is the law?—That depends how far their civilisation goes. In their wild wandering state there is very little respect for white people's laws.

1120. But in their wild state were they not very obedient to their own laws?—Most completely, but their laws are different from ours.

1121. There was no such thing as disobedience of their own traditions?—No.

1122. And among those who have come in and been civilised you find the same obedience to our laws?—Yes, of course, and my plan has always been to train them to know the laws of the country, and to fulfil them, and in no way try to introduce other laws for themselves, but as much as possible stick to the law of the country.

1123. Do you think they have as yet sufficiently advanced to wish to obey the law through respect to it, apart from fear of punishment?—I do not think they have much fear of punishment, because very little punishment has been inflicted on them as yet, and they are fully aware of it.

1124. Their obedience is from respect rather than fear?—Yes; most decidedly.

1125. There is nothing else occurs to you on this point—any practical suggestion in reference to carrying it out—the scheme seems most desirable, but it may fail in carrying it out?—Yes.

1126. There are some camps of blacks in East Gippsland, what do you suggest as to those?—They differ from ours in so far that they are wild yet. We have heard for years of large tribes, and the natives on the stations expressed their great fear lest the others would come and fight, and kill them. They evidently seem to have done so at the beginning when Gippsland was discovered, and white people, even people living, remember the great fights that took place; but the fear as to these Warrigal tribes was groundless—they never came—and we came to the conclusion that they were no more in existence. I sent a full report some years ago about the Gippsland natives, stating the names and localities to the Central Board. The Warrigal tribe were not to be found, but only lately appeared. They were a few young men coming from the Maneroo country, until a greater number of them appeared, and, it seems, came from the

source of the Murray. They call themselves Murray blacks, and some have Murray names even. Mr. Bulmer will be able to give information about this. For the first time they came to the station in the most miserable condition, in health and morals, through smoking opium. I spoke to them, almost every one, and they seemed altogether inclined to make that place, Lake Tyers, their home. They were tired of the state of their lives, and were pleased that the enmity that was formerly between the Gippsland Proper tribes and themselves had disappeared; and the consequence was that the first work I had to do was:—An old man brought his daughter, and said, "Marry her in your way to a young man here, like the white people; I cannot, because it is against my law. You marry them, and I will come back again."

1127. Why was it against his law?—I do not know; some way or other—some tribal relationship. He disappeared the day I married them according to law; and the next day old Jack appeared again, and they have ever since been on most friendly terms.

1128. That was a remnant of respect for an old tribal marriage law?—Yes; but he submitted to our law.

1129. Have you any idea how many there are of those Maneroo blacks, those wild fellows. Did you ascertain from those who came whether there are any more?—There were a few more, over thirty.

1130. Might they be gathered in by visiting them?—I think they would be most easily gathered in to Lake Tyers; most of them will settle on their own account, and even if a few old men go, they will soon return. There is no temptation beyond Lake Tyers, and if Lake Tyers is put into a proper position for self-support, I think that will be easily done; besides I do not think many of them will live long, the opium smoking has settled them.

1131. You said something about the food?—At my place. You asked what was to be done with children whose parents had been refused food. I was not prepared to answer that question, because it had never happened to me. Next time I asked about it at Lake Tyers, and I found that it must be regulated as we have it at Ramahyuck, that the boarding-house provides for all children at any time. There is cooked food, and baked bread, and clean beds, and every child is welcome, for all it is provided. If the parents, for some reason, are not receiving rations the children know that for them there is food, and properly cooked food, better than they have in the camp, and at a meeting I made it known to them all as a rule in general. I never could have a child refused food. The men might have their rations stopped for a day, but they know their children are supplied in any case.

1132. With reference to handicrafts, you seemed to think that it was better to have men generally handy, having a little of several trades than to teach them one special trade?—I believe so.

1133. Why is that?—The reason is, first, the labor on the station. If the station shall be self-supporting it will require the labor of the young men, who are very scarce. We have not many men to do the work, and I fancy if one is encouraged to learn a trade and work at it on the station, it wants more scope and usefulness; we could not have a show for it at the station. A young man wants a change of work.

1134. Do you think that the disposition and temperament of the blacks are opposed to their learning and working at one trade?—I think they are opposed to learning and working at one trade—they must have a change.

1135. That of course may be with the present generation, but I refer to the young men now being educated under your own hand?—Not the present ones yet. It may be when the new generation comes from them; but I cannot say it of them.

1136. Have you any hope for the present young?—No, not for trades.

1137. What is that, the old, wild instinct?—That is the old, wild instinct; even among clever young men. Mr. James, at the telegraph office, asked me once for a youth, he was a Gippsland youth, to become an operator. I believe he would have turned out a good operator, but he would have turned bad also in his life. I hope, by-and-by, to get some trained to be teachers. I have one now, very able, teaching as an assistant; and I hope he will pass by-and-by the examination and teach on the station.

1138. Is that not more likely to be distasteful than the trade?—No; if you employ a tradesman for four hours a day for five days a week it is different from putting a man to his trade always, and when he is not at the school he helps with other work.

1139. There is a variety then?—Yes, and even teaching itself is a variety.

1140. When the stations are all enclosed, all in working order, fewer hands would be required?—That depends on what has to be done on the station. On a station like Ebenezer there would be little use for all the men if farming or something else is not done; but on a station like Ramahyuck, with hops and arrowroot, hands would be always required to do the work, whilst at the Wimmera sheep-farming would need very little help.

1141. What would you do with those hands during the slack times?—The work must be varied. Whilst you work in summer with the hops, you work in winter with the arrowroot.

1142. Take Lake Tyers, where only arrowroot would be grown, would you allow them to go and look for work in the slack time?—I believe there is sufficient work for all of them for some years to come. Ringing trees and improving the country gives an immense deal of work, and I believe will repay itself. The country is poor, and there are the men to do it. Then basket and broom making could be commenced. That part up at the Wimmera was as wild as anything, and for years I have been working with the aborigines to clear away scrub, and every man was working, and by so doing the place where the station stands is now a nice clean place.

1143. Do you think that agriculture could be carried on with any advantage on the station, the men growing crops, wheat, oats, barley?—It would not with me; it does not grow in payable quantities. I have tried wheat successive years, and I scarcely got anything. The country is not fit for wheat, but I understand that round Ebenezer there are a good many white people's farms; and if so, I cannot see any difficulty for the station to do so.

1144. Supposing the land was suitable, do you think it would be desirable to encourage that?—I would do so. I do not mean on a wholesale scale, but to work it for themselves.

1145. You think they are fit for that?—Every man on my station is fit to plough.

1146. Are they as good as white men at ploughing?—That is my experience. All my men plough, and do it nearly as well as the white. I give it them in turns, and they do as well, I know; and the boys are all very fond of it.

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1147. Can they take care of their ploughs, harness, and horses; would you trust them to do that?—No; I have to look after them; but I fancy with many white people you would have to look after them the same way.

1148. Do you think as much with the whites?—White people would be superior in this way, but generally speaking there is a room for the ploughs and harness. They have to bring it back and put it in this place, and I simply look if it is there.

1149. But still you think this supervision is necessary. The Commission wish to know particularly this, may they look forward reasonably to these men being educated in such a way as to shift for themselves and support themselves?—Yes; I think that is only right and just, and can reasonably be expected ere long.

1150. If I follow you that cannot be done in this generation?—Why not?

1151. You said so?—I only stated if the station is put in proper order—stocking, and so on—outlay; after that it will be a very short time before it will be self-supporting.

1152. I do not mean that; I refer to the possibility of the native himself going out and supporting himself off the station altogether, and living as a European would do, maintaining his family from his own work, and bringing them up properly, educating and training them?—I answered that yesterday, to the effect that I do not think it could, because he has not sufficient stability in his character; on the stations they are under continual care.

1153. Although we may not hope for it at present?—Well, for future generations we may.

1154. For the present rising generation, the little children, you do not hope for it?—I am doubtful about it, not to leave them abroad yet. There may be some of them exceptions.

1155. They want some patriarchal superintendence?—Yes.

1156. As regards that energy, do you notice any great difference between the full-black aboriginal and the half-castes?—The latter are often worse than the aborigines in that want of energy; I do not see much difference. We have some very good half-castes on the station, and I believe by-and-by they will be superior.

1157. Can you suggest anything, in the way of special industries, that might assist in making these stations self-supporting?—I had two or three different plans, and I have tried them and been successful if I had only more men to work. I have a number of old people and little children, which swells the numbers, but who are not able to do the work. If I had the men, we could start more work that would pay. I mentioned before about growing osiers; it could not be a better place to be found than this; and even the growing itself will pay, without working them up. They are very high; sold in Melbourne, it would pay. It wants a little outlay for making trenches and so on, but I have not sufficient men to do it; they are fencing and ploughing, and attending to the arrowroot and hops; they have their hands full. There are numbers of people on the place, but they are not able-bodied people.

1158. The number of effective workmen?—Is few. Besides the growing of the osiers, I have been in communication with Baron Müller, and he suggested to try tea, that might do, and to try cotton. I do not think it will pay. Both will not pay, but olives will do. My neighbour, Mr. Disher, at Lake Wellington, has splendid olives, and they bear good fruit, and I do not see why they should not grow with us. Then, also, as there is plenty of land, I do not see why we should not plant a good lot of fruit trees. I understand the drying of fruit; that pays well. There is a good deal of dried fruit used here, and the women and children could be employed on this and on olives. I had a conversation with Sir Charles Duffy about it, and he was fully agreed on it.

1159. Have you thought about growing garden seeds?—I have done so, but it is difficult to sell it in the district; you must give it almost for nothing. I offered it to storekeepers at half the price, but they would not take it. Some years ago I tried a lot of the American broom. I was trying if they could not make brooms, the long-handled ones. The plants grew very well, and I dare say in the course of years it would be very easy to make them, when the youths are out of school.

1160. Coir matting?—I daresay it might do; I have no knowledge of that. Fruit-drying would be a very little outlay, and could easily be kept in order. We must look for such easy sort of work. They are not able to do hard work, and they are willing to do this sort of work if they are paid a little.

1161. I suppose that ground where you are would grow nuts?—I suppose it would.

1162. Walnuts?—I have planted some; they are doing well so far. There are many walnuts grown in Gippsland.

1163. I meant the hazel nuts?—I do not know the reason, but my neighbor has some, but they do not bear fruit.

1164. Even the timber is a most valuable wood for hoops for tubs, and handles, and so on?—I am not aware of this.

1165. I think you said before that the children at Ramahyuck have been educated up to the necessary standard and passed satisfactory tests?—Yes.

1166. Well now, do you think that that standard of education can be carried out with respect to the children generally?—I believe it can be carried out in every place, if you have the right man and have the school under the State. The difficulty is this, if we have teachers who are not under the inspection of the inspectors they begin to slacken.

1167. Do you think there is any more difficulty in educating a black than a white up to the standard?—We have advantages in their being always together, and I do not think there is more difficulty in any way.

1168. What are the advantages?—They are on the station in the boarding-house and attending school every day, whilst you find amongst the whites a considerable percentage do not attend regularly.

1169. Do you not think the standard of arithmetic is too high?—No.

1170. Has your attention been invited to this, that when the children have attained the standard they do not retain a recollection of it when they grow up?—They understand it just as well now as when they left school, and I believe I could show you letters from children who attended the school years ago, composing the letters, and they will do their arithmetic just as well now.

1171. You think they keep up the instruction they received; is that your experience?—Yes, I have some. They wrote down here to order a suit of clothes and sent the account; they do it all of their own accord.

1172. Do you notice whether there is any difference in the mental capacities between the blacks and the half-castes in your schools?—Yes, the half-castes are superior on the whole in their mental capacities.

1173. In their power of acquisition of a higher education?—Yes; of course there are some good ones among the blacks and some inferior ones among the half-castes, but the latter are superior, speaking generally.

1174. Your boys and girls at the school, at Ramahyuck, passed out very high?—Yes, they did; 100 per cent. repeatedly.

1175. Are they doing that now?—We have another teacher. They are still the highest in the colony, 96 per cent.

1176. How long has that new teacher been there?—A year and a half.

1177. That is scarcely enough to test it?—No, scarcely enough to test it. I mean if we have it under the proper state machinery the teachers will do it for their own advantage.

1178. That is a different subject, for that the state machinery is all important. But the other question is this, does the young native possess a capacity for attaining with the same proficiency as the European with the same amount of education?—They will do that.

1179. Have any natives obtained a certificate as having passed the standard?—Yes, I can send you some of them. After every examination the Inspector writes a certificate. They are most anxious. The law provides that they must go to school up to fifteen years, they must go till fifteen if they do not pass the standard; but some have passed at eleven, and they are anxious to leave school and join in general work as soon as possible.

1180. Do any of those who have received these certificates keep up their reading?—Yes, we have a large library. They are fond of historical and geographical books and travels, and books published by the Religious Tract Society, and I am sorry to say when they can get hold of yellow-back novels from Melbourne they do so. We have about 400 volumes.

1181. It has been very strongly urged upon us that the standard as regards arithmetic is unnecessarily high, that the natives may by a great pressure be brought up to that, but after a short time it is forgotten, that their capacity without pressure is lower than that of the European, and that necessitates artificial pressure?—I have no reason for saying anything of that sort. That it is difficult or was difficult when we first gathered in the wandering children, that was natural, and it cost great labor with the teachers, but to the children who attend the school and follow the course year by year it comes comparatively easy. As to retaining their knowledge, I have no reason to say they do not, but of course it has not been put to a very severe test yet for many years, though enough to justify my statements.

1182. It has been suggested to us that it would be desirable to lower the standard in regard to arithmetic, and yet we are unwilling to admit that the young aborigines cannot attain the same proficiency as the young European, and it might be an injury, unless absolutely necessary; but it is undesirable to throw away work in overforcing them?—I do not think the standard is too high. Mr. Kramer will be able to answer that, but his notion was too high altogether; he would not go below 100 per cent., that is every child passing, but that is not expected; there is not one school in the colony that does it, and I thought that unreasonable. I would suggest that 50 per cent. would be a fair average for the general return of the schools. In regard to a new station, I believe it would be better for everything for the State to make it a mission station.

1183. Suppose that the State, or whoever acted on their behalf, wished to do so, do you think they could get the services of competent persons?—I think so. Oh, yes.

1184. How would it be carried out?—For example, you want a missionary from our own society; the directors at home would have to be applied to.

1185. Do you think they would send a suitable man?—Yes; perhaps a younger man, and put one of us older men to the new station. The directors in Germany would very likely say, "If you will find the money we will carry on the work, according to our own principles." The same thing was done with the Presbyterian body here. There was a most able man here on the Wimmera, a Mr. Hartmann, a missionary, who is now successfully employed in Canada amongst the Indians, who was asked by the Church of England to come out again, but did not.

1186. There is one point forgotten. It has been suggested to us, in the case of natives proving insubordinate upon a station, power should be given to the managers to interchange?—That is very good. I was going to propose that and I forgot.

1187. On what grounds. Suppose you transferred a native from one station to another it may be a punishment to him; but would it not very likely disorganize the station to which the native was sent?—A case in point. There was a moral complaint against a young man at Lake Condah, and a commission was appointed to enquire into it. The case was not proved in any shape or form, and yet there was no means at our disposal to punish the offender; but after the settlement and a clear investigation the best punishment to be inflicted would have been to have removed the woman to another place, but we had no power to do it.

1188. In this particular case there was no offence proven?—The offence was on the side of the woman. She preferred a false accusation against the gentleman, and by removing her he would have remained, but as the woman remained he left himself.

1189. That is an exceptional case?—Yes; that is an exceptional case, but there is no power. We need that power seldom; but I think it is well if the Aboriginal Board has that power.

1190. The case which you put is, I can understand, there was the desirability of separating that one woman from the gentleman; but in cases of insubordination, disobedience of orders, as a punishment, do you think it is desirable to remove one insubordinate native from one station to another. Would you not take his spirit to another, and spread it amongst those natives; and would it be liked by that manager, who, perhaps, had difficulty with his own natives, to have an insubordinate spirit sent to him?—I cannot speak about the insubordination, because it never came before me.

1191. In the case you put, surely the manager might have applied to the Board; the Board sanctioned that removal?—The power ought to be with the Aboriginal Board. I have never had a case of clear insubordination. I have had cases of gross insults to me. Evil things were put to me and my wife, so that I had to punish the black, and send him away; but you could not call that insubordination in this sense.

1192. It was very like it?—Well, it was very like it. The case where it ought to be exercised is extreme laziness, extreme indolence, and disobedience.

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Hagenauer,
continued,
24th May 1877.

1193. Should you have any objection, as manager, to natives being sent to your station from the others?—I do not think I would. I have done so. I have taken some of the most insubordinate from Coranderrk in days gone by.

1194. If the consent of the manager is not really obtained, it is useless to consider the question?—A good many of the managers would object, I should think, but I had not.

1195. You want it as a power to break off bad associations?—Yes; to break off bad associations.

1196. Does not the Board possess that power now?—Yes; I believe they have that power, perhaps, in regard to the children. I forgot one point. Hitherto it has happened on some of the stations, once on mine, that parents just take a fancy, "We will take our children away out of school," and they wander about, and go away. Now there is a sort of clause in the Act, that the power is given to the Aboriginal Board, by an Order in Council, to get such a child back again, to appoint a place for it, but the machinery is almost unworkable. I did once communicate a case to the secretary of the Board, and in the course of a month got a reply that the matter was to be referred to the Governor in Council, and it took a considerable time before I received another letter. The authority has been received that the child shall be sent to the station, and the Inspector was instructed to get the child. After another month had passed, and when the Inspector came, the child had been already in the school two months. The power should be given to act at once, in a day or two.

1197. That is inseparable, I am afraid, from official red tape?—Could you not have some forms ready signed by the Governor in the hands of the President of the Board, ready to be used when required?

The witness handed in the following statement:—

BUILDING EXPENSES AT RAMAHYUCK MISSION STATION.

From 1863 to 1877.	By Government, through the Aboriginal Board.		From other sources.	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Church building expenses ... ..	...	...	214	9 4
School-house (State school just now) ... ..	...	...	110	0 0
Missionary's house (including kitchens, laundries, baking-house, and meat store) ... ..	...	...	597	13 7
Children's boarding-house (old building)... ..	82	10 0	98	16 4
New additions estimated at £160, which it is proposed to be paid by the Aboriginal Board.	...	...	...	...
New hospital for children (money already raised for it) ... ..	...	...	40	0 0
Store rooms—		£ s. d.		
Flour, &c. ... ..	...	30 0 0		
Produce ... ..	...	15 0 0		
Tools, &c., garden produce, store (3 rooms) ... ..	...	...	45	0 0*
Cart sheds and stables ... ..	...	...	12	0 0*
Other outbuildings ... ..	...	...	25	0 0*
New hop-kiln and cooling-house ... ..	...	...	20	0 0
New hop-kiln and cooling-house ... ..	...	...	152	0 0
Thirteen native cottages, cost from £6 to £35; total, according to average ... ..	...	50 0 0	160	0 0
Outside paddock fences (all is divided into three paddocks)... ..	...	192 18 0	329	12 0
Not including garden fences for natives, nor mission and school-houses.				
	325	8 0	1,804	11 3

* This can only be estimated now.

F. A. HAGENAUER.

The witness withdrew.

The Rev. John Bulmer examined.

1198. How long have you been in charge of Lake Tyers?—Fifteen years.

1199. In the first place, what is your opinion of Lake Tyers, as a place for an aboriginal station?—I think Lake Tyers would be very successful as an aboriginal station, if the area of the reserve were enlarged, as in its present state there would be no hope of making it self-supporting.

1200. As a sanitary station?—As a sanitary station, it could not be better.

1201. As to its situation, and the temptations to which the inmates are exposed, by reason of its proximity to population?—As to situation, it is admirably adapted for the residence of aborigines, as it is twenty miles from a township, and there is no licensed hotel within twenty miles.

1202. Can you make any suggestions for improvement of its management, or as to maintenance of discipline at aboriginal stations?—As to discipline, I cannot complain of disobedience on the part of the blacks; but to maintain order, I would only recommend stoppage of supplies to all able-bodied aborigines who refuse to work or obey reasonable orders.

1203. Is not that done at present?—Yes, that is the way we keep discipline on the station now, and we do not complain of the blacks being insubordinate. We just stop the supplies.

1204. And you do not have to do that often?—Not often; one or two cases. I think when Mr. Ogilvie was over I had one case, and I stopped his rations. He would not work, but he lived on the station with the blacks.

1205. And he came round?—Yes.

1206. After two or three months?—Yes.

1207. Was he a single man?—No, he had a wife.

1208. Did you give any rations to the wife?—No.

1209. Had he any family?—No.

1210. Neither he nor his wife had rations?—Well, she would have fed him and kept him in idleness. He is a lazy fellow generally. He would have eaten her rations, and it would have been a bad example to the others.

1211. Was she willing to work?—Yes, she was willing.

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1212. How long ago is this?—Just about twelve months ago.
1213. Has he been working well since he resumed work?—Very well. He was a very violent tempered man before, and it seemed to tame him.
1214. How were they fed in the meantime?—By the other natives.
1215. They are very good-natured in that way?—Yes, they are very good-natured. He did not starve, but he did not get it from me.
1216. Do you think it desirable to pay for the labor of the aborigines?—I think blacks should be paid for their work, as they can always obtain small wages on any station.
1217. To what amount would you pay them?—In proportion to the labor they do.
1218. Taking wages and food, would you pay them the full amount they would receive off the aboriginal station, or would you pay them less?—The full amount. They work for very small wages on other stations, five or six or seven shillings a week and rations. That is the common wages for them. For stockriding I have known them get ten shillings, but not often.
1219. Do you propose to pay them that?—I should say about seven shillings a week would be about it. Some would require more who do carpentering.
1220. That would amount to a very large sum indeed, if you paid all the natives at that rate?—We must not pay them all. Some would be worth so much, others, in fact, scarcely any wages at all. I pay now the blacks for their work, out of the proceeds of the station, as far as I can. If a native does fencing, I pay say about half what a white man would get.
1221. By the job?—Yes. I give sixpence a rod for putting it up, sixteen shillings for posts, and ten shillings for rails.
1222. Do you make any reduction in those cases for rations?—No.
1223. The half price that you would pay the whites, and rations?—Yes.
1224. Contract work could be easily arranged, but the difficulty would be day work?—I do not think it would be advisable to pay day work, but by the job.
1225. Do you carry that out in washing arrowroot?—Yes, in washing arrowroot. I make the agreement, threepence per pound, taking the arrowroot and finishing it.
1226. In earthing it can you carry out the contract system?—Yes. I say, "I will give you so much for earthing this, say ten shillings an acre for hoeing it up." I find it difficult to get them to work without giving them something. It would have to be left to the discretion of the manager.
1227. What is the principle you would like; to pay them the full value of their labor?—Yes.
1228. If so, in what manner, whether by money alone, or by money and rations and goods, and at what rates or prices?—In money and rations. Their clothes, &c., they should purchase, as they have to do, out of their earnings, when away from the station.
1229. How are they clothed at your station; well?—By supplies from the Central Board.
1230. Do they pay for that?—No, not yet.
1231. Do they make up their own clothing?—Yes.
1232. It is sent to you in the piece?—Yes. Some trousers are sent ready-made, but the women's and children's clothes are made on the station.
1233. That is only lately?—Yes; we think it the best plan to encourage them to make their own clothes.
1234. Then the clothing is given in when you consider the value of the work?—Yes, that has been so.
1235. You are feeding and clothing them?—I think that should not continue. The desire to be paid for their work, I think, is right; but it is only fair that they should purchase their clothing.
1236. How could you carry that out?—The question is raised of a store on the station, and things would be sold to them just as at any other store.
1237. If you had a store you could carry it out. If the Central Board sent you a supply of things, say £30 worth of stores, you can sell them to the blacks, and of course you would simply have to account for the amount of clothes?—Yes.
1238. You think that would answer?—Yes.
1239. If you could, you would prefer to pay full value for their work, and induce them to buy all their clothing?—I would.
1240. You would if you could?—I think so. They should not be paupers.
1241. There is a difference between the clothing which may be described as necessary, and the ornamental?—Yes.
1242. The necessary clothing, how would you carry that out. You propose that they should pay for the necessary clothing by labor?—Yes.
1243. If you received certain materials from the Central Board you would have to pay them back in money?—Yes. My idea was only supposing we were to have a store and we were to sell. It would do them no good to give money unless they could purchase at the station.
1244. There is a vast difference in the matter of ornamental stores purchased there instead of outside from hawkers, and stores such as necessary clothing?—Yes, there is a difference.
1245. How would you repay. If the necessary clothes were given you, you would have to give the money back?—I should have to consider that.
1246. In estimating the amount you may take into consideration the amount of clothing you gave them?—Yes, that could be done. His clothes could be taken as part payment, but hitherto the blacks have never taken them into consideration, but I think we could impress that upon their minds, that is the necessary clothing and also the ornamental clothing they must purchase with their own money.
1247. With regard to this question, supposing that a store were established to supply them with those articles of clothing which are not absolutely necessary, do you think, from what you know of the nature of the blacks, they would be induced to spend their money in that way?—Yes, I think so.
1248. To prevent them from going to hawkers and outside?—They would rather purchase on the station, but some might prefer to buy drink.
1249. Would the store not induce them to lay the money out and not have it in drink?—Yes.
1250. Is your station visited by the hawkers?—Yes. They come by the boat. A storekeeper from Bairnsdale comes about once in three months, and I find that the blackfellows will come for money when they see the goods there.

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1251. Do you ever find any articles brought by any person, such as drink?—The hawker has never brought it on the station.

1252. Do the blacks go away and bring it on the station?—I have never seen it, but I believe it has happened once or twice. I have been told so by an aboriginal.

1253. About the entrance they have facilities for getting drink?—Yes, and I have communicated with the police, but it is very difficult to deal with it. I have had one case before the court. The last time the policeman promised he would have a detective to watch the case, but nothing has been done.

1254. Do you find it a serious difficulty?—I find it a serious difficulty to prevent the blacks getting grog, but we are 20 miles from a licensed public-house.

1255. How far is this shanty away?—Seven miles from Lake Tyers.

1256. Are they licensed to sell?—No, there is no licensed house nearer than 20 miles.

1257. Do you think it advisable that rations and goods should be purchased on the station and a store kept for that purpose; and if goods, of what kinds should a supply be kept?—A store would be a great boon to the station in which should be kept sugar, tobacco, and general drapery, as they are often short of the former articles, their rations generally not being sufficient.

1258. That is sugar and tobacco; do they find the ration of sugar not sufficient?—I give them two pounds a week.

1259. That is the able-bodied?—Yes.

1260. What do you give the children?—The children are in the boarding-house.

1261. The women?—In the families I give a pound and a half.

1262. What is the quantity of tobacco they are allowed?—30 lbs. for three months for the whole station.

1263. How many people?—Over a hundred.

1264. That includes all?—Yes. There are 60 people that smoke.

1265. Do the women smoke as a rule?—Yes, the elder women.

1266. What do you think is a fair supply of tobacco for a native a week?—I do not give any black as much as four figs a week; two figs is what he generally gets. I give it to him twice a week; but a blackfellow would smoke even more than that, and if a store were kept we would have to keep a supply.

1267. Do they now purchase it?—Yes, they do.

1268. Where?—At a store at the Lakes' entrance.

1269. Do you think it is desirable to give more than two figs a week?—No, I would not give them more than that. They are heavy smokers, some of them.

1270. You must consider keeping tobacco in the store you would facilitate their getting it, and encourage their smoking. Do you think that is desirable. The difficulty of obtaining it might check them?—We might consider that and not keep tobacco there at all. I have tried to get them to abstain from smoking.

1271. Unless they abstain from principle it is no use?—No.

1272. You would keep general drapery?—Yes.

1273. You think it would be better to keep tobacco, and give it out with discretion?—Just so; to have a little in the store.

1274. But you would not give more than the present ration, two figs a week?—No.

1275. Do they on the other stations?—I do not know what they give.

1276. Do those wild blacks who came to you from Maneroo smoke?—Every one of them.

1277. And more or as much as your own?—Just about the same. The only difference is that they smoke opium, some of them, which is far worse.

1278. Did they bring opium on the station?—I have never seen it, but they tell me that they buy it from the Chinamen when they go abroad. My attention was drawn to it by a boy in the school. He seemed sleepy, and I told him to go out, and they told me it was caused by opium; and I found that about a dozen smoked opium.

1279. Is the station ever visited by Chinese?—No; in fact I do not think they smoke it on the station.

1280. Did they tell you where they acquired the habit?—At Maneroo.

1281. At the Kiandra diggings?—I think so. I think the danger is very little of smoking opium on the station, and the only danger is that they may be tempted outside.

1282. Are they not supposed to have acquired the habit on Maneroo before they came?—Yes; there are only a few of them, half a dozen or a dozen amongst them; a few boys and one girl.

1283. Would it be practicable to pay to the managers of the stations the wages earned by aborigines, instead of to the aborigines themselves, and thus encourage a resort to the stations for what they want, instead of squandering their money elsewhere?—If a store were on the station it would be a good plan if the managers were paid on behalf of the blacks; but I fear there would be great difficulty in carrying out this arrangement. Some gentlemen would send their money to the station, and I daresay some would not.

1284. Do you think that difficulties would be met with on the part of the aborigines themselves?—I asked the blacks themselves, the morning I came away, and read these questions to the men. They said they would like their money to be paid on the station. There was not one said "No."

1285. They all assented?—Yes; they all assented.

1286. Would they be likely to have any objections when the money became payable to them, or would they be satisfied to have the money sent, that the right amount of money would be sent?—They would be satisfied of that. They would know I would receive their account. They generally bring their account when they receive the money, and they ask me if it is right, and when I read it I say, "Have you so-and-so? That is right." A few of them might want their money at once.

1287. Do any of your blacks save money. Have you any savings bank or box?—The fact is, they do not earn so very much. They have not much to save. I am able to give very little. They have not the means of saving yet.

1288. Do you not think, too, that when they work they are rather apt to spend a large amount of their earnings in living—eating?—Yes; some men who do not drink at all spend it all in food. There was Billy McDougall, spent it all on himself and his family, and brought back no money when he returned from work.

1289. They spend without much foresight?—Yes.

1290. Do you think it advisable to board out orphan children?—I would not recommend the boarding out of orphan children, as the blacks generally do not wish it.

1291. Did you ask them that question?—Yes.

1292. At that meeting you held?—No; before that. They came to me and asked me. There is a little difference between orphan children and other children among the blacks. There is no fear of an orphan child being destitute, because when a child loses its father it has another father, who takes up himself the care, and loves the child as much as the parents. They would not like to see that child removed from the station. They call it their own child. A child always has two fathers and two mothers, or five or six perhaps.

1293. He is not an orphan really?—He is not an orphan, not in their way. In fact they are more indulgent to him, from the fact that he has lost his own father or mother. They are very kind altogether to their children, so that, according to the views of the natives, there are no orphans at all.

1294. Was their answer unanimous disapproval to that?—The blacks disapproved of their children being taken.

1295. Do you think it desirable to encourage the aborigines to hire their labor out to employers in the country either for long or for short terms?—As little as possible. As a rule the blacks receive no benefit from hiring themselves out, as they squander their money foolishly. This does not apply to all. In regard to blacks hiring themselves out, I have no particular objection to a blackfellow going to work for a neighbour, only the difficulty is in regard to getting grog. If they could be prevented getting drink, I do not see there is any particular harm in his going to work.

1296. He is left to associate with the lowest order of the whites. They cannot resist the temptation?—Just so.

1297. Would it be advisable to prevent them going into the townships at all?—Yes.

1298. On those grounds?—On those grounds.

1299. If they could not get drink there would be no objection?—No objection, if they could not get drink. I consider Christianity the only thing to prevent them. I have one William McDougall, who is a good Christian man, I consider, and he never purchases drink. In that case I should not be afraid of their going anywhere.

1300. Have you many on your station that you consider Christian men?—I have five or six men that I consider live very decent lives. I do not consider that they are as good as "Billy." I have not such confidence in them as in him; but there are some women who show by their lives that they are changed women. Not more than four that I consider I could have confidence in. Most of them on the station live very moral lives, but those I should have confidence in entirely are Christians.

1301. Having regard to the habits and disposition of the aborigines, do you think it desirable that the youths should be apprenticed to learn trades or occupations?—I think it would be well if the Board had the power of putting boys to trades who are not willing to reside on the station, so that they may have the alternative of settling or working elsewhere. Some boys might want to go away. If such boys knew that they would have to go to work at some trade elsewhere it would in a great measure prevent them from wishing to wander.

1302. You would encourage it in order to stop it?—Just so, that the Board should have the power. I do not think myself that you would find persons willing to take the boys to learn trades.

1303. Do you think they could learn trades, shoemaking for instance?—I think so; or basket-making.

1304. Do you think they would stick to it?—I dare say some would. A man like Charley Alexander.

1305. He is an exception?—Yes; some of the boys are very quick at learning. They would pick up trades; not blacksmithing, because they are not strong enough.

1306. They have not physical strength?—Some of the young men are strong, but they might consider that hard work. Carpentering, they need not go away from the station to learn that. I can teach them that and many other kinds of work. Shoemaking they would have to go to learn from the station.

1307. Harness-making would be a most profitable thing?—Yes, I think they would learn that very easily.

1308. Having learned that would they work at it?—If they knew that they had to make their own living. Hitherto they have had the idea that they will be supported whether they work or not. It has been a trial to us that the blacks know that they receive the stores from the Government. They said we had the stores. The difficulty was to get them to work; for then and even now there are those who think we are doing them wrong if we stop their rations. They think they have a right to the stores.

1309. Having an aborigine who had learned the trade, do you think he would work at it so as to support himself?—I think so.

1310. You have never had any experience of it?—No.

1311. Do you think it desirable to encourage handicrafts at the stations, and of what kinds?—I think the station is not yet ripe for establishing handicrafts. In future, if one or two of them learn trades they could teach their brethren. That is the only idea of handicrafts. If some of the young men were to learn they could work at it on the station and teach the others. I do not think it would be worth while to have a regular tradesman on the station. There are not enough boys to employ a man.

1312. Should the main object of a station be to train the aborigines to earn their living abroad or to form self-supporting communities on each station?—The blacks should form a community on each station; even if they went away to work for settlers, they should have a place which they could call "home."

1313. You think they would relapse into bad habits without the station?—Yes.

1314. You think the young children now growing up on the station would similarly require to be kept in a self-supporting community; they cannot be trusted to go out?—I think so. If they had been properly brought up, they could be trusted to go and earn their own living.

1315. Not to be absorbed?—Not to be absorbed, but I would keep the station for them to return to, even for the young.

1316. You draw that distinction between them and the white people, that they are not able to go alone?—Yes.

1317. That is not your view. Why is it you think it necessary for them to have the station always under their lee as the resort, a protection?—Because I think they feel they have a home to meet at together. There are seasons when blacks love to congregate for festivity.

ABORIGINES.

Rev. J. Bulmer,
continued,
24th May 1877.

1318. Why could not they go, having been taught a trade, into the world, and support themselves as a European would?—The habits of the blackfellows are so different from Europeans. There would always be blackfellows meeting somewhere, and they would fall into their savage habits.

1319. Even the young ones?—Even those young ones, after we had educated them, would fall into their old habits again.

1320. Even Billy Macdougall?—Yes, if he was left.

1321. Are they treated as an inferior class outside?—I think they are.

1322. Has that any effect in lowering their self-respect?—No, I do not think that.

1323. They are very sensitive?—They are very sensitive if you show them a marked contempt; if you do anything of that sort, oh, yes.

1324. Have you any suggestions to make as to the treatment of the aborigines?—The blacks should be treated in a strict business way, kindly but firmly, so that they may not in future be mere paupers, but have an independent mind. That is the course that I pursue, kindness as well as firmness, and the blacks know that very well that I love them and would do them good.

1325. You think they appreciate kindness?—I do.

1326. Can you give any information as to the aborigines who are not at the stations; the number in your district, their condition and mode of obtaining a livelihood; and can you make any suggestions for the amelioration of their condition?—There are three or four who habitually wander. They are confirmed drunkards, and earn their living by begging and working. I daresay if the Vagrant Act were brought to bear upon such they might be induced to return to the station.

1327. How do they support themselves?—By working and begging.

1328. Do they receive any food from any of the guardians?—There are no guardians of aborigines at Gippsland. There are only three or four blacks who wander.

1329. Are they married?—No, they are single men mostly.

1330. About what ages?—One is about 40, another about 35.

1331. How many actually have you?—About four in my own district.

1332. Are all those unmarried?—They are all unmarried.

1333. And are able to work?—And are able to work.

1334. They support themselves by working and begging occasionally?—Yes.

1335. Or begging generally and working occasionally?—Yes. One of them is a regular drunkard, and would come under the Vagrant Act. He is a good workman when he likes. He comes to my station sometimes:

1336. For how long?—For two months; never more than that.

1337. That would reduce the number to three?—Yes.

1338. What do you attribute those men's living off the station to; why do not they remain longer than two months?—I think it is mostly their love of drink that makes them wander.

1339. Do you think that having put those men in gaol would induce them to come to the station?—I think if they were cautioned, if the policeman told him that he must return, warned him, I think it would have that effect.

1340. Do you think they have respect for the law?—I think so if they know it will be carried out.

1341. Those that you speak of, the men who belong to your district and who do not continuously stop on your station?—Yes.

1342. Are there any towards the Snowy River not gathered in any station?—I had all the Snowy River tribe there on the coast, but there are the blacks of Bidwell station. They have just come now; they had hitherto been wandering.

1343. How many have come to your station?—About thirty.

1344. How long ago?—About eight months ago.

1345. Attracted by what they heard of your station?—Yes.

1346. Are they remaining quietly?—Yes, some of them. When I came away there were one or two pair wanted to go for something, but would soon return.

1347. Did they leave the children at Bidwell?—No.

1348. They have all come in then?—Yes, all come in. There are not many, only six of the Bidwell's.

1349. Do you suppose there are any left scattered?—No, not in Gippsland.

1350. You think that there are none in Gippsland that have not reached your station?—I think so.

1351. Were all those thirty Bidwell blacks belonging to Victoria?—Only ten of them. The rest were Maneroo blacks.

1352. With the exception of Murray Jack. He is a Victorian?—Yes.

1353. Is he married?—Yes.

1354. Has he any children?—Yes, or his grandchildren. There are ten Bidwell blacks, and Jack and his wife and daughter.

1355. That is five from the head of the Murray. That is fifteen from Victoria?—Yes.

1356. And the other fifteen New South Wales?—Yes.

1357. Have you had conversations with those men about the motives that induced them to come to your station?—Yes; the motives of some were that they were dying off in Maneroo by the measles. They got the idea that they were dying off, and they thought they would be safer on the station, and, also, that they wished to bring their children to school. I had sent messages to them often in past years.

1358. How long ago?—Two or three years. I had done so, and I had always had promises that they would send them, and now they have brought them; and there is an old man who is going for four or five more that he has up there.

1359. Is it the education, or is it the feeding?—I think perhaps both.

1360. They appreciate the education of children?—Yes. They like to know they can write. One or two blacks who were taught have gone back, still it left some impression, and I think that has been the means of the others coming down.

1361. Is that what you dread, a wild disposition evincing itself suddenly after they learned a trade outside, unless they have the station to fall back on?—Yes. They want some moral support.

1362. How can you get this; can you suggest any method by which you could get these border tribes to come to you. Do you think paying visits would have any effect?—The only method I know of is to make the station attractive to themselves. Just the morning I came away one said to me, "When you

come back I want to build a house," and I said, "The station is not so nice as it may be, but very likely it will be more attractive some day;" but he said, "I feel I would rather live here now as it is than go away working on the stations."

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continued,
24th May 1877.

1363. Was he unmarried?—Unmarried.
1364. How long had he been on the station?—About six months. He went away for a month.
1365. This is the first time he evinced a desire to remain permanently?—Yes. Before he said he had to go out and work for his living, but now he wants to stop.
1366. Is that from a reluctance to work?—No, he works very well on the station.
1367. Have you any very old blacks on the station at Lake Tyers?—Yes, I have one very old man.
1368. Does he ever talk about the time the blacks were brought there?—No, he does not; but many of the number well remember when Billy Macdougall's mother and father were shot down at Snowy River.
1369. You have a master on the station, a teacher; is he connected with the Education Department?—Yes, Mr. Hallier.
1370. Have you your school inspected?—Yes, the inspector has just been to the station.
1371. What proportion have passed?—He did not examine for results, he merely looked round the school. It was not the season for results.
1372. Have they yet been examined for results?—It is a capitation school, and the inspectors have not yet done so as a rule. The results I forget just now, 70 per cent or something like that I think.
1373. Do you examine them yourself; do you think they are progressing?—Yes; I think so. I examine them on the Sabbath on religion.
1374. I mean in their secular knowledge?—I do not examine them myself in the school, not in secular things, I leave that to the Inspector mostly.
1375. What is the average attendance?—Nineteen; that includes my children.
1376. Do you think they are capable of attaining a high proficiency in the different subjects they are taught?—I think so with a good teacher. There are instances of that on the other stations.
1377. Relatively with your own children, comparing them with them, do the natives learn as rapidly and easily?—Yes, in fact, quicker than some of my children. They are very quick at taking it in.
1378. Do they retain it as well as your own children?—No, I do not think so.
1379. How far advanced in arithmetic is the most advanced?—Some of the boys are in vulgar fractions.
1380. Are any of your children as far as that?—Yes, one of my boys.
1381. Have you heard any complaints of the schoolmaster, that he is unable to teach the higher branches?—He has not attained to that yet, but they are capable of learning, no doubt of that.
1382. But it is not necessary that the schoolmaster should be specially trained for natives. They all speak English?—No, not in the native language; but he should be a good and expert teacher.
1383. Are there any of the old blacks with whom you have to converse in their own language?—Yes, some of them, but most of them understand broken English as a rule. I need not speak the native language to convey my meaning. To the very old ones I do sometimes, they like it best; they get more attached to me by that, they feel I belong to them.
1384. They are quicker in observation and in perception than European children?—Yes, they seem to develop quicker.
1385. Not so much the physical development. I mean their powers of learning. Are they equal to those of European children?—Yes, I think so.
1386. You doubt their powers of retaining?—Yes.
1387. Have you had opportunities of forming an opinion of that?—Only from this, that they do not care about books as a rule, and unless they are forced to write they are sure to lose what they have learned.
1388. They will not keep up that knowledge unless they are compelled to?—No, you have to handle them like children. Many of them are not fond of reading. You have to tell them to take a book, they would not do it of their own accord.
1389. Yours is poor land. Would anything except arrowroot grow on it with profit?—I have been told that if I could get that hill on the western side, on the other side of the vale, it would grow crops. I am having it cleared now, ready for cultivation.
1390. Do they do anything in the way of fishing?—For their own use.
1391. Not in the way of preserving for sale?—Not yet.
1392. Might not that be turned to account as an industry?—I think it might.
1393. Is there not a man living near there making a living at it?—He is making a poor living. Fishing is a very uncertain thing at Lake Tyers.
1394. Are not the blackfellows better able to catch fish than the whites?—Yes. I have thought of turning my attention to curing fish for sale. The Lake Tyers fish are very good salted, and dried, and smoked. I have thought it would be a very good occupation.
1395. Would osiers or willows grow?—No; the land is not flat enough.
1396. You have no land equal to Mr. Roadknight's?—I think we have quite equal. It is there brought up to perfection by manure.
1397. What is the great difficulty in that station with the management of it. The principal difficulty, is it not the want of some land on the other side of the lake?—That is one difficulty for a paddock, and the other difficulty is that the reserve would not be large enough to support cattle.
1398. In fact, you want a larger reserve, and a piece of land on the western side of the lake, to act as a paddock, where you could keep stock?—Yes; that would be a great boon. A gentleman was the other day examining that country.
1399. At present you get all your meat from Mr. Roadknight, five miles off?—Hitherto we have; but I am keeping some sheep, to obviate that. It has to be brought by drays and boats.
1400. Your stores?—Over by boat, and then by drays.
1401. And you require a paddock to put the bullocks in?—Yes. At present I keep them in my brother's place; but we ought to have one of our own.
1402. Does anything else occur to you?—No.
1403. If anything occurs to you that you wish to add to your evidence, will you add when it is sent to you?—I will.

The witness withdrew.

Adjourned to to-morrow at four o'clock.

FRIDAY, 25TH MAY 1877.

Present :

His Honor SIR W. F. STAWELL in the chair ;

A. W. Howitt, Esq., P.M.,

G. W. Rusden, Esq.,

F. R. Godfrey, Esq.

The Rev. Alex. Mackie examined.

Rev. A. Mackie,
25th May 1877.

1404. You have been at Lilydale for some time ?—Six years.

1405. And had opportunities of seeing Coranderrk ?—Yes.

1406. Have you been in the habit of visiting there ?—Yes.

1407. If you will favor us with any suggestions that will help us to alleviate the present condition of the aborigines, from your experience there, or any conclusions you have drawn, we shall feel obliged. How often were you in the habit of visiting ?—I may say that, since Mr. Green left the station, I have been in the habit of going every fourth Sabbath, and conducting service.

1408. One service ?—One service, on the Sabbath afternoon. I go from Lilydale, and I find the attendance is very good, a very attentive congregation. I have the best attendance when the weather is bad ; in fine weather I find the aborigines very often away about the reserve, camping under the trees. The last time I was there I had about 120 altogether, I think. Of course the white residents attend also. Besides that, I go occasionally during the week. In cases of sickness they sometimes send for me when there is no doctor to be procured. I go in cases of that kind, and give what assistance I can, because it happens that I studied medicine also.

1409. Have you attempted to catechise either the young or the old ?—Yes.

1410. Do they appear to have any real ground for religious belief ?—The young ones have, those who have been in the school.

1411. But not the older ones ?—Not the older ones. They would require a great deal more instruction than I have time to give to them.

1412. Have you ever been on any of the other stations ?—I have not.

1413. Nor had any other experience of aborigines. I ask with reference to drawing a comparison between their condition and others ?—Not between the various stations. I have not been on any but Coranderrk.

1414. Have you had any opportunity of becoming acquainted with the natives anywhere else ?—I have known the natives of Victoria for the last twenty years, and had a good deal of conversation and intercourse with them.

1415. And know their habits of thought ?—Yes, both in Victoria and New South Wales ; a good many in Coranderrk I knew in their wild condition twenty years ago. I think that there should be some classification with regard to them. The real blacks who are advanced in years are very ignorant, and very inaccessible to religious instructions ; but those who have a little European blood in them seem a different class altogether.

1416. The half-castes ?—The half-castes. Those who are almost pure Europeans I think should scarcely be recognised as aborigines at all.

1417. What distinction do you observe between the half-caste, the simple half-caste and the aborigine. The half-castes are far more intelligent naturally, even without any definite instruction. I may say that I married a couple about three weeks ago. The woman was a pure black, the man was a half-caste. He had received no instruction, and could neither read or write, but he was a very intelligent man naturally. He knew what he was about in everything that I told him ; but the woman herself seemed thoroughly dark, could comprehend hardly anything. This man has been working for years on a station on this side of the Murray. He does not reside at Coranderrk, but came down to get married and see his friends, intending to go back again. He does not like Coranderrk, and there was a very great difference between the two.

1418. Was he supporting himself by his own exertions ?—Yes.

1419. That is only one instance, and his intermingling with the whites might have quickened his powers of observance and intelligence ?—Yes, I think so. I think that has done it.

1420. Because we hear in the schools there is no perceptible difference between the half-caste and the aborigine in the power of acquiring learning ?—Having them young I do not think there is much difference. I find in the school at Coranderrk there are some pure aborigines of the young equal, if not superior, to the half-castes, in their mental acquirements with the same opportunities.

1421. Have you had any experience in teaching them ?—Just catechising them, putting questions to them.

1422. On religious subjects ?—On religious subjects.

1423. In imparting knowledge in any other way ?—No. I have examined them in the school, seen their writing and arithmetic and exercises in the school, and asked them questions on grammar, and I find they answer as well as any white children in any of the common schools in the colony.

1424. The examining them in scripture should enable you to form a judgment as to their intelligence ?—Yes.

1425. Their intelligence may be exhibited in that as much as in any other subject ?—Yes.

1426. You think they are equal in power of learning to whites ?—Yes, I think so.

1427. What classification would you suggest then to be carried out ?—Well, I think that the pure blacks are a race who are rather decreasing, inclined to decrease, and others who are not blacks are increasing, and I think will probably go on increasing ; and I fancy that instead of treating these as aborigines they should rather be treated as Europeans, and separate the pure blacks from them.

1428. Do you not think that would have an injurious effect on the pure black ; lead them to suppose they were regarded as a lower class than the others. Why not look forward to absorbing all in the general population ?—Yes ; but I think that should be done by absorbing the half-castes first of all.

1429. Why not be guided by their intelligence or advance in civilization, whether half-caste or pure ?—Yes ; whether half-caste or pure.

1430. Do you think, from your experience of them, they have a great attachment to their wives and children?—I think they have a very great, but not the same kind of attachment as civilized Christians have. I think it is more a blind sort of attachment. I do not think they would agree on any consideration to separate from their children. For instance, the girls, who are either black or half-castes, if they have children, what would be called illegitimate children, I think they would never dream of exposing them or abandoning them.

1431. Does that attachment exist between the father and the children?—Between the mother and the children especially.

1432. But to some extent, the father of the children?—Well, there is a good deal of affection between the father and the children, but not nearly to the same extent, I think.

1433. When you speak of "would not desert them," are there instances where they have, and, apparently, if they are satisfied with the person to whom they can entrust them, they appear to let them go willingly. It is hard to say how much is due to persuasion, and how much to indifference?—My experience is that they are very much attached to their children, the mothers even where the father is not known.

1434. This is the result of your general experience, not only at Coranderrk?—Yes.

1435. But in the early days to which you refer, they frequently took very little trouble about them?—I do not think they have the same affection for them as they have for those half-caste children. Whether it is they are proud of them because of their white blood, I do not know; but they exhibit a much greater degree of care for those children than in their original state they did for their own offspring. But the mothers, I believe, were always fond of their children. The fathers I do not think were so very particular.

1436. You think any scheme which involved the separation of mother from child would not be justifiable?—I think not.

1437. And opposed to the natural feelings of both mother and child?—I think so. At the same time, those children who have very little black blood in them, being reared in Coranderrk, the fathers of them ought to be made to support them, and they not be a burden on the State. There are cases there where the children are almost white, and the mother nearly white, and where the mother knows the father very well.

1438. And they could be affiliated?—I do not see why such a girl's evidence should not be taken in court as well as any one else, as to paternity.

1439. No doubt it could, but the difficulty is to prove that there may not have been others as well as the man charged?—That is where the difficulty is. We will have to go back to old Manx law—to the ecclesiastical law—where the mother's evidence was taken, and if the father did not deny it, the support had to be given.

1440. Do you think that would happen here?—Perhaps it might. In regard to Coranderrk, I do not think it is a good position for the aboriginal station. I never thought so, and I do not think so still. At the same time I would be disposed to consult those who have been resident there before they were removed. But, as a matter of health, I believe it is altogether unsuitable, more especially for the aborigines who have been born on the other side of the Dividing Range. There are blacks at Coranderrk from the interior of Riverina. There is one from Menindie, and he is never healthy, often in bed sick, and he has a large family. Those from the Murray and the other dry latitudes find it not suitable for their health. There have been stray ones there come the last few months, and they will not stay. They say it is too cold.

1441. Do you attribute that to the damp cold temperature?—Yes, it rains there now nearly always.

1442. Is anything due to the moisture of the floors of the houses they live in?—No, I think they have on the whole very good houses; there is moisture in the floor to a certain extent sometimes. The only drawback is its being a fixture when it gets unsuitable. They used to be able to move their camp. And there is no doubt that some of those houses that they have been in, after they have been occupied a few months, ought to be abandoned by them even if they only went under a gumtree. There is another disadvantage, they will lie with their feet near to the fire, and under shelter, then on a fine day they will go wandering down by the Yarra Flats and lie out all night, and this brings on cold much more severely than if they had never been under a roof at all, through the transition, the suddenness of the change. I dare say Coranderrk is quite healthy for those who are natives of the Yarra district, but I do not think it is prudent to bring aborigines from the interior and make them reside there.

1443. Do you think it is objectionable on other grounds, its proximity to European population?—I think it is too near to Healesville as well. Those stations I think should be as remote as possible from the temptations of civilization. It should be almost self-confined, in fact I would prohibit the hawkers going in and selling fancy goods and drapery.

1444. Have them sold on the stations by the managers themselves?—Yes, or select a good native who could look after the store, and who would feel honored by being put in some position of confidence.

1445. Do you think there is much immorality at Coranderrk at present?—I do not think so.

1446. You spoke just now of the number of half-castes, and others who had children so nearly white that they could fix on the father; do you think there is much of that?—Well, the last two years I do not know of any births of that kind, and previous to that, I have tried to collect statistics, but I never could succeed. It seems that no register was kept. And in the cases that I refer to more particularly the mothers came only a month or two before the children were born from other parts of the colony.

1447. You think the morality of Coranderrk has improved within the last two years?—Well, I think it has.

1448. Have you observed any change for the better or worse with regard to their religious conduct?—No, I could not say there was. In fact my impression is they are improving. They are certainly improving in an educational point of view.

1449. You do not think their religious instruction is neglected?—I think it ought to be more systematic and constant than it is.

1450. They take information in very small quantities?—In very small quantities and require it often. I would be inclined to give them a systematic course of instruction every day, the younger ones say half an hour or an hour every day, as a part of the school programme.

1451. Do they receive any except what is given by you?—The schoolmaster has a Sabbath school, and he has the Church of England service every Sabbath I am not there.

1452. Does he instruct the children and catechise them?—Yes; he teaches them the catechism as well; and he teaches them hymns and singing.

ev. A. Mackie,
continued,
5th May 1877.

1453. But there is no instruction to adults?—No regular instruction that I am aware of particularly.
1454. Did you refer to children or adults when you spoke of improvement?—The children only.
1455. What is your impression as to the morality or religious progress drawn from?—From conversation with them, and talking with them on religious matters, visiting at their houses—I do that occasionally when I go up on the week—and on the whole my impression is that they are better than when I went first. While Mr. Green was there I was on the station only once or twice on a casual visit.
1456. Then you scarcely knew the condition until within this last two years?—Only within the last two years.
1457. You can draw no comparison between those last two years and previous years?—No.
1458. Might I ask under what circumstances you commenced visiting there; were you requested?—I went of my own accord, but my impression is that Mr. Ogilvie asked me to go.
1459. Was there any obstructions or difficulty made with regard to it?—Not the slightest.
1460. And you have never had your efforts impeded as regards visiting there at any time, either by the officers there or by the Board?—Never in the slightest. The managers there have generally assisted in every way. They seemed very anxious that I should go. I went, being a clergyman resident as near as any one else, and offered my services, and they were thankfully received. I have just continued them since.
1461. Are those children baptized?—I have not baptized any.
1462. Are you aware that any have been?—The present manager told me that Mr. Ståhlé baptized all the children while he was there.
1463. Since he left?—Since he left there are none, that I am aware of.
1464. Any marriages?—Yes.
1465. Who performed those?—I did.
1466. There must have been several children born since Mr. Ståhlé left?—Yes, they are not baptized yet, so far as I know.
1467. Do you think the natives understand what baptism is, the ceremony?—Some of them do. There are two or three I could name who understand it very well. There is Bamfield, Mrs. Morgan and her husband, and others.
1468. Have they expressed any desire to have their children baptized?—They have not themselves to me. The manager spoke to me in regard to it, and I said I would require to have the parents a little advanced in knowledge, until they could answer the questions I would put to them; and I would require them to be baptized themselves. I think the less intercourse they have with whites in the surrounding district the better.
1469. You would keep them a community themselves as much as possible?—Yes.
1470. What is your object in that. Supposing you could allow them to mix with the whites without being subject to temptations, would it not be much better?—It would be much better if we could allow them to mix with the whites without their being subject to temptations.
1471. You think that is scarcely practicable?—I think that is scarcely practicable.
1472. Your apprehension of temptation would lead you to isolate them that way?—Yes.
1473. If we look forward to their earning their own bread some day they must intermingle?—I think the younger ones might be gradually drafted off.
1474. Would the parents object to the younger boys being apprenticed?—I think not, not if they are a certain age.
1475. Youths approaching manhood?—I think when they get three or four years old they are left very much to themselves. I think the attachment I spoke of between mothers and children only extends to infants. I think after they are weaned and independent of the mother there is not the same attachment.
1476. Have you observed the attachment during your intercourse amongst them to the children by those who are related to them?—Yes.
1477. Are you aware that they regard uncles and aunts like second fathers and second mothers?—Yes.
1478. That shows that that attachment extends long after infancy?—Yes, a sort of clannish feeling of that kind exists also. The couple that I spoke of that came down from the Murray came down to visit the sister-in-law, that was one of their objects in coming down.
1479. Before you saw them at Coranderk had you many opportunities of being acquainted with their habits and customs with regard to children?—Only casually in the country; we had them very frequently camped about the ground in their wild state. There are a number of them at Coranderk intelligent, who, I think, might be self-supporting; they could manage very well for themselves, both male and female.
1480. Young ones?—Young ones; young men and young women.
1481. How would you dispose of them?—Allow them to go out to service, if they were willing to do so.
1482. Do you not think that would expose the young women to temptations, which we can hardly hope they would resist?—I think they would be in very much the same state as young European women. I think a community of Europeans, gathered from the same social rank, put together, would exhibit very much the same state of morality, on the whole, as they do. There are good and bad among them. There are some very bad, especially the older females; but some of the half-castes, who have been brought up under proper instruction, I think, put out with proper care, might do very well.
1483. Do you not think that they would be subject to greater temptations in consequence of their having been in some measure mixed up with the natives, and therefore imbibed some of their prejudices and ideas. Are you not aware that among the aboriginals themselves the code of morality was not as it is amongst Europeans?—It is very low. I am aware of that.
1484. If that were instilled into the minds of the half-castes by mixing with those, would they not be more likely to fall than the whites, whose code of morality is higher?—Those who have been under that influence probably would.
1485. But they are more or less liable, are they not, to hear from the old blacks something of what their notions were in the native state on that subject, and therefore become more liable to temptations than a lot of children brought even from a low rank of life, who have not had that instilled into their minds?—I do not think as a general rule that would be the case.

1486. Do you think the natives would be able to go out and earn their own living in a business of their own, say, take a selection and make their way in the world?—I think a very few of the half-castes would, if they were so inclined.

1487. You say they are capable of as much instruction as other people. What is the want in their case that they could not make their way in the world, suppose they were put on a piece of land?—I think they are not disposed to very much work. They are very much given to play, even the grown up girls, unless constantly watched.

1488. No stability of character?—No stability. They would not fix themselves to anything for long.

1489. Do you think they would not persist in any occupation of that kind?—I do not think they would. I think there are some of the men who would be able to make their way very well if they selected land, had property of their own.

1490. Half-castes you mean?—Yes, half-castes.

1491. Have you had a copy of those questions sent to you. In regard to the second question, "Can you make any suggestions for improvement of its management or as to maintenance of discipline at aboriginal stations?"—My impression is that it should be kept up chiefly by rewards, a system of rewards for those who are best behaved; in cases of breaches of discipline do not give them any reward. I understand that at Coranderrk there is a prospect of their getting rewards for the best kept gardens, and that has had a marked influence upon them in making them more tidy about their houses.

1492. You have observed that?—Yes, I have observed that.

1493. Then the next question is—"Do you think it desirable to pay for the labor of the aborigines?"—I think so in most cases, that is to those who would make a judicious use of what they got, those who work of course.

1494. You say you would not pay a man who would not make a judicious use of it. You mean a man who was in the habit of spending it in intemperance?—Yes.

1495. But suppose he worked as fairly, as many an intemperate man does, would you expect him to work for nothing when others were being paid for their work?—No. I would expect him to work for clothing and comforts, but not give him the control of his money; invest it for him, or lay it by for him or his family.

1496. You think they ought to be managed in a sort of patriarchal way, not strictly in accordance with law?—I think so, more in that way.

1497. Is there anything more that occurs to you, looking at those questions?—There is a question here, "Would you continue the present supplies if they chose to remain off the stations, when they might come in? What steps would you take?"—I think they should go to the stations for those supplies.

1498. And not receive them if they chose to remain off?—I think if they were distributed at the stations only, it would be better; let them travel to the station for them instead of to every run.

1499. If they chose to leave the station afterwards you would not restrain them?—No, but I fancy a considerable number of them would stay on the stations?—I do not know that many would stay at Coranderrk from the Riverina or Murray. I fancy they would take their rations and go away.

1500. They would get them much nearer at the stations on the Wimmera?—Yes.

1501. What steps would you take to induce them to come in. Would you merely confine your measures to issuing rations on the station and not off, or would you do anything else?—That would be the principal way. I do not see that we could take them violently. I think the employment of a missionary to induce them to come would be well.

1502. You suggest that a missionary should go round and appeal to them, and use his efforts by suasion to lead them to come in?—Yes, that is the way I think it should be done.

1503. As to those who live to a great extent by begging, would you take any steps to stop that begging as we do amongst the Europeans, our begging in the streets?—I would trust very much to suasion, and if they were within a reasonable distance of their stations the inhabitants should refuse to give them anything.

1504. How could you effect that?—Tell them to go back. If they came to me frequently, I would simply order them to go back.

1505. But that is where the inhabitants themselves see the expediency of doing it; but how would you induce that feeling, they like sometimes to keep them?—They will keep them working sometimes. That could only be met by prohibiting it, prohibit their giving them any work. You cannot prevent their giving a cup of tea, or some small help.

1506. If in reading your evidence, which will be sent to you, anything occurs to you which you would like to add, will you do so?—Yes. I might say something as regards the medical attendance. They frequently come to me, sometimes in the middle of the night, when the doctor is not able to go. Having studied medicine, I do not like to refuse to go in cases of urgency. I went up about a fortnight ago, at midnight, to see a boy who had lock-jaw, through being wounded accidentally by a black. I told them to go to the doctor at Lilydale, and they went, but he could not go; and I went, doctored him, and stopped till daylight, and the boy was much better by that time; and I believe he went on and recovered. I asked the last time whether the doctor had gone to see him; they told me he had not, nor had he been since.

1507. Had he been sent for?—He was sent for on that occasion.

1508. Is that doctor resident at Lilydale?—Yes.

1509. And he is the medical man who has been in the habit of attending regularly?—He attends the station. He may have been away from home on that particular occasion.

1510. Have you ever heard the blacks complaining at all of the want of medical attention or treatment?—Yes, they sometimes complain; several of them have complained.

1511. That they did not receive proper attention?—That they did not receive proper attention, did not get attention at all from the medical man. They have the notion that when they are ill a medical man should see them.

1512. Were they aware that you had studied medicine?—Yes, they are aware of that.

1513. Did you speak to them on the subject in the first instance?—It was the manager, Mr. Halliday, who spoke to me on the subject; and on this occasion, especially, he told them that if they could not find the doctor they were to go to me.

1514. Excepting colds and coughs, arising from the situation, I suppose, there is not much illness. They lead a healthy life?—I think on the whole they are healthy.

Rev. A. Mackie,
continued,
25th May 1877.

1515. What kinds of disease are prevalent at Coranderrk?—Coughs, and the lungs affected, rather, the lining of the lung, a kind of pneumonia they seem to suffer from, especially in the wet season; but, when ill, they like to have a doctor there, whether it is to do any good or not.

1516. That is the fancy?—That is the fancy.

1517. As you have studied medicine, have you had a sufficient opportunity to form an opinion as to whether, in fact, the treatment which would be suitable to a European constitution is suitable to theirs. Will the medicines act on them in the same way?—I think they do for the same disease.

1518. From what you have seen on the place, is there any want of attention on the station, medical comforts, or anything?—I think not, except the want of a few simple instruments.

1519. What instruments would you recommend?—Some simple surgical instruments. One night when I happened to be there, a man happened to be in a fearful state with the stomach, and he had been rolling and moaning all day, and I saw the state he was in; and he had been having doses of castor oil all day to no purpose. I could have relieved him in a moment with an enema; such a thing as that. I think a few simple appliances of that sort ought to be kept on the station.

1520. There is no medical man lives nearer than Lilydale?—No.

1521. This case of the boy you refer to was an accident?—Yes; one of them was throwing a brick at two dogs, and it struck him. The man who did the injury came to me and was in such a state, thinking he had killed the boy, that I could not but go to him.

1522. Is there any other suggestion you would make with regard to the medical attendance, or with regard to what might be done there?—No; I think not, with the exception of what I have mentioned. A few simple instruments and medicines would do the whole thing. It would be better, I think, for the doctor to be paid for each visit, than have it on the contract system. I understand he has the contract to go always when he is sent for, at present, and I believe he does not always go when he is sent for. There was the case of old King Billy. The doctor was sent for on three different occasions, and on the last occasion the manager drove down specially with two horses, and the doctor would not go. He knew the man was dying, and it was no use his going, but the relatives of the dying man thought it a great hardship; but I told them the doctor could not do anything for them.

1523. Is there anything more that occurs to you?—There is nothing more.

The witness withdrew.

Molesworth Greene, Esq., examined.

1524. You were on Mount Hope Station for some years?—Yes.

1525. And were acting as guardian of the aborigines?—Yes.

1526. And stores were entrusted to you to dispense to the aborigines?—Yes.

1527. Were there many on the station?—There were three or four women and two or three men in constant residence, and there were others that used to come and go between the neighboring stations.

1528. How did you give the food to them; did you adopt any system?—Rations were given to them once a week.

1529. And not more given than a stated quantity?—A stated quantity of blankets was given out twice a year, and the rations once a week in regular quantities.

1530. Some of the natives continued on the station?—Yes; a small number, I think about four men and three women and their children were permanent, almost. They used to go away perhaps for a few days' fishing, but they were, to all intents and purposes, resident; and other members of their tribe used to come occasionally.

1531. Have they remained on the station?—No; I got them sent off to Coranderrk, those that used to live there permanently.

1532. What was your motive?—Because there were half-caste girls growing up, and I knew that they would be living with the men on the station. They were just getting to the age of puberty. I should have liked to have kept the men, but they would all go together. I had a great difficulty in getting them to go at all. I know that some of the half-caste women were living with some of the stockmen, and I had a great difficulty to get them away. Mr. Green, of the mission station, came and helped me.

1533. You took that step in order to prevent the immorality that you foresaw?—Yes; because it was a bad thing for the station. I do not think that the natives themselves feel the immorality as European women feel it. It does not degrade them as it does Europeans. They do not see any harm in it; they do not lose their self-respect. They do not get "bad" at all from it.

1534. The Commission are anxious to know, from your experience and supervision as a guardian, how you thought that system worked, of distributing those rations and clothing. In your instance you put a stop to it?—The way it worked was that I found it was really quite unnecessary for the young women and young men, because they could have been kept by our station; so that the only ones who might have suffered were the old men and the old gins. The work of the able-bodied men was always a sufficient return for food and rations. The stations would have been glad to find them in those; and then, of course, their women would have been kept. In fact, I never saw a black suffer anywhere from want; even where the Government did not supply anything, they were always fed.

1535. Then this distribution by the State was unnecessary, to say the least?—I think so, quite.

1536. And injurious, so far as it allowed those women to remain away from the restraints of discipline?—Yes; there is one question that I understand has been raised, as to whether you would recommend that the Vagrant Act should be put in force for the natives. I think there is a strong case for that, because they congregate about bush public-houses, where they always get uproarious and disreputable. I would not allow a black to be about a public-house at all. There are sometimes some most dreadful scenes with the natives.

1537. Worse than among the whites?—Most frightful, because there is no restraint whatever; whereas on the stations they are as quiet as can be.

1538. Did you attempt to teach any of them, the children?—No. My wife tried to teach some of the young ones, but found it quite impossible to get on.

1539. Whilst they were running wild, so to speak?—Yes; it requires regular discipline.

1540. You had a young native boy with you as a groom?—Yes, a Queensland black, who was sent over with some cattle.

M. Greene
Exam.,
25th May 1877.

1541. How did he finally conduct himself?—He was a very difficult boy to manage. Young Stewart took him home to England, and they had to send him out after being there for a few years. He nearly killed Lord Blantyre's butler. He was very violent.

1542. Was that occasionally?—Yes; and he was always lazy and hard to deal with.

1543. Do you think those youths could be apprenticed to learn any trade. Some of those Mount Hope blacks were most useful men for station work for the time they would stay; but it invariably happened that, after a time, they would take a wandering fit and go away.

1544. You could not depend upon them remaining?—No. At Queensland we have blackfellows permanently employed at stockriding. They have their own saddles and bridles, and can be thoroughly depended on, all they require being a head stockman to look after them.

1545. Are they married?—They are nearly all boys.

1546. Will they remain after they are grown up?—They have been there for ten or twelve years; and the other members of the tribe are always anxious to have their boys entered to be taken on for the same work.

1547. They consider it advancement?—Yes.

1548. And that mode of life is suited to their tastes?—Yes, certainly. I think that if you were to apprentice them and confine them in workshops you would kill them. They would all get consumption and die.

1549. The work should be something pleasing to themselves, and also out of doors?—Yes; station work suits them well.

1550. And change of scene?—Yes.

1551. Do you think if this dispensing food and distributing blankets were stopped, and every inducement offered to them to go to the stations, that they would gradually come in?—Yes, I think so. It would drive them in, and if you stopped them going to public-houses, it would be a good thing accomplished, because the publicans like having them about their places.

1552. The great practical difficulty is how to get information without converting the police into informers?—I should not allow a black near a public-house; you have a law making it penal to sell drink to them, why not rigidly enforce it? I had a frightful scene once at the Mount Hope Station. A hawker managed to get in and sell them drink. The result was frightful; the blacks attacked each other with shear blades, some were nearly wounded to death and others went off quite wild. They were all mad drunk; it was the most hideous scene I ever saw in my life. We caught the hawker and got him fined under the Act.

1553. Do you think punishing the natives or the publicans would be the best way?—I would punish the publican and have the natives taken up and sent to some of those stations. They could be made to understand that.

1554. Do you think they suffer much from being confined in a gaol, or do they care about the degradation?—The restraint or confinement, I should think, would frighten them; but I would not send them to goal, I would send them to a mission station, and keep them there, say for three months. After that they might be allowed to stay or go, as they liked.

1555. You would punish the publican heavily?—Yes. I would throw the onus on him of keeping them away. There are sometimes most hideous scenes about the bush public-houses.

1556. Do you think the natives would purchase articles if a shop or store were kept on each of the aboriginal stations, instead of spending their money in drink?—I think they would. Little things, such as bits of dress and ornaments, they are very fond of.

1557. Were there many of the blacks wandering up and down the Murray?—We are fifteen miles back from the Murray. I think nearly all the black men of middle age, and the young blacks, were employed on the different stations in the district.

1558. Employed like other station hands?—Yes; but most of them would not stay so long, though some used to remain permanently.

1559. Do you think that was from the natural restlessness of the savage nature or from their taking offence at anything?—Entirely from restlessness. They used to come back again and be very good friends. They would start off sometimes in the middle of the work they were at, apparently for no reason, and go fishing, and that would occur perhaps at the very time they were most required. They used always to keep on steadily at shearing time.

1560. What was their money usually spent in?—In drink.

1561. Have they any idea of investing in the savings bank?—With me they had not the slightest idea of such a thing. They did not understand it in the least; they thought they were parting with their money in handing it over.

1562. It has been suggested that if possible the employers of labor should be induced to pay to the managers of the aboriginal stations instead of to the blacks themselves?—Yes.

1563. Do you think that practicable; it might be some trouble, but it would prevent the expenditure of the money in drink?—The blacks themselves would not like it.

1564. The blacks we have examined say they would?—I do not think they would. None of the blacks that I know would, they like getting the money themselves.

1565. You say they stopped on through shearing time, was that due to the assemblage of men at work?—I think so. I think they like the company. The black feels he is then one of a lot of shearers.

1566. And occupying a similar position to the whites?—Yes.

1567. And they value that?—Yes.

1568. You mentioned that you found the sending of stores to you unnecessary at the time you were there?—Yes, except for the old ones.

1569. Did you ever mention that to the Aboriginal Board which sent the stores?—No.

1570. Do you know whether the stores are still sent there?—I do not. I left there six years ago.

1571. How many years were you residing there?—I was there between four and five years.

1572. Have you anything else to suggest?—No. The only thing I am anxious about is in regard to the bush public-houses. If that evil could be put a stop to, it would be better for everybody.

The witness withdrew.

Adjourned to Monday next at Three o'clock.

MONDAY, 28TH MAY 1877.

Present :

F. R. GODFREY, Esq., in the Chair ;

G. W. Rusden, Esq.,

| A. W. Howitt, Esq., P.M.

Rev. Carl Wilhelm Kramer called and examined.

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1573. Have you had a copy of the printed questions?—Yes. I have not written any answers to them.

1574. We will go through them now. The first one is with regard to the site of the Ebenezer station—what is your opinion of that?—I do not think a better site could be found for an aboriginal station ; it is situated on a hill of limestone, so that the drainage is first-rate, and the dryness of the climate makes it I think very well adapted for the aborigines, who are so liable to be attacked by chest diseases. Of course epidemics are an exception, visiting healthy as well as unhealthy situations. This was the case with the measles two years ago.

1575. Will you state in what position this station is—whether in connection with any church?—It is entirely in the hands of the Moravians ; the land is held by trustees, and I am appointed by them, *i.e.* by the Moravians.

1576. Where are their head quarters?—In Saxony, Germany.

1577. Do you receive your instructions direct from them?—Yes.

1578. How long have you been in charge of Ebenezer?—About fourteen months.

1579. Before that you were living in Gippsland?—Yes, at Ramahyuck, I was schoolmaster there and assistant missionary.

1580. The next point is as to the position of the place as regards surrounding temptations?—It is situated within ten miles of Dimboola, a rising township.

1581. Is that sufficiently far away for the natives to be removed from temptations?—Yes.

1582. You have not found any inconvenience from the proximity to Dimboola?—No, not usually ; of course some of the wild ones will occasionally wander off, but that would happen anywhere.

1583. The second question has relation to the system of management—how does your system go on at Ebenezer now?—It goes on pretty well, only that we have not sufficient employment for the natives sometimes ; so that if the management which has been so far very good under Mr. Speiske is to be improved, the first necessity will be that the reserve should be enlarged, so that there should be something to manage.

1584. For the purpose of keeping more sheep?—Yes, so as to make it carry about 3,000 or 4,000.

1585. Would that give sufficient employment throughout the year?—Yes ; and there should be also a little cultivation, if not of wheat, hay, which I think grows very well : although there is no reason why wheat should not be tried at least.

1586. Grow enough, at any rate, for the wants of the station?—So that the cattle could be kept in good condition, and more of them kept for the additional work.

1587. Could you find any manual employment for them, such as making baskets of dish stands, or anything of that sort?—I do not know whether the men could make baskets or would. Have never seen them engaged basket making.

1588. The women make basket-rests at Lake Condah?—Yes, they make them at all the stations.

1589. Could you not encourage that so as to give them employment, and make some means of profit?—I think the women have enough to do with keeping their homes in order, and attending to their families and everything belonging to household duties—the men are what we want employment for. I am told there are only two women able to make good saleable baskets. Moreover the grass of which baskets are made has been destroyed to a great extent by the drought of the last two seasons, there being none about the station.

1590. How many men have you?—About fifteen.

1591. How many acres of land on the station?—3,700.

1592. To what extent do you think it ought to be enlarged?—About fifteen or sixteen square miles.

1593. How many sheep would that carry?—Between 3,000 and 4,000.

1594. You think that would then make the station self-supporting?—Yes, I think so ; and I think there should be a paddock set apart for cattle, to provide for a constant supply of milk.

1595. Have you any difficulty with regard to the maintenance of discipline?—No, I never have.

1596. Do they seem satisfied?—Yes, they seem to be pretty well satisfied. There are always some small complaints of course.

1597. But you find them amenable to your directions?—Yes, so far, I have.

1598. Have you had any difficulty about their wanting to leave the station without permission?—Yes, some have left and gone to Towaninnie.

1599. What is their object in going there?—Change ; they want to see their friends who are living there. But I have letters from some of them telling me they could not come back, they were afraid of the Wimmera blacks.

1600. Do you think there is any cause for fear?—I do not think there is. I think the temptation over there is too strong, and that the other is really an excuse.

1601. What is the temptation?—The man said in his letter there were about thirty blacks there, and we know how they live there : there is a ration depôt, where they get rations, and there is a public-house there. Mr. Finlay is owner or manager of Towaninnie Station.

1602. Is that one of the places where rations are supplied by the Board?—Yes.

1603. Do you approve of that system of depôts?—No, I do not at all.

1604. Does it prevent the blacks coming to your station?—Yes.

1605. If they were done away with, do you think the blacks would be induced to come in?—Yes, I think so ; most of them at least.

1606. Have you good reason to know how many blacks there are at Towaninnie who do not come to the station?—There are thirty the black man told me in his letter, and there are some along the Murray. I should think there would be altogether about fifty. At the other depôts there are not so many congregating.

1607. How do you think they are living?—I believe they work a little, and get their rations there. They work for a time and then take a spell. I have heard of them shooting wild dogs for the settlers, and some of them strip bark.
1608. Do you think it desirable to pay for the labor of the aborigines?—I could not get them to work unless I paid them.
1609. You pay them?—Yes.
1610. Have you any rate?—No, I pay some by the job, it depends on the kind of work.
1611. Can you give instances of the rates you pay—for sheep-washing—for instance?—For sheep-washing 2s., for mowing 2s. 6d., for shearing according to the rates at the stations outside. Other work, such as clearing, gardening, &c., 1s. per diem.
1612. What do you pay for putting up your brush fences by contract?—About half what the settlers give.
1613. And you find the men in everything?—Yes, they get the benefit of everything at the station, I merely pay for the labor.
1614. How do you pay them?—By money.
1615. So that partly in rations and partly in money you give them as much as white men get for the work?—Yes.
1616. Have you any difficulty in giving them satisfaction on that plan?—No, they are quite satisfied with it.
1617. What are the rations you give?—Seven lbs. of flour each, two lbs. of sugar, quarter lb. of tea, two small figs or one and a half large figs of tobacco a week; rice and oatmeal each two or three times a week, and half a pound of soap every other week.
1618. What rations do you give to the women?—They get the same, and the children half.
1619. Is that all, whether they work or not?—Yes, that is if they work.
1620. And if the women work too?—Yes, they have to keep their houses and families in order, and do a little sewing. They also do the washing and ironing for the mission families, for which they are paid. They also do some fancy work and sew rugs.
1621. Then in the case of neither the man nor the woman working, how would the children be fed?—That has not happened with me.
1622. Do you give rations to those who do not work?—No, not at all.
1623. Have you many of them?—I have not any at all just now. I had some just after Christmas, but they turned repentant and are working now.
1624. Do they have any part of the week to go hunting?—Yes, the whole of Saturday.
1625. What ration of meat do they get?—According to the work they do—1½ lbs. mutton a day for a man, the women 1 lb., and the children ½ lb.
1626. How many sheep do you use on an average?—Ten a week.
1627. Do they ever want more than their ration—do they ever try to buy?—Yes, they buy sugar and tobacco.
1628. But not meat or flour?—No, no meat, and the flour is always quite sufficient.
1629. They do not complain of want of meat?—No.
1630. Do they avail themselves of that opportunity for hunting on Saturdays?—Yes.
1631. Do they get much game?—Yes, a great many kangaroos. I believe at some stations they have the Wednesday also, which I think is a good plan to adopt when work is slack; in that case they would not of course have any mutton.
1632. Do you think it advisable that rations and goods should be purchased on the station, and a store kept for that purpose; and if goods, of what kinds should a supply be kept?—Yes, I think it is advisable, and I think they should be paid partly by money and partly in goods. That gives a hold over them—you can either give them or withhold them, according as they are working or not.
1633. That is to say, if you thought a man was not making good use of his money, you would give him goods and rations instead of money?—Yes.
1634. And you approve of having a store kept on the station?—Yes. In fact there has been one on a small scale, and I have found that it has answered well.
1635. Do hawkers come round sometimes?—Yes, very frequently.
1636. Do the natives buy much from them?—Yes, clothing material generally.
1637. Do you think that the natives would purchase goods of that sort from the store in preference to the hawker, if they could get them a little cheaper?—If they could get them cheaper they would.
1638. What things should be kept at a store?—Sugar should be at the head of all, and tea and soap.
1639. Any kind of ornaments, trinkets, or ribbons?—Yes, ribbons for the hair, for the young people—females.
1640. Dresses—would they sell?—Yes, the material at least for dresses; tobacco, powder and shot, and such like; kerosene, candles, maizena, and fish-hooks; also needles, sewing cotton, &c., and, perhaps, hoes, spades, rakes, and the like.
1641. Do any of your men go out to work among the settlers?—Yes, at shearing and harvesting.
1642. Do you not want them at home at that time?—I get as many as I want generally, and I let the rest go out.
1643. Would it be practicable to pay to the managers of the stations the wages earned by aborigines instead of the aborigines themselves?—That is a very vexed question.
1644. Do you think it is practicable?—In some cases it is absolutely necessary that it should be done, or the money all goes to drink. Those who went out (four or five) brought no money home, while those who worked here at shearing, for instance, laid out part of their earnings in the purchase of furniture, such as iron bedsteads, chairs, &c.
1645. You draw a distinction as to those who drink?—Yes.
1646. Who is to judge of the necessity?—I do not know how you can draw the distinction.
1647. Could not the manager tell which man he could trust?—Yes, I could tell, but I hardly know where to draw the distinction.
1648. If it was left in your power, would not that tend to maintain your authority?—Yes.

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continued,
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1649. Do you think it would be a good system to give you power to allow them to go out, and, in the case of those liable to get drunk, to say to the person who employed them that the money earned must go to you instead of to the blacks?—Yes, and therefore persons who may wish to employ them should never be allowed to decoy the natives away. I have known persons ride into my place, and arrange with the blacks to go out working without any reference to me, setting my authority aside altogether. It should be under the control of the manager as to who is to go.

1650. If you saw a man who was accustomed to squander his money, you would say, "If you go out your wages are to be paid to me;" but to another man whom you could trust you would say, "You may receive your money"—Yes.

1651. But would you go further and not allow any out without your consent?—Yes; because I have been sometimes vexed with the people riding up and hiring them without asking me at all whether they could be spared or no.

1652. You think that none should leave without the permission of the manager, and the wages should be paid to him at his discretion?—Yes. There is this to be remembered though, that as soon as they begin to work, they begin to draw on their wages.

1653. In those cases I presume you would say that no money at all should be given, but only the rations—that is in the objectionable cases?—Yes. I know four or five of the men who went to harvesting at a place three miles from the station once, and they drew all their money before the work was done.

1654. If the men were only allowed to draw rations, and the balance of the money goes to the station on his account, would that do?—Yes, I think so; but it would be a difficult thing, because I know when I employ them they begin to draw at once.

1655. Do you think it advisable to board out orphan children?—I do not think it advisable at all. We have some children at the station who were brought up in families of white people; one of them is spoilt entirely, both for whites and blacks, and the other has got round since she has got married; she was at first quite unmanageable. It seems with the girls that at a certain age they get unmanageable.

1656. In what way?—They want to get married.

1657. And if you do not let them get married they go wrong?—It seems to have been so. We do not find it so much when they are at the station.

1658. Are you familiar with the language of the natives?—No.

1659. Do you know their customs with regard to their orphan children—do their relatives take charge of them?—Yes, a relative will carry the orphan baby, and will say I am the father of that one.

1660. They adopt them as it were?—Yes.

1661. So that you can hardly consider that among the blacks there are any orphan children in our sense of the term?—No, the children are never abandoned; some other blacks take charge of them like the parents.

1662. Do you think it desirable to encourage the aborigines to hire their labor out to employers in the country, either for long or short terms?—I do not think it desirable if employment can be found for them at the station; but if not I would do it under the restrictions I have already spoken of.

1663. Having regard to the disposition and habits of the aborigines, do you think it desirable that the youths should be apprenticed to learn trades or occupations?—Yes.

1664. Apprenticed away from the station?—Yes.

1665. Do you think they are capable of that?—Some, perhaps, would make good carpenters and blacksmiths.

1666. But do you think they have stability of character sufficient to enable them to carry on such work?—That is what I doubt, particularly the full-blood blacks; but rather than see them go wrong in idleness, I should like to see them learning a trade.

1667. Would you wish that the manager should have a veto as to the person to whom the native would be apprenticed?—Yes, I should think that would be good, rather than let them go to anyone.

1668. With that provision you think there would be no harm in it?—No.

1669. But I understood you to say you had doubts as to the blacks having sufficient stability of character to go on?—I should not wonder if they went away.

1670. That they would not care to follow a sedentary occupation for any length of time?—No. Tailors and shoemakers—these would not do at all. Carpenters and blacksmiths and masons might do; but I think they would always be happier at the station.

1671. You have a man who works as a mason?—Yes; a half-caste—Stewart. Several of them, indeed; and one of the black ones too.

1672. A full-blooded black as a mason?—Yes.

1673. Where did he learn the trade?—At the station.

1674. From whom?—From my predecessor there. I think they would be far happier amongst their own people. I do not think they would like it very much—would fret for their own people and friends. Sometimes, at a certain age, the young men become unruly. In that case they might be sent out, or, perhaps, sent to another station.

1675. Do you think they could be kept under better discipline if they were sent out?—Yes, if a contract were made.

1676. Would they understand the nature of a contract of that sort for apprenticing?—Yes; but I think there would not be many who would undergo such a course of training. Masonry, carpentering, are all taught on the stations, not for them to set up to make their living by it. That is another question. I do not think any one of them could set up as a carpenter in Dimboola or any other town, and make a living by it.

1677. But he can make himself useful on the station under the direction of the manager?—That is what they are taught. They are taught mason-work, and there is a smithy and tool shop.

1678. Are any of them good blacksmiths?—Yes.

1679. Any full-blooded blacks?—No; they are not very good; the half-castes are the best.

1680. Should the main object of a station be to train the aborigines to earn their living abroad, or to form self-supporting communities on each station?—My opinion is, that self-supporting communities should be formed on the station.

1681. To remain in permanence?—Yes. If they are self-supporting then they are a burden to no one.

1682. And looking to the future, supposing that the race do not die out, do you think they would remain, or would they be absorbed in the general community?—I do not think the blacks would be absorbed; indeed I am positive that they would not.

1683. You think they would always remain a separate race of people?—Yes; but I am afraid they are dying away.

1684. There is not much increase?—No; no increase at all.

1685. Not even in your healthy situation?—No; none. Last year there were five deaths and five births.

1686. To what do you attribute that?—I do not know; but the number has gone so low now that an increase can hardly be expected at a great rate.

1687. But I suppose you have some young people there that marry?—Yes.

1688. Do they have families?—Yes.

1689. But that only made the five increase you speak of?—Yes, as against five deaths.

1690. Have you any suggestions to make as to the treatment of the aborigines?—I think that the school programme should be a little lowered for the children; the old should be treated with liberality, and the young and middle aged men as stated in the foregoing answers.

1691. Are there any special industries that you would suggest which could be carried on by the aborigines on the station?—Well, we thought of fruit growing, such as oranges and grapes, which sell well.

1692. Do you mean drying as well as growing?—We were going to sell some, to preserve some, and to dry it in various forms. The olive might also be tried—might grow, perhaps, if well watered. Sold £16 worth of fruit last year. Dried raisins and figs with good success.

1693. Can you suggest any other special industries?—No, not exactly for the Ebenezer station. Perhaps osiers might grow in the flats if the banks are not too high, which I am afraid they are.

1694. Do you think that the climate of the district is adapted to agriculture?—It is carried on to a great extent within seven or eight miles of the station—only the land is rather inferior; that is the land belonging to the stations. Near Dimboola the soil is well adapted for wheat.

1695. Has not the mission that you are employed by promised some grant of money for the purpose of purchasing agricultural implements?—No. Application has been made for that purpose, with the intention of carrying on agriculture; but I have not yet heard from them. I do not know whether it would do for grain. Mr. Spieseke, who, from his long residence here, should be competent to judge, considers the soil too poor.

1696. To make your station self-supporting it ought to have, you think, 15 or 16 square miles added to it?—Yes.

1697. About the fencing—would the blacks fence it, if you had the material provided?—Yes; the stuff is there on the ground; it has only to be put up. A log or a good mallee fence would be very good.

1698. By whom were the buildings erected on your station?—All by the mission.

1699. Without any assistance from the State?—No assistance from the State.

1700. Are there any particular buildings besides the huts for the aborigines?—There is a boarding-house for the children built of stone, and there is a school-house also of stone, and a church; also a residence for the missionaries.

1701. And those were all built by the mission?—Yes.

1702. And by the black labor?—Yes, they helped; but for the church there was a white man, a mason, employed; but they all helped. The other buildings, I am told, were also built by a white mason, with the help of the blacks.

1703. What has your station been in the habit of receiving from the Government for some time past?—Nothing but stores.

1704. Not any grant of money?—No, not at all.

1705. You have your income derived from the flock of sheep?—Yes.

1706. And upon that you exist?—Yes.

1707. How did you procure the sheep?—They were entirely given by the neighbors. Supposing the reserve was enlarged, there would be the question of stocking it.

1708. What would you suggest?—A number of breeding ewes should be purchased and some rams.

1709. And you think that would give the station a start, so as to make it self-supporting.—Yes; quite sufficient. We have been rather in an awkward predicament, having to apply to the neighbors for sheep—that is rather unpleasant, and I hope there will be no occasion for it in future, as the Government can well afford to treat the few remaining blacks liberally.

1710. How many have you on the place now?—About 1,500. We shored 1,800, but then the natural increase was only 200, and the neighbors gave us 150; but we kill at the rate of 500 a year, so that brought the average down.

1711. Would you not have cattle as well, so as not to kill sheep all the year round?—It would be better, and we should have enough to give a good supply of milk. For that purpose we should need a paddock fenced in.

1712. There seems to be some difficulty about it?—Yes, a great many.

1713. What are they?—I do not know; I think the difficulty has been that the present reserve is held by trustees. But I have since learned that the Board formerly were also against the extension of the reserve.

1714. What would you suggest?—We are quite willing, if the blacks get the land, that the trustees should resign. Our board at home agree that the whole of the land should be held as the other reserves are by the Government for the benefit of the blacks. Their good is all we care for.

1715. Does the difficulty rest, in your opinion, with the trustees, the aboriginal board, or with the Government?—I suppose if that difficulty about trustees were removed, the Government would be willing. Perhaps they are not acquainted with our intentions.

1716. With regard to the education, you said that, in your opinion, the standard was too high.—Yes.

1717. Do you think that the natives are not capable of being educated up to the same standard as the white children?—No.

1718. Is it not a fact that the school you had at Ramahyuck passed as high as any school in the colony?—Yes, they passed a good examination; but it was only by a continuous strain on them, and the teacher as well, which I think is not needed. There are some children that would absolutely never pass the standard, no matter how or by whom taught.

Rev. Carl W.
Kramer,
continued,
28th May 1877

1719. Then you think that the fact of their passing in that creditable way was not due to any extraordinary aptitude on their part, but to the extra time bestowed in teaching them?—Yes, just so; they are not more apt than white children.

1720. Do you think that the young natives that have been taught who have grown up keep their education or lose it?—They keep the reading and writing, but not the rest.

1721. They lose the arithmetic and the grammar?—Yes.

1722. How long were you teaching at Ramahyuck?—Seven years. I do not think they are so quick as white children.

1723. Do you mean the average of white children, or white children of the laboring classes?—Of the laboring classes I should say; the half-caste are a little smarter.

1724. Do you teach at Ebenezer?—No, I have a schoolmistress.

1725. Is the school visited by a Government inspector?—No, it is not.

1726. Do you approve of the system of having those schools just the same as State schools?—If the programme is made lower I think it would be better.

1727. You think the programme of the State schools is too high for them?—Yes.

1728. What standard would you suggest?—Good reading and writing—just as in the State schools—they should learn that.

1729. Would you not teach any arithmetic?—Yes; arithmetic up to the compound rules, excepting reduction; they never can learn about pounds and pottles and things like that.

1730. As to grammar?—There is no parsing and analysis needed; they do not understand the parsing, and as to analysis it is almost useless to attempt it with them. The arithmetic is the most difficult subject for them. I think if the Board kept the education under their control too, it would be better; their inspector could examine the school.

1731. Do you think that the Board should employ a schoolmaster, or only as far as examining?—Only to look after the school and see that it is not neglected.

1732. You think that would be sufficient?—Yes, I think so. I would not teach them any more under the Education Department.

1733. Is that in consequence of your experience?—Yes; seven years were quite sufficient.

1734. In consequence of that seven years, you would not attempt to teach them under that system?—No; that is what I wrote to our Board in quite plain terms.

1735. Do they receive any religious instruction at Ebenezer?—Yes, every day, Saturday excepted, from myself.

1736. How do you find their minds receive the religious teaching that you give them?—They receive it slowly, but they do receive it.

1737. Have you had any instances in which you could have confidence that they had received it satisfactorily?—Not with the children; but I have with the grown-up ones.

1738. Instances in which you feel satisfied that they were Christians?—Yes, that they were true Christians.

1739. And understood it?—Yes.

1740. How many?—About fifteen or twenty. The children are not Christians yet; they have the knowledge, but not the experience.

1741. Can you give any idea about the numbers of natives that are down the Lower Murray who might possibly be brought into the station?—I do not know whether those from the Lower Murray would come.

1742. But those from Towaninnie?—Yes, I think those would come; there are about thirty.

1743. And how many in other parts?—About twenty; that is fifty altogether.

1744. And you think it would be desirable to stop the supplies at the depôts, in order to induce them to come in to the stations?—Yes, I think so.

1745. After a due notice, you think it would be no hardship to go to the stations for the stores if they required them?—No. Lots have been at the station; but they were dissatisfied for some reason, and they went away; if they came again they might possibly stop.

1746. Would you suggest anything else besides stopping the supplies outside?—If sufficient inducement was held out to them in the way of work and pay. What makes them leave, they say, is—"There is no work here; we have no shirt on our backs." That is a phrase they learn somewhere, although when they come back again they are generally really without a shirt on their backs.

1747. Do you think it would be desirable to form a station lower down the Murray, near Kulkyne Station?—I do not know the place.

1748. About 40 or 50 miles due north from you down the Murray. Do you think it would be a desirable thing to form a station there for those Lower Murray blacks?—I think so; of course I do not know the place.

1749. Would it interfere with your station?—No, not at all.

1750. There is a thick belt of mallee between you and there?—Yes; and there are only one or two old men going between the two localities. If there were a station there, of course they might be tempted to go, but I do not know.

The witness withdrew.

Mr. William Edward Morris examined.

Mr. W. E. Morris,
28th May 1877.

1751. You are connected with the Church of England Aboriginal Mission?—Yes, I am secretary, and I have brought with me answers framed by our committee to the printed questions forwarded by the Commission, together with a few suggestions on general matters.—[*The witness handed in the same as follows.*]—

1. What is your opinion of Lakes Tyers and Condah as places for aboriginal stations?—Both excellent.

(1.) As sanatory stations?—Both excellent.

(2.) As to situation and the temptations to which the inmates are exposed by reason of proximity to population?—Could hardly be better situated.

2. Can you make any suggestions for improvement of its management, or as to maintenance of discipline at aboriginal stations?—That there be careful avoidance by the Central Board and their agents of any manifestation before the aborigines of the powers of control they possess and ought to exercise. It is destructive of discipline if the aborigines be encouraged in any way to appeal from the decision of managers to persons higher in authority. A manager should be empowered to stop the supplies of men and women able but unwilling to work.

3. Do you think it desirable to pay for the labor of the aborigines?—Yes.

4. If so, in what manner; whether by money alone, or by money and rations and goods, and at what rates or prices?—**By money and rations.** The rates and quantities to be at the discretion of managers, within reasonable limits prescribed by the Central Board. Mr. W. E. Morris,
continued,
28th May 1877.

5. Do you think it advisable that rations and goods should be purchased on the station, and a store kept for that purpose; and, if goods, what kind of a supply should be kept?—Yes. Principally grocers' and drapers' goods.

6. Would it be practicable to pay to the managers of the stations the wages earned by aborigines instead of to the aborigines themselves, and thus encourage a resort to the stations for what they want, instead of squandering their money elsewhere? If so, what suggestions can you offer for carrying out this object?—Managers of stations should have funds placed at their disposal in order to pay for work done on stations. This would, to a great extent, prevent aborigines working away from the stations, which is undesirable. Managers might be empowered to make contracts with employers, a condition of contract being that payment be made to the manager. At the same time aborigines should be at perfect liberty to make contracts and receive payment themselves.

7. Do you think it advisable to board out orphan children?—No.

8. Do you think it desirable to encourage the aborigines to hire their labor out to employers in the country, either for long or for short terms?—No.

9. Having regard to the disposition and habits of the aborigines, do you think it desirable that the youths should be apprenticed to learn trades or occupations?—No.

10. Do you think it desirable to encourage handicrafts at the stations, and of what kinds?—To a limited extent. Chiefly carpentering and basket making. The physique and inclination of the aborigines indicate pastoral and light agricultural pursuits as more suitable.

11. Should the main object of a station be to train the aborigines to earn their living abroad, or to form self-supporting communities on each station?—To form a self-supporting community on each station.

12. Have you any suggestions to make as to the treatment of the aborigines?—They should be treated as at present on the mission stations—kindly but firmly—be encouraged to industry and cleanliness, and be stimulated to rise above a mere animal existence by christian precept and example.

13. (1.) Can you give any information as to the aborigines who are not at the stations; the number in your district; their condition, and mode of obtaining a livelihood; and (2.) can you make any suggestions for the amelioration of their condition?—(1.) None other than that already in the possession of the Central Board. (2.) If the numbers be sufficient in any locality to justify the formation of another station, one should be formed after the pattern of those at Lakes Wellington, Hindmarsh, Tyers, and Condah. In districts where the numbers are few they should be removed to the above stations, care being taken to make liberal provision on the stations for the new comers, so that they may be impressed with the attractions of station life, and that the older inhabitants may not feel the increase of population likely to interfere with their comforts and privileges.

May 28/77.

WM. E. MORRIS,
Hon. Sec. Church of England Mission
to the Aborigines.

The following additional suggestions and remarks are respectfully submitted:—

1. That the aboriginal reserves be vested in trustees, in order that some security may be afforded to those who seek to promote the welfare of the aborigines that their work shall not be impaired or destroyed by the antagonism of persons opposed to the existing policy of the country concerning the aborigines. Provision could of course be made for reversion to the Crown on the extinction or extensive diminution of the aboriginal population.

2. That the aboriginal reserve at Lake Tyers be increased in area, in order that enough sheep and cattle may be run upon it to render the station self-supporting, and that the reserves be sufficiently stocked.

3. That, until a station becomes self-supporting, a small sum of money (say £50 to £100), as well as the rations and goods at present supplied, be placed annually at the disposal of the manager, in order that he may keep his station in working order, without having to make constant resort to the Central Board for every trifling expenditure. An annual account of expenditure could of course be required.

1752. In regard to the answer to the second question, might I ask, are you aware of any such interference at any time?—Yes. Not by the present inspector, Mr. Ogilvie.

1753. You refer then to something that took place in former years?—Yes; and a thing that has occurred might occur again. I know that on one or two occasions the authority of the missionary was seriously injured by the exercise of authority by the inspector who came down.

1754. In regard to your answer to question 6, do you follow out that suggestion with the Church of England stations—you suggest that funds should be placed at the disposal of the managers—do you give your managers money to pay for labor?—We do not.

1755. Do you propose that the Central Board should give money for the payment of the blacks on those stations?—Yes. My idea is this—the Board send down rations and clothing in order to maintain the aborigines, and in that way, good, bad, and indifferent, all receive alike. In place of that I would give all so much in rations and clothing, but I would place money at the disposal of the managers of the stations to remunerate the aborigines who work—in money instead of rations and clothing.

1756. In other words, you recommend that the Board should place a certain portion of the money which is voted by Parliament for the benefit of the aborigines at the disposal of the managers, and not send stores and provisions to be distributed as at present?—Not to the same extent.

1757. In that case if they did not get stores they would have to buy them with the money they earned from the manager?—Yes.

1758. Would there not be likely to be a conflict of authority between one party and the other—the sort of thing you have referred to?—I am assuming that the manager of the station is the missionary, not that there should be a separate manager. We have not used the term “missionary” here at all, because the Board have nothing to do with the religious education.

1759. But you know that the stations are in various positions—some managed by the Church, some by the Board, and some by the Moravians?—I think there are only two classes, those managed by the Board and the others.

1760. Take the case of Ramahyuck—there is a very large sum of money derived from various sources—revenue derived from the labor of the aborigines—for instance, the sale of hops and arrowroot, and things of that sort—do you think it would be fair to expect the Board to pay those aboriginals for their work if the whole of the produce of the station is also handed over to the managers to do what they like with?—If the station is self-supporting then there is no need for the Board to contribute anything; those are only suggestions as to what should be done as long as the station is not self-supporting.

1761. Would it not be better, instead of the Board being asked for money, which might be used improperly, if they were asked to place the stations in a self-supporting position?—Certainly. That is what I ask further on.

1762. Then, if so, this suggestion as to money would be unnecessary?—Quite so.

1763. Did I understand you to say that you thought it advisable that the stations should be kept apart altogether for the aboriginal population?—Yes, decidedly.

1764. Do you look forward in the future to the absorption of the aborigines in the general population?—No, I do not.

Mr. W. E. Morris,
continued,
28th May 1877.

1765. As to your suggestion that a sum of money—£50 or £100, as well as rations and goods—should be placed at the disposal of the managers instead of their applying constantly to the Central Board, do not those stations that are under the charge of the missionaries or the Church receive sums of money—is there not a considerable sum of money subscribed, for instance, by the Church of England?—No, not towards that kind of expenditure.

1766. Why?—Because we understand that all we contribute is for the religious education of the natives, and their spiritual good; and that the Board, on the other hand, supply the temporal wants. We do not think that it is our function to look after the latter.

1767. Inasmuch as you get the proceeds of all that is produced on the stations—?—We do not receive anything—whatever is got is expended on the stations solely for the good of the blacks.

1768. It does not go in any shape to you?—No, not a penny. I can give you our general account for the year. [*The witness handed in the same.*]

HONORARY TREASURERS' ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 1877.
GENERAL ACCOUNT.

Receipts.		Expenditure.	
Balance from last year	£89 19 11	Lake Tyers Mission—	
Subscriptions, &c., as per list	789 9 10	Mr. John Bulmer, stipend	£200 0 0
		Mr. L. Hallier, in augmentation of the capitation allowance from the Education Department	40 0 0
		Superintending missionary	50 0 0
		Allowance to aboriginal couple for taking charge of boarding-house &c.	12 10 0
		Grant for new church	100 0 0
			£402 10 0
		Lake Condah Mission—	
		Rev. J. H. Ståhlé, stipend	200 0 0
		Do., allowance, in consideration of expenses attending reception of visitors	10 0 0
		Miss Gregory, stipend from 1st June 1876	63 6 8
		Superintending minister, expenses	12 0 0
		Allowance to aboriginal couple for taking charge of boarding-house, &c.	12 10 0
		Seeds for planting, £5; school books, £2 10s.	7 10 0
			305 6 8
		Miscellaneous expenses—	
		Printing annual report, other printing, postage, and bank charges and for collecting and remitting cheques	40 5 10
		Hire of hall for annual meeting	2 2 0
		Subsidy to <i>Missionary, at Home and Abroad</i>	10 0 0
		Balance available for expenditure of Year 1877-8	119 5 3
	£879 9 9		£879 9 9

RESERVE FUND FOR NEW MISSION.

Receipts.		Expenditure.—Nil.	
Balance from last year	£276 13 3	Balance at Colonial Bank of Australasia	£280 8 5
Interest*	3 15 2		
	£280 8 5		£280 8 5

Further interest amounting to 14s. became due on the 25th May 1877.

1769. Have you any further suggestions to make?—No.

1770. Have you ever been to Coranderrk?—No, I have only been to the Lake Condah station.

1771. Why do you specially select those four mission stations as the models on which you would establish a station if a new one were formed?—It is because they are mission stations, and are conducted on religious principles; and, as far as I have heard, they have been successfully conducted.

1772. You have not seen any but the one?—No.

The witness withdrew.

Mr. William Goodall called and examined.

Mr. Wm. Goodall,
28th May 1877.

1773. You are superintendent of Framlingham station?—Yes.

1774. For how long?—Nine years.

1775. Have you had a copy of the printed questions?—Yes.

1776. Have you prepared answers to them?—Yes.

1777. Will you be good enough to read them?—Yes. The first question is, "What is your opinion of Framlingham as a place for an aboriginal station—(1.) As a sanitary station?"—My answer is, that it is well adapted for an aboriginal station. (1.) As a sanitary station, I do not think it could be better situated in this respect. I have consulted medical gentlemen upon the subject, and they agree in their opinion, that its situation could not be improved in this respect.

1778. From your own experience, you find that to be the case?—Yes. I have also compared my statistics with those of other stations, and I do not think quite so many die at my place as at Coranderrk.

1779. Then as to the second part of the first question—" (2.) As to its situation and the temptations to which the inmates are exposed by reason of its proximity to population?"—I am of opinion that its situation in this respect could not be improved; for I find that drunken blacks are like all other drunkards—if it is not at home they will travel for it. We only have one hotel that we are annoyed with—that is at a distance of three miles.

1780. Do you find any difficulties from the aborigines at your station getting drink?—Well, occasionally one or two give me trouble, but the generality of them are very sober and steady.

1781. Can you offer any suggestions to prevent the aborigines getting the drink?—No, I could not, unless the Act will do it. It seems almost impossible to do so; there are such a number of carriers passing up and down, and they will purchase the liquor and give it to the blacks. I might suggest to allow the black half the fines. That is a very salutary and effectual way of getting at the vendor of strong drink, though it might not be good for the morals of the blacks. At present they have their grog stopped, as they say, and get no benefit by it. If there was an Act that provided that the blackfellow would get half the fine, the person selling drink would see there was danger, and might desist. Passing on now to question No. 3—I do think it most desirable to pay for the labor of aboriginals, and that they should receive fair value for their labor. I should not recommend such large supplies from Government, and they should be required to purchase their stores and clothing—the able and working men—from the station, and that a store should be kept on the station for this purpose.

1782. Then I understand you to say that they should receive the full amount of their wages, and that they should purchase what they want from the station?—Yes, from the store on the station. Mr. W. Goodall,
continued,
28th May 1877.

1783. Then you would not give what they earn partly in money and partly in rations?—They could take it in rations, and purchase from the store; “and that the blacks should be enabled to purchase them at their lowest possible rates, the Board merely charging sufficient to cover the expenses.

1784. You think it would be an inducement to them?—Yes; I have consulted some of the most intelligent, and I think so.

1785. What kind of goods besides the ordinary rations would be suitable?—I should recommend useful wearing material.

1786. In the piece or made up?—In the piece, excepting men’s clothing; there is a difficulty about making that up.

1787. Anything in the way of ornaments?—Yes, fancy articles for women and children; powder and shot, little sweets, plums, and currants.

1788. What rations do you give the blacks when they are working?—Flour, about 7 lbs., and $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of tea, per week per head—that averages through for the men and women both—a little more than 2 lbs. of sugar, and a moderate allowance of tobacco.

1789. How much?—Some of them are heavier smokers than others—sometimes two figs of what they call navy packet pieces. I do not allow the women any, excepting the older ones.

1790. What rations do you issue to the children?—The children go in with the parents as half.

1791. You give those rations to those that are working?—No, right through whether they are or not. Of course, if they turn awkward and will not work, I threaten to cut off their rations; but I have not had to carry out that threat, except on one or two occasions. I think about twice since I have been on the station. There is also a small allowance of meat, about 4 lbs. per week per head.

1792. Do you find that allowance of meat sufficient?—Not at all.

1793. What do they do to supplement that amount?—They catch kangaroos and opossums.

1794. Have they any stated times for hunting?—Saturday.

1795. Do you find that their hunting on that day provides them with a sufficient amount of meat?—No; I often find them complaining that they are out of meat.

1796. Does the station supply meat, or do you buy it?—I have to buy the beasts and slaughter them.

1797. The station then is unable to provide them with meat?—At present, with the stock we have.

1798. Is it all fenced?—All but about half a mile along the river.

1799. Could you breed enough cattle on the station to sell to make the place self-supporting?—Yes, I think so. I have spoken to Mr. Tozer—an old settler, who had stations some years ago—and several other squatters, and it is their opinion that it would amply maintain them. As it is, one man offered me £300 a year for the grazing. The principal reason why the station has not been stocked has been the want of funds. To supply this want I would suggest that we should be allowed to depasture stock and devote the proceeds toward purchasing a proper supply.

1800. That is graze them?—Yes; I could get sixpence per head per week for them; and it would carry 400 head; and that would enable us to purchase stock and pay the wages of the aborigines; and as we purchased our own stock we could take portions of the land back. Sixpence per head per week is what my neighbors are getting, and they have not as good grass as I have.

1801. Should you be able to find permanent work for all the blacks on the station?—Yes, plenty for years to come.

1802. If it were stocked with cattle, you think it would be able to keep the blacks?—Amplly, and we should have cattle to sell.

1803. Without their going out?—Yes. Question No. 6 is—“Would it be practicable to pay to the managers of the stations the wages earned by aborigines instead of to the aborigines themselves, and thus encourage a resort to the stations for what they want, instead of squandering their money elsewhere?” This is my reply—“It has always occurred to my mind as a most desirable thing that the money earned by aborigines should be paid to the managers, as it prevents them yielding to the temptations which are held out to them by the wayside hotels.” I find that when I can succeed in getting them safely home with their money they lay it out in a very judicious manner, purchasing nice little comforts for themselves; the great difficulty is to get them from the outside stations home to the aboriginal station without spending their money. There are so many people ready to look after them on their way home; but those who get the money about the place and come home with it spend it sensibly, usually; so that I think it would be a very desirable thing if this could be brought about. They sometimes come and say they have not received the full amount of their wages, and I have seen into it; but I have only their word for it, as the settler has not kept accounts.

1804. Can you offer any suggestions for carrying out this object?—The suggestions would be to require any white man employing aborigines to enter into an engagement with the managers, and forward the moneys so earned by cheque to the said managers. Of course, if he entered into an agreement, and I sent him the man, it would be necessary for him to carry out the transaction with myself or any manager appointed. I think it would be a very simple thing. Of course by the previous question you see that I hold it as highly objectionable that their labor should be hired out.

1805. You think that if possible they should be kept employed on the stations?—Yes; I can speak for my own men. If the labor is provided for them on all the stations, as it is on mine, and they are paid moderate wages, they would never ask to go away.

1806. Are they paid wages?—They have only received one gratuity of £10.

1807. That was for fencing?—Yes.

1808. They work in fact for their rations?—Yes, the old and the young get the rations.

1809. The next question is “Do you think it advisable to board out orphan children?”—I do not think it at all desirable to board out the orphan children—in fact it would be very difficult to find orphans—as soon as one father dies another claims the child—there are always relations that claim them.

1810. You think that they would not like to have the children taken away?—They feel it very keenly—they would protest against it very loudly, and it would also tend to the dismemberment of the station. In fact, it is the children who are the principal attraction to the old ones. I have had old ones wandering out till I had got children they had an interest in.

1811. How did you get them?—Merely asked the children, and gave them provisions, and asked them to come in.

Mr. W. Goodall,
continued,
28th May 1877.

1812. And their parents followed them?—Yes, and their older friends.

1813. Did they not object to their children going?—No; there is only one pair, they are at Colac, that have objected, and their children are still outside in a wretched condition. One pair were attracted by a grandchild I got, they stayed for six years, and as soon as the child died they went away.

1814. What is the reason of that—is it the advantages of education that they get, or in order to get rid of the trouble?—I do not think it is that, because if any of the children get into trouble, or have to be punished, they strongly object to it.

1815. Then it is for the provisions and education?—They see they are better provided for than they can do for themselves.

1816. Do you think the value of education weighs?—Yes; in fact the younger men have craved for some means being provided for them. They have frequently made a request for a schoolmaster.

1817. You have no schoolmaster?—No, nobody there but myself; and further, I notice that the children who have been taken and ruled by white people are much worse when they grow up than the children whom we have brought up on the stations, and who have been brought up by the blacks themselves.

1818. No discipline?—No; there is one just come who is a greater trouble than any other—they will always leave their place of service or adopted home when they get to the age of 15 or 16. Some of the settlers make great pets of them, and when the change of life comes it is too much for them. “8. Do you think it desirable to encourage the aborigines to hire their labor out to employers in the country, either for long or for short terms?”—Not at all. As an instance of the bad results of that, I got a man from one of the stations, a great drunkard, and by using the influences we provided he became a sober steady man, and signed the pledge, and remained so for four years, and accumulated a little property, a couple of horses, a cow, and saddles and bridles, and so on. A gentleman called at my place one evening—he was pushed for an assistant to drive sheep across the plains—this man was the only one I could give him, and I begged him to take great care of him, and the man tempted him with drink on the plains, and ever since he has been one of the greatest nuisances on the place. I could quote several instances of that sort. If they are provided with labor and rations on the stations, and good influences brought to bear upon them, if they are not allowed to go into the world and meet with the temptations that are there, they are all right, but they meet so many of their old associates on the stations and farms who take them off drinking. Ample and reproductive work can be found for the aborigines on the stations. “9. Having regard to the disposition and habits of the aborigines, do you think it desirable that the youths should be apprenticed to learn trades or occupations?”—No; as I think it would seriously affect their health, being naturally and instinctively of a restless nomadic habit. I do not think they would settle; they would not stand the confinement to any trade. Question 10 is—“Do you think it desirable to encourage handicrafts at the stations, and of what kinds?”—My reply is—“There are so many difficulties in the way that I do not think I could recommend anything of the kind, and I think if they were well instructed in agricultural pursuits it would suit their tastes much better, and be more congenial to their natural habits.”

1819. Have any of yours developed talent for that sort of thing?—I have one very clever at carpentering.

1820. If he had an opportunity of being taught, would it be desirable to have him taught?—Yes, I think carpentering would be a very nice thing if they could be taught that.

1821. Do you think they could learn shoemaking?—I do not think they would sit to that.

1822. Basket-making?—That would do nicely for the women—in fact, I am looking out for some of the osier willow this year to plant, and see if I can do it. That is a great defect, that I cannot find proper employment for the women. Question No. 11 has been answered already. “12. Have you any suggestions to make as to the treatment of the aborigines?”—I have no other suggestions to make. The treatment that they receive is good, excepting what I have referred to. “13. Can you give any information as to the aborigines who are not at the stations; the number in your district, their condition, and mode of obtaining a livelihood; and can you make any suggestions for the amelioration of their condition?”—There are about twenty-five aborigines in my district scattered about, not living at the station.

1823. Where are they residing?—Some at Belfast, some at Wickliffe, and some at Camperdown and other places.

1824. What is their mode of life?—Their condition is simply deplorable. Their mode of obtaining a livelihood is of a varied character, sometimes by fishing, and sometimes catching opossums for their skins, at other times working for Europeans. The money so earned is in all cases spent at the country hotels, and, when that is done, the women generally resort to prostitution, and are the subject of the most brutal insult of low whitemen. The suggestion is that they should be removed to the station as early as possible; and if they are found about the towns they should be treated as vagrants, and any persons found harboring them should be fined heavily.

1825. Can you suggest any means of gathering those blacks into the station?—There is a provision in the Act against persons harboring aborigines without certificates; if that were carried out when they come about the townships, I should think they might be brought under the vagrant Act.

1826. You could not do that unless they are begging?—They are always begging, and having no visible means of support.

1827. If they live in camp, as they used to live, and go out and get opossums and live on them, you could hardly call them vagrants?—Scarcely, but they do not do that; they merely sell a few skins to get drink with, and then beg for their clothes and food; and are a constant source of trouble and complaint with whites.

1828. Are there any depôts in this district away from the stations?—I think there is only Mr. Grey, 60 miles from my station.

1829. Do any of them go for those supplies?—A few are there stopping about Mr. Grey's.

1830. Do you think it would be a desirable plan to give up sending to these depôts in order to induce more to come to the stations?—Yes, I do.

1831. And it would do no injury to the blacks, and be the means of bringing them in?—I think it would be a certain means of bringing them in. There is another station at Colac, about 70 miles off.

1832. Are there many blacks about there?—There were 6 men, 2 women, and 2 children. I know as to a number of those who are now knocking about in this way that if they received any remuneration for their labor they would come in at once.

1833. You think paying for their labor and stopping those supplies would induce them to come?—In nearly all cases excepting a few of the old ones, who would be reluctant at first; but even they might eventually follow. When Mr. Ogilvie was in office he recommended that the station should be let—that would put it out of the blacks' hands. I think it would be more desirable for us to keep possession of it; it would keep up the interest in it.

Mr. W. Goodall,
continued,
28th May 1877.

1834. You have only a few children at your station?—About 16.

1835. They are taught by Mrs. Goodall?—Yes.

1836. Does she find them capable of receiving instruction?—They are very good scholars; very quick.

1837. How do they compare with white children?—I would rather teach them than white children. I was three years a teacher at Warrnambool, and I find the blacks much more intelligent than white.

1838. Do you think they are capable of receiving instruction to the same standard?—I could not form an opinion on that; but they are equally quick in taking up the rudiments of education.

1839. You do not know whether the Government standard would be too high for them to reach?—No, they have attained it at some stations.

1840. From your own experience?—Oh! no. I do not think it would be too high—they are quite capable of attaining that.

1841. Without any great amount of mental exertion?—Without any great amount of mental exertion. They seem to take a great liking to it.

1842. Have you any blacks on your station who have been educated there or elsewhere when young?—Yes, several.

1843. Do you find that they have kept up that knowledge at all?—Some of them.

1844. Do they read?—Some are very diligent at it, some are not. One was educated at the Grammar School, Geelong, but you would now hardly know he had been at school in his reading and writing—he can read very little.

1845. Is he a native?—He is a half-caste. It was his reputed white father who educated him.

1846. How did he come to your station?—He gradually got lower and lower in the scale of society, till he was turned away by his patron, and he went back to his tribe. I had a young woman, who came three years ago, who could not read at all. She got one of the smaller boys at the school to teach her, and she can read beautifully now.

1847. Taught by one of the blacks?—Taught by a little black boy. When she comes to services she will read after me. She is a half-caste.

1848. With regard to this other question, of religious instruction, what do you do in that way?—They are provided with Sunday services, and a service one evening in the week.

1849. Have you any Sunday-school?—No.

1850. Any clergyman in the habit of visiting?—Mr. Coombes attends us regularly, the Independent minister at Warrnambool; he is very regular, and occasionally we have visits from other clergymen—in fact his services have been so useful that I was going to recommend that they should be acknowledged in some way, if possible.

1851. Have you anything else to say with reference to the general condition and treatment, either on the stations or in any other way?—I have nothing further to say than what I have recommended there. I think the treatment in general has been good, in reference to their supplies; and if those alterations are made it will meet all that is required. I think that they should be provided with better accommodation on my station, in regard to their houses. We have been endeavoring to saw some timber, but we have only got on slowly. It would greatly improve their health if they had better houses to live in.

The witness withdrew.

Adjourned to to-morrow, at Four o'clock.

TUESDAY, 29TH MAY 1877.

Present:

A. W. HOWITT, Esq., P.M., in the Chair;

G. W. Rusden, Esq.,

F. R. Godfrey, Esq.

Mr. John Andrews called and examined.

1852. You have acted for some years as clerk to the Aboriginal Board?—I have for about three years.

Mr. J. Andrews,
29th May 1877.

1853. And keep all the accounts?—Yes.

1854. And all the payments are made through your office?—Yes.

1855. Have you brought any accounts with you?—No. I have brought some memoranda with me that I thought might contain such information as the Commission required.

1856. What information have you got?—I brought first of all a statement showing the average attendance at the six stations last year; the total cost of the stations to the Board, and the cost per head; showing also, where I possessed the information to enable me to do so, the amount received for produce:—

Name of Station.	Average Attendance in 1876.	Total Cost in 1876.	Cost per head in 1876.	Produce sold in 1876.	Kind of Produce.
Framlingham	58	£ s. d. 877 0 0	£ s. d. 15 2 5	£ s. d. 28 0 0	Oats.
Lake Condah	90	816 0 0	9 1 4	49 18 10	Wattle bark, hides, skins, and arrowroot.
Lake Hindmarsh	64	476 0 0	7 9 0	213 0 0	Wool and garden stuff.
Coranderrk	140	3,744 0 0	26 14 10	1,622 0 0	Hops.
Lake Wellington	86	522 0 0	6 1 5	180 2 0	Hops and arrowroot.
Lake Tyers	73	600 0 0	8 4 4	65 0 0	Arrowroot, wool, and skins.
All other stations (census returns)	581	990 0 0	1 14 1		

The receipts for produce sold at Framlingham and Coranderrk form a portion of the revenue of the Board; the produce of the other stations belongs to the several missions.

Mr. J. Andrews,
continued.
20th May 1877.

1857. First of all, Framlingham is a station under the charge of the Board?—Yes, altogether.
 1858. And the only produce was £28 for oats sold?—Yes.
 1859. Did that come into the general funds of the Board?—Yes.
 1860. And was returned in the shape of wages?—Wages were paid to the aborigines to a larger amount.
 1861. At any rate that amount was expended?—Yes.
 1862. Lake Condah is a mission station?—Yes.
 1863. The produce goes into their funds?—Yes, the funds come to the Board.
 1864. Lake Hindmarsh is in the hands of the Moravians, and you have no record of the produce sold there?—No.*
 1865. They have sheep?—Yes.
 1866. And Coranderrk, do you know what is the hop crop?—Over £1,600, the net produce of the hops.
 1867. Lake Wellington is also under the charge of a mission—the Presbyterian?—Yes.
 1868. And their produce also goes to the mission funds?—Yes.
 1869. Lake Tyers, you have no record of the produce?—No; I sent for the information, but I did not obtain it in time.*
 1870. Could you divide the items which form the principal charges in each of those larger items in some way, so as to give an idea of the manner in which the money was expended?—Yes, I think so.
 1871. The cost per head in each of the stations varies in this return—can you give the details showing the reasons for the variations?—I can account at once for a great deal of this apparent discrepancy. In this statement you will see that the average cost per head of those aborigines who are located at Framlingham and Coranderrk is much larger than the average cost per head at the other localities. Those two stations are altogether dependent upon the Board, and the other stations are not. The expenditure on the other four stations is simply in addition or supplemental to the expenditure by the mission bodies under whose immediate supervision the stations are. With regard to Coranderrk, which stands here at a very high percentage, there is another explanation, which is that its expenditure includes the expenditure of every description on the station, including that of hop-planting. I furnished to Mr. Ogilvie, the late inspector, a statement in detail with regard to Coranderrk station.
 1872. Is that it—[handing a paper to the witness]?—Yes, that is it.

PARTICULARS of Expenditure at Coranderrk during the Year 1876.

	£	s.	d.
Provisions, tobacco, soap, meat, clothing, boots, blankets, hardware, tinware, &c., and carriage thereof	1,968	15	8
Horses, vehicles, and harness	119	19	5
Hop plantation	639	18	8
Buildings—erection and repairs	336	17	6
Insurance	16	1	8
Horse feed	36	8	11
Seeds for farm and garden	63	17	2
Medical attendance, medicines, medical comforts, &c.	89	17	9
Stationery, &c.	4	0	3
Marriage fees for aborigines	14	0	0
Allowance to Mrs. Briggs for acting as matron from 20th July to 13th September	4	0	0
Travelling expenses	20	4	6
Wages of aborigines other than in connection with the hop plantation	99	2	4
Farm overseer	89	11	8
Salaries of superintendent and teachers	241	17	7
	3,744	13	1

ABORIGINES.

AMOUNTS actually disbursed during the Year 1876 for the service of the several Stations.

	£	s.	d.
Coranderrk (see above)	3,744	0	0
Lake Condah	816	0	0
Framlingham	877	0	0
Lake Hindmarsh	476	0	0
Lake Tyers	600	0	0
Lake Wellington	522	0	0

The cost for clothing and provisions and general stores to the blacks at Coranderrk is £13 18s. a head.

1873. Comparing the same items of expenditure at the other stations—the expenditure that is common to all the stations—Coranderrk is not so very much in excess of the others?—It does get in excess; but they are altogether dependent upon the Board, while the other stations are not; but I think, eliminating from the expenditure on Coranderrk their extra expenditure for the hop plantation and buildings, and other similar expenses, that it would be found still that the cost of blacks is more considerable to the Board on the other stations—perhaps not at Framlingham, but the other stations not under the control of the Board entirely. I can furnish the Board the same information as this with regard to each station.

1874. What are your other returns?—I have a list of the salaries and fixed wages which the Board are paying—[handing in a paper].

1875. With regard to the salaries in reference to the General Inspector, you put the expenses £400 a year, that is inclusive of travelling expenses?—Yes, and he acts as secretary to the Board also. Mr. Burgess, the manager of the hop plantation, at £2 a week, has since been dispensed with.

1876. Since the 17th December?—Yes.

1877. And the manager on the station is now doing the work?—Yes.

* The information having since been supplied is now inserted in the return.

1878. Thomas Burgess' laborer is also dispensed with?—Yes.—[*The following is the return referred to:—*]

Mr. J. Andrews,
continued,
29th May 1877.

SALARIES and Wages paid during the Year 1876.

Name.	Office.	Place.	Rate.			Remarks.
			£	s.	d.	
C. S. Ogilvie..	General Inspector and Secretary	.. .. .	Per annum.			
J. Andrews	Clerk .. .. .	.. .. .	400	0	0	
H. H. Halliday	Manager	Coranderrk ..	100	0	0	
Miss Robertson	Schoolmistress	Coranderrk ..	150	0	0	From the 28th March 1876. Was also paid £1 per week from the 18th December 1876 for managing the hop plantation.
J. S. Deans ..	Schoolmaster	Coranderrk ..	70	0	0	To the 20th October 1876, and not employed since that date.
R. Burgess ..	Manager of hop plantation ..	Coranderrk ..	120	0	0	From the 16th March 1876.
J. Harris ..	Farm Overseer	Coranderrk ..	Per week.			
Thos. Burgess	Laborer	Coranderrk ..	2	0	0	To the 17th December 1876, and not employed since that date.
W. Goodall ..	Master	Framlingham	Per annum.			
			75	0	0	
			Per week.			
			0	12	0	Not employed during 1877.
			Per annum.			
			90	0	0	To 30th June 1876.
			120	0	0	From 1st July 1876.

There is another reason which would not appear in any tabulated statement as to why the blacks at Coranderrk are more expensive than any other station. It is this, that Coranderrk is continually having taken to it blacks fresh from the bush, weak, decrepid old men and women, who are sent down to us from the Murray and other places, who require when they first come to the station fresh clothing, and perhaps extra medical attendance, and things of that sort—in fact, Coranderrk is a sanatory station.

1879. Sanatorium and hospital?—Yes, and I think that the station occupying that position will always cost the Board somewhat more per head than the other stations.

1880. Than any station not subject to similar influences?—Yes.

1881. Have you any other return?—It also occurred to me that another reason which may be fairly put forth on that point is that a great number of changes have taken place in the management arising from unavoidable circumstances during the last few years. It has been under the management successively of Mr. Green, who was succeeded by Mr. Ståhlé. The management was then vested for a short time in a matron—Miss Robertson—and Mr. Ogilvie was then in charge temporarily, and then, lastly, Mr. Halliday, the present superintendent. I think that another method of reducing expenditure at Coranderrk would be to give sole control of everything in the station to whoever was manager for the time being, if the Board had confidence in him, and to discourage as much as possible any appeals from the superintendent to the Board, or from the Board to any higher authorities. I may mention as an instance of what I mean of the way in which the blacks take advantage of any superfluous amount of kindness and attention shown to them—that the blacks at Coranderrk very frequently fall into the habit—of course it is at once checked—of leaving the station without permission from anybody, and coming down to Melbourne and incurring expenses, and then quietly coming up to the office and expecting to get their coach fare and other expenses paid. They are exceedingly hurt that that is not done, and think that an appeal from the Board to the higher authorities will put it right. One black told me he had been obliged to leave his horse at Kew, and he wanted me to give him 10s. to pay for his horse's stabling, and to go back. I declined, and it turned out that he had left without leave.

1882. You do not mean that the blacks have been in the habit of coming down to town, without leave, and then have had their expenses paid by the Board, or by the person in charge of the station?—No; I produce this merely as an illustration of how they would, in common parlance, "try it on."

1883. And that would be discouraged if the manager had sole control over them?—Yes, I think he should have more control over them than he has now.

1884. If they knew that they could not appeal from his judgment?—Yes.

1885. Have you any other return?—I brought with me a statement showing the amount paid on account of each local guardian during the year.—[*The witness handed in the same.*]

STATEMENT showing Accounts passed for Payment during the Year 1876, for Stores, &c., supplied to the Local Guardians and Honorary Correspondents.

Name.	Locality.	Amount.	Name.	Locality.	Amount.
McEdwards, A., Esq. ...	Mildura ...	£ s. d. 76 6 7	Tone, A., Esq. ...	Wangaratta ...	£ s. d. 17 16 10
Reid, Curtis A., Esq. ...	Redesdale ...	50 11 2	Dennis, A., Esq. ...	Tarndwarncourt ...	52 18 5
Argyle, S., Esq. ...	Mount Hope ...	46 4 3	Rutherford, Jas., Esq. ...	Ulupna ...	173 2 4
Mogg, B., Esq. ...	Wirmbirchip ...	49 6 7	Finley, J., Esq. ...	Towanninnie ...	76 4 7
Garratt, J. M., Esq. ...	Geelong ...	15 2 2		Terang ...	4 4 0
Fawcett, L., Esq. ...	Swan Hill ...	124 3 5	Howitt, A. W., Esq., P.M.	Bairnsdale ...	0 17 9
Miller, John, Esq. ...	Kulkyne ...	146 1 8		Balmoral ...	0 10 6
Ralston, Jno., Esq. ...	Casterton... ..	16 16 6			
McKenzie, J., Esq. ...	Wyuna ...	106 16 9			
Randell, J., Esq. ...	Mordialloc ...	33 13 9			
					990 17 3

1886. From what you know of the work done by the local guardians generally and the situation of many of these places where the goods are distributed, do you think, excepting perhaps some of the stations, such as Mildura, on the Murray, and Swan Hill and Kulkyne, that it would be any very great hardship if the blacks were expected to get any clothes and rations which they required from some or other of the stations already established?—Personally, I know nothing of those localities; but I have had opportunities while I have been clerk to the Board of conversing with persons whose business brings them into contact with the aborigines; and I have long since come to this conclusion, that, if it be desired to civilize those blacks, they should all be brought in to one or other of the stations, or divided between them. As I understand, the majority of the local guardians have some clothing or some food in store; and the blacks are round hanging about, fishing or amusing themselves, and by-and-by come in and get some rations, or a blanket, or a pair of trousers, as they need; but I think that there is not that influence for their good which there would be on the stations.

Mr. J. Andrews,
continued,
29th May 1877.

1887. That is your impression from what you have heard from others?—Yes, from what I have heard from others.

1888. Have you had an opportunity of noticing any of the returns with regard to the census?—I have noticed the totals only; but I could look into them if there was any point you wish.

1889. The total they have arrived at is 580?—Yes; the total census shows that there are 1,067 blacks in the colony. Of those, 581 were not within any one of the six stations. There is another matter I may mention without having any special knowledge with regard to it. I think that, as regards the young people among the aborigines, it is a pity to keep them at the stations. It seems to me that it would be better to try to get them employment outside, particularly the half-caste aborigines. I have thought that the main end of the Board—which is to provide permanently for the aborigines, and to promote their welfare—would be best served by merging the young population wherever possible in the general population of the colony, rather than by keeping them a distinct race. If those half-castes at Coranderrk were taught a trade—why should not a half-caste man or woman be taught to make boots or do carpentry work?

1890. Have you seen the half-castes at Coranderrk or other places?—Only when they came down to Melbourne.

1891. And it is on that knowledge that you base your suggestion?—Yes.

1892. Do you know sufficient of the blacks to enable you to form a judgment as to whether they could be relied upon if they were taught a trade to carry that trade out in the world, as against the world, without falling into bad habits or being taken advantage of?—I cannot speak from experience. It is merely my theory on the subject.

1893. What is that return?—The census return of blacks.—[*The return was handed in, and is as follows:—*]

CENSUS on 15th March 1877.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Framlingham	42	27	69
Lake Condah	41	40	81
Lake Hindmarsh	35	25	60
Coranderrk	62	73	135
Lake Wellington	37	36	73
Lake Tyers	35	33	68
All others	380	201	581
			1,067

1894. In Mr. Ogilvie's evidence he was asked whether the amount which was voted for the blacks was sufficient for the requirements of the stations; he said, "No, and for this reason, that when I became the inspector the Board was altogether in debt, and I am sorry to say it is in the same state, or a worse one, now—further behind I expect it is." I want to ask you about that question. Have the Board ever expended any money beyond what is voted to them?—The Board have never at any time expended more money than what has been voted to them—more than what they have received.

1895. Is it the case that the Board is in debt at the present moment to any extent, and, if so, can it be explained?—The Board is in debt at the present moment, and it can be explained in this way: that the liabilities of the Board are principally, or to a very large extent, for clothing supplied for the winter season, and which is more properly chargeable upon next year's moneys than upon the moneys of this year, and if the Board were to refuse to supply clothing to the blacks until they absolutely had the votes at their disposal a great hardship would result.

1896. Has that not been brought about in some measure in consequence of the financial year of the Parliament terminating as it does now—it having been altered to the 30th June—that has made the difficulty?—Yes, the financial year ends in the middle of winter, and it necessitates one of two courses, either that the Board should put by from the commencement of the year a large portion of their money, and not spend it for any purpose, which they have not been in a position to do since I have been connected with them, or that they fail to supply the wants of the aborigines excepting at the time when the votes are first passed.

1897. In fact the whole of the stores required for this year have been already purchased, and are always obliged to be bought during the summer months at the commencement of the year?—They are bought quarterly in advance, but the clothing practically is bought annually in advance, because the requisitions for clothing come in at the commencement of the winter season.

1898. Mr. Ogilvie also spoke on the same question—another part of it—that there was £1,000 voted for building and fencing, and that was held back, and in expectation of getting that he had very foolishly expended some of the Board's money in building and that kind of thing, and that has had to come out of the £6,500. Do you know what was the nature of this work that was done?—Out of last year's votes there has not been any very large amount spent on buildings at Coranderrk, I think not more than about £240 or £250.

1899. Has the Board ever in fact since you have known it been really what might be said to be thoroughly commercially solvent at the end of the financial year?—At the end of each financial year the Board has always been in debt.

1900-2. Then the present managers have inherited that liability?—Yes.

1903. Do you think the money voted annually sufficient for the requirements of the stations?—No, I do not think it is.

1904. What would you suggest as to that—do you think that by a larger outlay and placing them in a different position they could be made more or less self-supporting?—I think they could not be made more self-supporting than they are without considerable additional expenditure.

1905. That would require a larger vote at some time?—Yes.

1906. And you think that by getting a larger vote and by spending it judiciously on the stations the annual vote for them might afterwards be diminished?—Yes, I think so. The money at the disposal of the Board now from year to year is so small that I do not see how they can spare any money to give the stations such a start as they really need.

1907. Will you take a copy of these questions—[*handing the same to the witness*]—and see if there are any of them that you can answer that you know anything about yourself?—I will do so with pleasure.

1908. Is there anything else you wish to state now?—No, I think not. I will prepare the information which the Board have desired me to give, and will supply it as soon as possible.

1909. Have you found or do you think there is any difficulty with regard to the supplying the wants of the stations at any time in consequence of the system of having to get the money by votes under certain heads being placed on the Estimates in that form?—Some difficulty arose at the end of 1875 or the beginning of 1876, but I forget now what it was; in consequence of that the wording of the vote was altered.

Mr. J. Andrews,
continued,
29th May 1877.

1910. Since then there has been no such difficulty?—No.

1911. Before then, if £1,000, say, was voted for buildings, and £4,000 for provisions, and they did not want all the one, and did want the other, they could not be changed?—The savings could be changed on a certain formality being gone through.

1912. Only in subdivisions?—Yes, only in items of the same subdivision.

1913. Not from one subdivision to others?—No.

1914. The present system is the best in that respect that the Board can make use of it where desirable?—Precisely so.

1915. Can you give an idea (you have a great deal to do with the correspondence of the Board) what the correspondence was?—The correspondence of the Board was very voluminous.

1916. Has it been reduced in the last year or two, or is it about the same or increased?—I have no knowledge of the extent of the correspondence since it has been conducted by Mr. Ogilvie; I have only the correspondence relating to accounts.

1917. General correspondence does not go through you?—No.

The witness withdrew.

Adjourned sine die.

The following information was subsequently supplied by Mr. Andrews:—

BOARD FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE ABORIGINES.
EXPENDITURE during the Year 1876 on account of the several Stations.

Name of Station.	Average Number of Aborigines at Station.	Cost per head for Provisions, Clothing, Stores, &c., &c.	Provisions, Clothing, Stores, Hardware, &c.	Cultivation of Reserves, Buildings, Fencing.	Medical Attendance and Medical Comforts.	Horses, Vehicles, and Harness.	Cattle, &c.	Salaries of Superintendents and Teachers.	All other Expenses.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Cananderrk	140	13 18 1	1,947 17 2	1,295 4 11	85 18 11	120 0 9	.. ..	245 17 7	59 9 5
Framlingham	58	10 0 4	581 2 10	90 4 3	60 17 7	32 0 0	5 19 0	102 10 0	4 7 6
Lake Oudah	90	7 6 2	658 3 2	78 1 6	67 14 11	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	12 6 4
Lake Wellington ..	86	4 17 10	421 19 4	88 4 0	9 9 0	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	2 10 0
Lake Tyera	73	7 10 11	551 15 3	32 9 4	13 15 0	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..
Lake Hindmarsh ..	64	6 10 11	419 8 4	.. ..	52 19 6	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	4 5 0

THURSDAY, 31ST MAY 1877.

Present:

F. R. GODFREY, Esq., in the Chair;

E. H. Cameron, Esq., M.L.A.,

A. W. Howitt, Esq., P.M.

G. W. Rusden, Esq.,

Rev. Murdoch Macdonald examined.

1918. You are joint convener of the Presbyterian Church Committee on Missions to the Heathen?—
Yes.

Rev. Murdoch
Macdonald,
31st May 1877.

1919. Are you acquainted with any of the stations?—My acquaintance with them is not very great. I spent eight days at Ramahyuck. I went there in the beginning of February, to examine into the state of the station on behalf of the Presbyterian Church. My acquaintance with them is confined to that.

1920. Do you know anything of the habits of the aborigines?—No, not from personal observation, excepting what I saw there, and that by comparing the condition of the younger people there who have been under training with that of the older people, I was able to come to some conclusions that satisfied myself at all events.

1921. Would you mention to the Commission what your opinion as to that station is?—I came to the conclusion that it is very well conducted, and that the object for which it has been instituted has been, to a very large extent, attained.

1922. Have you any suggestions to make as to the treatment of the aborigines generally?—My opinion on that subject is embodied in a paper which our committee sent in to the Commission.—[*The secretary produced the same.*] We wish it to be distinctly understood that the paper presented by the Rev. Mr. Hamilton was not adopted by the committee; it is simply an expression of his individual opinion.

1923. Have you any suggestions to offer with regard to the particular station that you had to do with—Ramahyuck?—With regard to the future management of the aborigines, the idea that occurred to us was that the system which Mr. Hagenauer has introduced, of giving portions of land to each family, as he is doing at present, in small allotments, might in course of time be extended, so that the people might be encouraged to support themselves principally by the cultivation of those parcels of land. We thought that in that way habits of thrift, and industry, and self-reliance might be fostered. Then we throw out a suggestion that in the course of some time such a thing as this might be encouraged: that they should meet annually and choose one of their own number to act as a sort of factor or overman under the superintendent.

1924. Is that system not somewhat in force at Ramahyuck already?—It is, but our idea is that it might be carried still further, and, in fact, that small farms should be given to them.

1925. Which they would have the working of themselves?—Yes, and that they would support themselves by them. To encourage them to provide for their own support. We do not think it can be done at once, but the system might be worked up to that. It might be necessary also to have a portion of the reserve for the purposes of the station generally to provide money for the payment of wages, and of rations for the infirm and children; but our idea was to promote habits of self-dependence and industry on the part of heads of families.

1926. I see the committee recommend that there should not be any violent changes of the system already in vogue?—Yes, that is our idea.

1927. You suggest that factors or overseers should be chosen?—Yes.

1928. What would be the duties of those overseers?—That under the superintendent they should look after the working of the station generally, perhaps also buy and sell at the markets for the community.

1929. You suggest that they should be elected by the aborigines themselves?—Yes, and that they be themselves aborigines, and be elected every year.

1930. Do you not think that possibly ineligible persons might be elected whom the manager might not approve of, and that might make two kinds of authorities in the place?—Yes, it is possible such a thing might occur, but I suppose the manager to have such influence over the natives as to get them to secure eligible persons.

1931. But without the veto of the superintendent?—Well, it might be desirable to give him the power of veto.

1932. Has not the committee full power with regard to this particular station to ask or request, as the case may be, Mr. Hagenauer to adopt this system?—We take nothing whatever to do with the secular management of the station, as I may call it.

1933. But looking at the danger of having a divided authority, would it not be better that Mr. Hagenauer should select those he thinks fittest for it as a guarantee that the management would be all homogeneous?—Yes, perhaps it might be so; only it seems to me that the two things might be secured—that the confidence of the people might be secured in this way, they nominating certain persons, and the election being confirmed by the manager.

1934. You say that secular matters also should be entirely in his hands?—Yes.

1935. You do not think the Board should interfere in a matter of that sort?—I understood that I was speaking rather as to suggestions for the future management of all stations, not as to this one station only. The Commission invite suggestions as to future management; we were looking to the question of what suggestions could be offered with a view to foster habits of self-dependence among the natives, and this kind of village-system, which I have seen in successful operation among other races, occurred to us as likely to be beneficial among the aborigines here, if it could be carried out, especially as it involves no violent change on the system at present in vogue, seeing that Mr. Hagenauer gives them garden plots on which they grow their own arrowroot, for instance. The idea is to extend that system, so as to let every family eventually have a little farm of its own.—[*The witness read portions of the committee's paper bearing on the subject.*]

1936. Do you see any risk of any encroachment upon his authority and prestige on the station if it were known that he was, as the superintendent, instead of being as now at his own discretion, under the orders of the Board in Melbourne?—I do not see much risk. He is appointed by us to give religious instruction, and to use his influence as a Christian man to form correct habits among the people; but, at the same time, he manages the station, which is the property of the Government. All the buildings upon it are the property of the Government, and all raised upon it is also, I understand, the property of the Government.

1937. Well, I think practically on the mission stations they are not?—Does it not go towards rations and payment of wages?

1938. It goes to the natives?—We do not as a church expect to have to support the aborigines—that is the duty, I apprehend, of the Board; but, on the other hand, the produce of mission stations goes to the support of the stations.

1939. Then you wish to take from the missionary that power which he has at present of distributing the produce of the station more or less?—No, I do not think that is my suggestion—it does not come to that—but simply that the churches—the religious bodies sending missions to the aborigines—and the Government should have a good understanding among themselves—that the churches should pay the missionaries for the religious work, and that the Government pay for the secular work.

1940. Would the church then be willing to give up the whole management secularly as regards the person who manages the station—that the church should allow missionaries to go there, but not to be the superintendents?—We apprehend danger in that, and therefore recommend that the church should unite with the Government in the matter.

1941. You see the successful manager of a station is looked upon as a kind of patriarch?—Yes.

1942. And a great deal of his influence is got from that, and if he were a mere servant it would seriously depreciate his influence I am afraid. Is the church anxious to give up the management of the stations because they are unable to pay?—Not at all; our object is that any relief we can get in this way we should devote to the same kind of work elsewhere; it is not that we want to withdraw from the work or grudge the money that is spent upon it, but we think that it is but equitable that as our missionaries do secular work for the Government Board the Government Board should pay for that work.

1943. But have you considered the probable consequences—the incidental consequences—to which we have referred that might follow from that?—Yes, I consider that a great deal would depend upon the character of the man, and if he were a proper man it might add to his authority for the natives to understand that he was clothed with the double authority of the church and the Government.

1944. But do you not see we cannot deal with an exception, we must take the probabilities of the whole number?—Yes, of course.

1945. An incapable man might manage it badly?—Possibly there might be danger, but I take it for granted it would be the object of all parties concerned to get good men for the position.

1946. Here is a special matter in your paper referring to Ramahyuck:—“Whether the section of land adjoining the mission station of Ramahyuck, purchased by Mr. Hagenauer to protect the station from the influence of undesirable neighbors, should not be taken off his hands and incorporated with the mission reserve.” Does the committee desire that that should be done?—Simply as a matter that concerns the welfare of Ramahyuck.

1947. Who purchased the land?—Mr. Hagenauer himself.

1948. “Whether a more liberal allowance for buildings, *e. g.*, for the erection of the boarding-house now in course of construction, and for the equipment of the station with such machinery as may be necessary for the development of profitable industries, *e. g.*, an engine to pump water from the Avon for the irrigation of the hop plantation, might not be made to Ramahyuck from the annual vote.” You want to

have the station provided, as it were, with the first plant to work it?—Yes, that was our idea. We noticed in Mr. Hagenauer's report to us that, while he was instructed to gather in some children from the Upper Murray, and found it necessary to build a boarding-house for them, only one-half of the money required for the erection was voted by the Government, and we thought that if the Government, in a case like that, asked him to do work, they ought to pay for the means of doing it.

1949. Do you know the special reason why Mr. Hagenauer did not get that money?—No, I was not aware of any.

1950. Then personally you would urge that as buildings are put upon those Crown lands the Government should contribute the material for their building?—Yes, because we have no interest in those buildings, except to carry on the work. Mr. Hamilton's paper was read to us, and we declined to adopt it as the expression of the committee's opinion, but suggested that he might hand it in as his own individual opinion. We have in our paper expressed a decided opinion as to boarding-out the children. Personally I am of opinion that it would be unwise to have large masses of children together in a boarding-house. I think it would be better, if it were possible, to divide them into classes, of say 10 to 20, under the care of a separate married couple, thus to preserve the family constitution as much as possible.

1951. Are you not aware of the peculiar habit of blacks looking upon all children as if they were their own?—Yes, I know that. I do not know that that would interfere with what I refer to, if you have the children once collected on the station.

1952. Even where placed in large masses they are still made one of the family?—Yes, as far as they are concerned themselves; but, looking to the advantages of the family institution generally, my idea is that, if you divide them in this way, the person in charge will have more of a parent's influence over them than if there were from 40 to 50 in one large building.

1953. Have you gone into the question as to making the stations self-supporting; are you of opinion that if the run were fenced in, and the necessary amount of buildings put on the stations, that they would be self-supporting?—That would depend upon the area and quality of land very much; but generally I think that under judicious treatment they can be made self-supporting.

1954. I am speaking principally of the particular station you are acquainted with?—Yes, Ramahyuck can be made self-supporting.

1955. You think that if that were properly fenced, and proper buildings put up, it would be self-supporting?—I think it would be self-supporting; not immediately, but I think it could be worked up to that.

1956. Then the committee of the church would have no objection to the purchase of the land by the Government, if they think fit to do so?—Yes, and they think it would be desirable.*

1957. On the principle of bringing the thing under one head?—Yes.

1958. Have you visited Coranderrk?—I spent about four or five hours there in the month of December last.

1959. You are not prepared to give any opinion about the station there?—I should hesitate on such slight knowledge to give any very definite opinion.

1960. But your general remarks are applicable to any of the stations?—Yes, they apply generally. What I saw there, however, helped me to come to the conclusion that, if it can be arranged, the best system is to put all the stations under missionary management.

1961. Have you anything further to add to the statement sent in by your committee?—No, I think not. There was one point, if it could be arranged—that representatives from our committee and from the other missionary committees might have a seat on the Board for the Protection of the Aborigines. We conceive it might be for the advantage of the Board, and for the advantage of the churches also.

1962. Some persons representing the churches on the committee?—Yes, the mission boards.

1963. But that is really the church itself?—Yes, practically.

1964. Can you give us any information as to any case of the sort, that at any time the church has not been represented on the Board—you are aware that the Board is appointed by the Chief Secretary?—Yes; and being so, what I should wish is, that the church might have an opportunity of appointing some one to represent it on the Board.

1965. The person you allude to would be one principally connected with the mission work?—Yes. We urge that on the ground that the religious bodies carrying on missionary work among the aborigines have an interest in the matter, and it might be for their advantage—might help them to carry on their work more judiciously—if they had through a representative a seat at the Board.

1966. And it would facilitate the communication of information between the religious managers and the secular managers?—Yes; that is the idea.†

1967. Is there anything else you have to say?—There is nothing else.—[*The witness handed in the following paper:—*]

The Committee of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria on Missions to the Heathen, having under consideration a letter from the Secretary to the Commission "appointed to inquire into the condition of the aborigines of this colony, and to advise as to the best means of caring for and dealing with them in the future," inviting any communication which this church, "as one of the religious bodies which have sent missions to the aborigines," may wish to make to the Commissioners, agree to respectfully submit the following statements and suggestions:—

Following the line of the printed questions accompanying the secretary's letter, the committee are of opinion—

1. That Ramahyuck (Lake Wellington Station) is, in every respect, suitable for the purposes of a mission station. They do not think that its situation exposes the people to any special temptation, as it is not in the immediate proximity of any town, while the neighboring population is sparse and of a superior class.

As to Coranderrk, they are not, as a committee, in a position to express an opinion; but they beg to transmit the accompanying paper from the Rev. Alexander Mackie, of Lilydale, who has been holding religious services at Coranderrk, under the auspices of this committee, as frequently as his other duties will permit.

2. The committee believe the management at Ramahyuck to be excellent; and respectfully calling the attention of the Commission to the results that have been obtained there, beg to express it as their decided conviction that the best method of securing good order on aboriginal stations is to place them under the superintendence of Christian men, who shall make the spiritual welfare of the people their chief aim, and, at the same time, exert their influence, in every legitimate way, to elevate their moral character, and train them to form habits of industry, thrift, and self-reliance. They are further of opinion that discipline should be maintained, as far as possible, by a judicious system of rewards.

* Witness wishes to add a Note, to the effect that he understood Queries 1956 and 1957 as referring to the section of land adjoining the Mission Reserve, bought by Mr. Hagenauer to protect the mission from undesirable neighbors, and that his answers were based on that understanding.

† Witness subsequently stated, in a note to the Secretary of the Commission, that he thought, on consideration, the object he had in view might be attained if the Board for the Protection of the Aborigines would invite the conveners or secretaries of the Mission Boards to confer with them when the affairs of their respective stations were to be discussed.

Rev. Murdoch
Macdonald,
continued.
31st May 1877.

3, 4, and 5. The committee are of opinion, that while the people ought to know that all are under obligation to assist, according to their ability, in the general work of the station from day to day, it is of importance, as tending to develop habits of industry and self-reliance, that they be paid, on a moderate scale, for special work; either by day's wages, or, when practicable, by contract. There might be an advantage in giving them their option to be paid wholly in money, or partly by rations and goods; and the committee think that a store should be kept on the station, where the people could purchase personal clothing and such other articles as are required in a family, as nearly as possible at cost price, so as to leave no inducement to travelling hawkers to frequent the settlement. The store, they conceive, might be managed by one of the more intelligent of the natives, under the control of the superintendent.

7. Passing over 6, which will be answered under 8, the committee have the strong conviction that it would be unwise, in view of the weakness of moral purpose still characteristic of the aboriginal race, to board out the orphan children. It would be extremely difficult, they apprehend, to find persons who would take such an interest in their spiritual and moral well-being as would justify their guardians—the Board for the Protection of the Aborigines—in entrusting them to their care. In the most favorable circumstances there would be great danger of the girls going astray; and even in the case of boys, the probability is that they would grow up with the feeling that they were regarded as aliens, if not as inferiors, and thus be tempted to contract pernicious and degrading habits. Without committing themselves to the position that in no circumstances should these children be boarded out, the committee consider that the safest, and in every respect the best course is, to continue the present plan of bringing them up in a boarding-house under the superintendence of the missionary and his wife. They believe that success would be far more likely to crown the efforts put forth in such circumstances to mould their characters for good, than when exposed, as they would in most instances be under the boarding-out system, to the influence of companions whose home-training might be very inferior to that which obtains on the mission station. The presumption also is that the oversight, under that system, would be less vigilant, patient, and judicious.

8. The committee think that the superintendents of stations might be empowered to issue licenses to men in whom they have confidence to hire their labor to persons of approved character, who would engage to look after them while in their employment, but that these licenses should not run for a longer period than three months, though they might be renewed on application. The time has not yet come, the committee believe, when girls should be permitted to hire their labor, save in cases in which exceptionally good guarantees could be given that they would be carefully and judiciously guarded. As a general rule, wages ought to be paid through the manager of the station.

9 and 10. As aboriginal youths appear to have considerable aptitude for light mechanical work, the committee think it would be advisable to teach them such handicrafts as joiner-work, lathe-turning, basket making, the manufacture of wooden toys, &c., but they think they should not be apprenticed out, except in very special cases. Persons qualified to give instruction in the trades specified might be engaged to reside for a time on the stations; or, better still, the superintendents of stations and their assistants should acquire these arts as part of their qualification for the work.

While all encouragement ought to be given to lads who evince a capacity for such occupations, the committee think that the work required on a dairy farm, and in the cultivation of hops, arrowroot, &c., would be more congenial to the tastes and better adapted to the dispositions of the majority of the black people.

11 and 12. The committee would deprecate any proposal to turn the aborigines adrift on the white population. They have not as yet the energy and moral backbone which would enable them to hold their own in the battle of life. Even under the most careful training, it will require two or three generations to develop these qualities to the degree that would justify their protectors in leaving them to themselves. The policy of the Board, it seems to this committee, should be to form self-supporting communities on the stations.

With a view to this object, the committee would respectfully make the following suggestions:—

Let each station be placed under the superintendence of a Christian man of missionary zeal, tact, and business capacity, whose duty it shall be to impart religious instruction to the people, watch over them with a paternal eye, and administer the general affairs of the station for the Board of Protectors. Taking it for granted that the Government will not assume the function of religious teaching, while it will loyally endeavor to give effect to the Royal instructions (Osborne House, March 1861) "to take such measures as may appear to be necessary to further their (the aborigines') conversion to the Christian faith and their advancement in civilization," the committee would suggest that the Board concert with the religious bodies at present engaged in missionary work among the aborigines to secure as managers of stations men accredited as missionaries by these bodies, and, if possible, practically equipped for the peculiar work required, by special training. The missionary with his Bible, and the influence for good which a Christian family dwelling in the midst of them must exercise over the natives, are essential, in the committee's judgment, to the success of any scheme that may be devised for the management of the aborigines. The Gospel is the true civilizer, and only as the higher ends for which the Gospel is preached are kept in view will it take effect in the reformation of life and manners. A responsibility divided between two heads—one acting for the church and the other for the Government—might lead to collision and work much harm. The committee would, therefore, submit that the system which obtains at present at Ramahyuck, Lake Tyers, &c., by which the missionary acts as superintendent for the Board of Protectors, should be continued and extended to the other stations, as the most favorable to discipline and the general efficiency of these institutions. Under such an arrangement it would be but equitable that, while the religious body appointing him should salary the missionary for his religious work, the Government Board should pay him for his duties as superintendent.

To secure competent men for this twofold office, the committee would suggest that Mr. Hagenauer—and they mention him because they know that he has proved himself a successful missionary—be empowered to look out for suitable young men, whom he should train, say for two years, in the peculiar duties devolving on the manager of a mission station. The Government Board would have no difficulty, it is presumed, in arranging with the churches by whom Mr. Hagenauer is employed for the support and management of such a training institute. Eligible candidates could be found, it is hoped, in Victoria; but if not, application might be made to the Moravian Board of Missions.

While a portion of the area of the station should be reserved for the good of the settlement as a whole, and farmed so that its produce should supply rations for the orphan children and the infirm, and yield money for the payment of wages and general expenses, a part should be divided into small farms, and an allotment assigned to each family which they would be expected to till for their own support, with, or without the help of their neighbors, as the case might require. There should also be a grazing outfield, on which the cottagers should have a few head of cattle as their private property, along with the herd and flock of the station. A system such as this—for which the people might be prepared by the gradual enlargement of their garden-plots—would be found, the committee believe, of great benefit in fostering that self helpfulness and independence of character which it is so necessary to encourage among the aborigines.

The committee would farther suggest, as calculated to promote the same object, that the heads of families should elect annually one or two of their number to act as overseers in the management of the station, and as factors for the village-community in the purchase and sale of stock and produce—all under the oversight of the superintendent. They would give the superintendent all the power he has at present, but would make it a special instruction to him to encourage the people, as far as possible, to manage their affairs for themselves.

Such a plan as this, involving as it does no violent change on the system already in operation, is feasible, and, in the judgment of the committee, fitted to yield good results.

With regard to the station in which the Presbyterian Church is more immediately interested, the committee would respectfully submit for the consideration of the Commission:—

1. Whether the section of land adjoining the mission station of Ramahyuck, purchased by Mr. Hagenauer to protect the station from the influence of undesirable neighbors, should not be taken off his hands and incorporated with the mission reserve?

2. Whether a more liberal allowance for buildings, e.g., for the erection of the boarding-house now in course of construction, and for the equipment of the station with such machinery as may be necessary for the development of profitable industries—e.g., an engine to pump water from the Avon for the irrigation of the hop-plantation—might not be made to Ramahyuck from the annual vote?

3. Whether the suggestion made above, as to the Government Board remunerating the missionary for his secular work, should not be forthwith carried into effect in Mr. Hagenauer's case on the ground of equity? The church would welcome an arrangement of this kind as calculated to enable her to extend her missionary operations among the aborigines.

Signed in name and by authority of the committee by

MURDOCH MACDONALD,

Joint Convener.

Melbourne, 6th May 1877.

The witness withdrew.

The Rev. R. Hamilton further examined.

1968. At a former sitting of the Commission there was a question raised as to some parts of the paper then handed in by you, and the question was then left until the Commission had an opportunity of carefully perusing it, and ascertaining whether those portions could be received or not. After careful consideration of the matter, and looking at the scope of the Commission, which is merely to inquire into the present state and the future condition of the aborigine, the Commission have decided that those portions of the paper referring to past management, and other debatable points, should be eliminated, as they do not come within the scope of the Commission. You will be good enough therefore to take back your paper, and make such alterations as will bring it within the functions of the Commission?—I was quite under a misapprehension as to the scope of the Commission, and I shall now be very glad to make the necessary alterations. I did not know I was travelling beyond the functions of the Commission, and my object in referring to the past was simply that we might be guided as to the future management of the aboriginal.

Rev. R. Hamilton,
31st May 1877.

The witness withdrew.

Adjourned to to-morrow at Two o'clock.

FRIDAY, 1ST JUNE 1877.

Present:

E. H. CAMERON, Esq., M.L.A., in the Chair ;
G. W. Rusden, Esq., | F. R. Godfrey, Esq.

Rev. R. Hamilton further examined.

1969. Have you now made your paper applicable to the terms of the Commission?—Yes, I have tried to eliminate what might be considered objectionable.

Rev. R. Hamilton
1st June 1877.

The Commission debated on the point, and instructed the witness to further remodel his paper so as to completely bring it within the scope of the Commission.—The witness took the paper and stated that he would endeavor to alter it in accordance with the wishes of the Commission.

1970. You do not know any other station but Coranderk?—No, not from personal visitation.

1971. And you have not been there for about two years? No; though I am constantly seeing the blacks and others.

1972. In the first part of your report you say that in a sanitary point of view you consider Coranderk favorably situated—do you not think that it is an exceedingly damp climate from what you have seen of it?—Well, I have no doubt that it is in certain seasons, particularly in the present one; it has a pretty damp atmosphere from its neighborhood, from its being situated so near the hills, but I do not think that militates essentially against the healthiness of the station.

1973. With regard to the natives brought from low countries, the Murray, Loddon, and warmer parts, those dry arid districts, is not it a severe trial to their constitutions to bring them to such a damp climate?—I have no doubt it is; but I think that might be remedied by additional clothing and more care. They are very careless themselves as to their health.

1974. Did you ever hear them make any complaints with regard to the dampness of the climate—those from the plain parts of the colony?—No; I think there is a passive submission to ailments that leads them rather to bear than to complain. I have not heard them complaining of the dampness of the floors, but I have not noticed particularly that they were damp and not suited to good health. They might be in some cases for want of proper drainage.

1975. There are no instances, are there, of ventilation under the floors of the huts?—The floors were for the most part earthen.

1976. And even where there were boards, did you notice any ventilation?—No, I think not; I believe the boards usually rested on the earth.

1977. Do you think it is a good plan to have those huts with earthen floor in that country?—No, I think not; I think they ought to be floored, and have ventilation under the floors.

1978. In the marriages you performed, were they all on the request of the aboriginals?—They were all on the request of the aboriginals through Mr. Green.

1979. And did the aboriginals converse with you on the subject?—I always took an opportunity of conversing with them previous to the celebration of the marriage.

1980. And they seemed desirous to have their union solemnised in this way?—Yes, in the Christian form.

1981. You did not inquire whether they were members of the same tribe, the bride and bridegroom?—Yes, always; that comes out in the inquiry as to the materials for registration.

1982. Did you find that they adhered to their own tribal law as to marriage?—No, they have abandoned that to all intents and purposes; they are collected from various tribes at Coranderk, and from the force of circumstances they have cast aside their marriage laws.

1983. Are you aware what their marriage laws are?—Their tribal law I am not very clear about; I have looked into it, but not for a considerable time.

1984. The blacks never made any complaints of any kind to you when you visited the place?—The complaints I think, the last time I visited the station, were about the collision of the authority between the manager and the overseer, and yet I did not see any collision between the two myself, because they seemed always very friendly together. The manager's difficulty was to get the aboriginals to recognise the authority of the overseer.

1985. Are you of opinion that an undivided authority in the hands of the manager is necessary on the station?—I think so; I think it is the wisest plan.

1986. You think the natives are quick to appreciate a want of authority on the part of their manager?—I have no doubt of it; and those that are not very much inclined to work hard would be glad always to avail themselves of any deficiency in authority. At the same time the authority ought to be of a kind and affectionate character.

Rev. R. Hamilton,
continued,
1st June 1877.

1987. It requires a combination of kindness and firmness to manage them?—Quite so. They complained that commands were given in a passionate way by the overseer of the hops—that he gave way to temper, and spoke very roughly and unkindly, and then they get irritated.

1988. And they complained to you of that?—Yes.

1989. Are you aware that he has not been on the station for the last eight or nine months?—I was not aware. I do not think it was from real unkindness; I think it was from inexperience, not being acquainted with their dispositions.

1990. When you were at Coranderrk did you attend any of the aborigines during illness?—Yes, many times.

1991. Did you have opportunities of conversing with them at a time when they either expected or were near their death?—Yes.

1992. Were you able to ascertain whether they appreciated the consolations of Christianity?—Yes; I have no doubt whatever about their being thoroughly under the power of the Gospel. They had no fear of death; they were peaceful and delighted in having hymns sung and in speaking about the way of salvation through Jesus Christ.

1993. And hopeful?—Full of hope.

1994. And that on several occasions?—That on several occasions. I have been delighted to see young boys full of peace and hope, and triumphing in the prospect, with no doubt about their future well-being, and I have seen such a striking contrast between those who have been under training, and some who had very recently come to the station—they had not the opportunity of learning and knowing the plan of Gospel salvation, and they have died without giving the same testimony. Some of the old men were not able to entertain much grasp of the Gospel system, and nevertheless by receiving the simple truth that they were sinners, and that Jesus Christ was their Saviour, they seemed to me to die happy.

1995. But in the younger ones you found a more intelligent appreciation?—Yes, a more decided testimony—full, clear, and unequivocal.

1996. If you think of anything more that you would have liked to have said here you can add it to your paper?—Very good; I will do so.

The witness withdrew.

Mr. Edward M. Curr examined.

Mr. E. M. Curr
1st June 1877.

1997. You are chief inspector of sheep in the colony of Victoria?—Yes.

1998. And also a member of the Aboriginal Board?—Yes.

1999. You have had considerable acquaintance with the aborigines in this country?—Yes; I have known them well for many years—since 1841.

2000. You have also studied their habits and language?—Yes; I have taken some pains with those subjects.

2001. When were you appointed a member of the Aboriginal Board?—I forget the exact date.

2002. Shortly after your appointment, I believe, you were requested by the Board to visit all the stations and to report the result of your observations?—Yes.

2003. And you were accompanied by the general inspector, Mr. Ogilvie?—Yes.

2004. That was in 1875?—1875, I think.

2005. How many of those stations did you visit on that occasion?—Having, in company with Mr. Ogilvie, visited the blacks on the Lower Murray, who, as you are aware, are not located on aboriginal reserves, we visited Ebenezer, Lake Condah Station, and Framlingham. I had previously been at Coranderrk Station.

2006. In fact you visited them all?—All except the Gippsland stations.

2007. You have not seen them?—I have not.

2008. Now with regard to Coranderrk—there are certain questions which have been given to all the witnesses, which we will go through first of all. What is your opinion of Coranderrk as a place for an aboriginal station?—I think it unsuitable for several reasons.

2009. As a sanitary station?—I do not think it well suited to the natives in that respect.

2010. On what grounds?—On account of its coldness and humidity. Even the blacks to whom the Coranderrk country belonged, before the time of the whites, only frequented the neighbourhood for a short time during the summer months, as they have told me. They usually lived in lower country. The blacks now located at Coranderrk were never used to such a climate. To this cold and humidity the great number of cases of lung disease at Coranderrk may, to some extent, I think, be attributed. In one year the deaths there amounted to some 33 per cent. of its population.

2011. Would that apply to those born in the district as well as to those from a warmer climate?—To both alike.

2012. Has not the excessive mortality been confined to that one particular period?—Yes; and was occasioned by measles, to a certain extent, no doubt.

2013. The mortality since that date has not been so great?—I believe not.

2014. Did you observe their dwelling-places?—Yes.

2015. How they were constructed as to ventilation under the floor—was there any provision there for ventilation?—The original constructor of the huts seems to have known nothing of ventilation. To this subject of ventilation and the kindred one, the action of the air on the skin, I think but little attention has been paid up to the present time at our aboriginal stations. It seems to me, that when it is attempted to domesticate a hunting tribe, there is much to be suffered by such tribe, and many dangers to be run; but that the innovation which is most serious is the interference with the skin which is made by clothing, and through it with the lungs and constitution generally. A fact bearing on this subject is, that the women at Coranderrk suffer less from colds than the men. From the superintendent at Coranderrk I learn that such is the case. This it seems to me may be accounted for from the circumstance that the female's dress interferes less with the skin than the man's—that the air and wind are less completely shut out in her case. The skin of the native has for centuries been exposed to air and wind, day and night, with nothing but the scantiest covering. We have put him into a close dress and hot bed, and located him in a hut which would be oppressive to an European, and he dies of lung disease. With this portion of the subject the report of

the Chief Medical Officer even, though otherwise excellent I should think, does not seem to me to deal thoroughly. And yet this subject of the exposure of the skin to air and light is probably a most important one, and intimately connected with the disappearance of savage tribes generally whilst under process of civilization. Not being a medical man, however, I make these remarks with diffidence. I may add that I never heard of an instance in which medical treatment was successful with a native in any serious case; but I have known several instances in which blacks suffering from general ill-health have abandoned both clothes and the doctor, taken to their old habits in the bush for a few months, and come back strong men. I have also heard other persons assert the same.

2016. You are aware that Miss Nightingale recommends ample ventilation for the sick?—I did not know that, but I consider it an all-important thing whether for the sick or the healthy. I believe in leaving windows open, not only if you are sick, but if you want to keep from getting sick.

2017. Did you notice the floors of the huts at Coranderrk?—Yes; many of them had water under them.

2018. They were absolutely wet?—Yes, they had mud floors; and I have no doubt if you had dug down a foot you would have come to slush and water.

2019. And the more the huts are stopped up above the floor the worse it must be for the effluvia and damp air?—Yes, no doubt.

2020. Then the remedy would be the floors open—a clear space under them—and more ventilation generally?—I would recommend much greater ventilation than we have ever given them.

2021. But you would recommend ventilation under the floors?—Yes.

2022. Are you of opinion then that it would be better for the health of the natives if they were allowed to roam in their own way?—No, certainly not. Experience has proved that such a course must lead to their extermination from the effects of drunkenness and debauchery. I think, however, that the changes of life which our civilization imposes on them should be effected as gradually as possible. In saying this I even refer to many small matters. It may seem ridiculous, but it is probable, that even the cutting off at the knee the trousers worn by the natives might have an appreciably good effect on their health by exposing so much of the skin to the air and light. On the subject of beds also, I may remark that Mr. Ogilvie, late general inspector of aboriginal stations, informed me that the natives at Ramahyuck generally lay on boards instead of mattresses. He also remarked that the natives on that station were healthier than at Coranderrk, where they sleep on straw mattresses. He did not connect the two facts, as I understood him, but I do, *as cause and effect*. I believe it is thought that feather beds are unwholesome for Europeans, as they obstruct the action of the skin; if it be so, beds much less soft might be expected to affect injuriously our native race.

2023. The situation of Ramahyuck is dryer?—I have not seen it; but it can hardly be dryer than Ebenezer Station.

2024. I think you said you had other objections to Coranderrk than those which refer to its sanitary qualities?—Yes. I think its situation highly objectionable, as affording temptations to drink. The facility with which visitors can reach it is also a bad point. Members of the Board, casual visitors, cricketers, and Members of Parliament have probably little idea of how their visits interfere with discipline. To manage an aboriginal station is not difficult, provided the manager be not injudiciously interfered with. But the native is a child, and very little unsettles and even makes him fractious, and probably the height of pleasure to him would be to get a Member of Parliament to listen to his grievances. To him no doubt the casual suggestion of an alteration even seems like a condemnation of his ordinary superior, and is no doubt very pleasant to him. Hence this influx of visitors to Coranderrk does not seem desirable.

2025. It produces an unhealthy distraction?—Yes, decidedly.

2026. In connection with that, I may ask whether, in your opinion, those stations that you have seen which were entirely under the control of the missionaries and not under the direct management of the Board were more free from those disabilities and better managed than the stations at Coranderrk and Framlingham?—Yes, I think that those under the missionaries were the best managed.

2027. I suppose it may be attributed to that cause?—This seems to me one cause, but there may be others.

2028. Can you make any suggestions for the improvement of the management either of Coranderrk or of any other station, or as to the maintenance of discipline at the station?—I have no suggestions to make.

2029. Do you think it desirable to pay for the labor of the aborigines?—I think so.

2030. Do you think it desirable to board out their orphan children?—I do not think it desirable to board out black children.

2031. What is your experience as to that?—That those who have gone through the process have learnt to copy rather the vices than the virtues of the white man, and have become less desirable citizens than they were. Persons who advocate boarding out do so, I believe, with a view to that measure aiding in the absorption by the whites of this colony of the remnant of our black population. This absorption to my mind is a mistake—there is no absorption in the case and I think never can be; substitute eradication for absorption, and I think you will be correct. The history of other similar races points to this conclusion. Where are the fifteen thousand blacks who inhabited this country forty years ago? Have they been absorbed? Have the Red Indians in America been absorbed? You cannot make the blacks like us. A black can never become one of us; his color will not alter nor his propensities.

2032. Until they die out?—That they must die out is, I think, a foregone conclusion. Were they as valuable commercially as short-horned cattle, or merino sheep, there would be no fear of their dying out. The fact is we have pretended but never really wished to save them from extermination. The Anglo-Saxon in Australia, as elsewhere, does not foster weakly races. He wants their lands. He is thinking of riches. He tramples them under foot without noticing what he does. But I know no physiological reason why our black race should die out.

2033. They are changing color very fast at any rate?—That may be.

2034. How do you think then our duty to the race could be done?—To begin, we should remember that as a mob of wild cattle cannot be tamed in a single generation, so we cannot at once civilize these people. That though we can teach them to read and to write more easily and as well as our own children, this is not civilization, at least as I understand the word, for true civilization requires morality, which cannot exist without religion. Then we must remember that the views and habits of mind of the blacks are unlike ours, and cannot entirely assimilate to ours for generations. This will easily be allowed when we remember that neither the Irishman, the Scot, nor the Welshman has as yet developed into an

Mr. E. M. Carr
continued.
1st June 1877.

Englishman, though they have gradually adopted our language. Hence we should set to work, remembering that our task is a long one, and that its completion will require a judicious and long-continued policy. To this time there have been nothing but half-measures and vacillation. In five and thirty years we have seen three distinct changes.

2035. What were those three?—First the protectorate, then non-interference, and then the present missionary system or whatever you like to call it. Those three changes have taken place since 1839.

2036. What system would you recommend?—Without going into detail, I would suggest that sufficient reserves of land should be made for the natives; that on these they should be required to, I might almost say, live, die, and be buried; occasional hunting trips, however, for the sake of health should be encouraged; that they should be under the care of missionaries or others appointed for the purpose; that these missionaries should be subject to a board; that this state of things should be maintained possibly for two or three generations, at all events until the natives were civilized, when I would cut up the lands and locate each family on its own farm.

2037. Do you think the stations could be made self-supporting?—Yes.

2038. In what way?—By stocking them properly, and by a judicious expenditure and careful proper management.

2039. Of course it would be necessary to give them sufficient land?—Yes; and very probably an increase would be required on what they now have.

2040. It has been recommended that for this purpose Ebenezer should be enlarged?—Yes, by 13,000 acres I think. It is very poor country.

2041. And at Ramahyuck their reserve is too small altogether?—I have not been there. In the cases I speak of you must reckon for increase—that would be only a matter of detail.

2042. Of course, holding those views, you do not think it desirable to hire their labor out?—Certainly not.

2043. Do you think, from what you know of the nature of the blacks, that supposing that course were adopted, that they would be able to battle with the world—even those educated on the stations, and brought up to a certain pitch of civilization?—No, I do not. I think utter degradation would await them.

2044. You think they will require a patriarchal rule for several generations?—Yes, I do most decidedly. The influence of the whites would tell upon them. The blacks would without any exception be treated as inferior beings.

2045. Do they themselves feel that inferiority?—Yes, the white man makes them feel it. He makes proposals to them that he would not think of making to any white persons.

2046. You think then they would not make their way in the world?—I think the simple result would be that the men would be overreached and the women seduced; the whites would debauch the women; the men would drink themselves to death.

2047. Do you think it desirable to encourage handicrafts at the stations, and of what kinds?—I think, according to the nature of the country, various industries might be made to answer—for instance, silk growing, and perhaps wine making; also handicrafts.

2048. Can you give any information as to the aborigines who are not at the stations; the number in your district, their condition, and mode of obtaining a livelihood; and can you make any suggestions for the amelioration of their condition. You recommended in your report that there should be a station formed down the Murray; have you seen any reason since to alter that opinion?—None whatever. I have just come from that district now.

2049. Will you give us your views on that subject?—I would recommend that those blacks who are at large, whether on the Murray or elsewhere, should be required to reside on the stations.

2050. How could that be best done—to bring them in. Many of those natives are at present in the habit of getting employment on the squatting stations about, and earning considerable wages—what would be the inducement you would hold out in that case—you would not use force, I suppose?—I would, decidedly, if necessary. I would treat them as children from the very beginning; they are nothing better.

2051. Do you think it would be a desirable thing, supposing a station were formed lower down the Murray, to do away with the local guardians and the depôts for the supply of stores?—Were the blacks located as I propose guardians would not be required.

2052. And doing that you think would have some effect in inducing them to come to the stations?—Yes, the blacks generally like places where large numbers of them congregate. Even without compulsion I think they would come in when they found they would meet other blacks there, and that they would be provided for, and would remain contentedly enough.

2053. When they once get used to them?—Yes.

2054. But might it not be difficult in the first instance to take a man who was unwilling to go, say down the Murray?—I do not think there would be much practical trouble in it. I daresay there might be an instance; but I have gone on the idea from the beginning that those natives are children, and in anything I have recommended I have inferred that they would be treated as children—made to go to those places and kept there—and if I am asked my advice, I recommend that this should be done: that the blacks should, when necessary, be coerced just as we coerce children and lunatics who cannot take care of themselves. If they are not coerced, they cannot be preserved from extinction.

2055. But you would recommend that it should be done with kindness?—Yes; of course there should be the least possible appearance of force. The power should be there. If necessary, let them know that if they decline to go they will be made to; but the greatest kindness should be used to them in every way, and I have always found that with the natives very little else is necessary.

2056. Have you found them grateful for kindness—do they appreciate it?—I think so; oh, yes. They are always exceedingly glad to see anybody they have known before, and to do any little things for him.

2057. They are affectionate?—Decidedly. I think they are more affectionate than grateful. They are apt to forget. They are like children in that—they do not think seriously of anything.

2058. Is there any other suggestion you wish to make?—There is only one thing—that is, the necessity for medical men who attend the natives being aware of the fact of how little our treatment and our medicines suit them. I read a report of Dr. Salvado's in which he states that the doctors at his establishment in New Norcia regretted that all they could do with medicine was to hasten the deaths of those people. Mr. Ogilvie and I formerly suggested that the best medical talent in the colony should be sent to inquire into the maladies of the blacks. The natives might reap the benefit of such a course, and men of science

might learn something from it. That the doctor constantly errs when he prescribes for a native as he would for a European I have no doubt.

2059. Generally speaking, do you think that the present system of management by a central board is the best that could be?—Yes; but I do not think that the present Board is properly constituted, nor that the powers with which it is entrusted are sufficient.

2060. Do you think they should have larger powers?—Yes. I think that as much as possible the whole thing should be placed in the hands of one board or institution, whatever it may be, and that that step should be final, and should invest the board with almost entire authority for all time. As it is, the board can inspect, devise measures, talk and recommend—anything but act. As an instance, we have seen what has been recommended by the Board and by the Chief Medical Officer respecting Coranderrk, but not a single step has been taken in the matter; 33 per cent. of deaths in one year is not enough to overcome a bad system. There is nothing but delay.

2061. Why is that?—It is the result of the uncertainty as regards the income of the stations, which should be obtained, I think, not from Parliament but from off the stations themselves. The stations should be of such a size and so stocked that Parliament need seldom if ever be asked for money to carry them on. When this is done, the stations will be within the range of good management, and not till then.

2062. As to the manager on any one of the stations, how should his authority be recognised on the station—should the blacks look to him as the supreme arbiter among them, or should they feel that he is liable to have his instructions overruled by a board?—I apprehend that any manager would have to be in a position to be overruled by the Board if necessary. I think that he should be subject to the Board, and a servant of the Board, but that a manager whose services should be retained would not require much overruling. Whilst on the station, I think the manager should be supreme, and that the blacks should be taught to look to him, and to no one else. That the fact of the manager being a servant of the Board's should not be too much paraded.

2063. If, on reading your evidence, you see any general recommendations that you would like to make, will you kindly make them?—I shall be happy to do so.

The witness withdrew.

Adjourned.

Mr. Curr subsequently added the following:—"I have already suggested, in conjunction with two other members of the Aboriginal Board, that Coranderrk is not fitted for an aboriginal station, and should be abandoned. It is a hop station. Hops grow, but blacks perish, at Coranderrk. With the proceeds of the sale of Coranderrk a fitting station for blacks might be set on foot, stocked, and possibly be made self-supporting."

THURSDAY, 7TH JUNE 1877.

Members present:

Sir WILLIAM STAWELL, in the Chair;

E. H. Cameron, Esq., M.L.A.,

J. G. Duffy, Esq., M.L.A.,

F. R. Godfrey, Esq.,

G. W. Rusden, Esq.

Miss Robertson examined.

2064. You were living for some time at Coranderrk, I believe?—Yes.

2065. Were you ever at any of the other aboriginal stations?—No.

2066. You were there as schoolmistress and matron?—Yes; for rather more than two and a half years.

2067. And during that time you had, of course, a good deal of experience in the nature of the blacks?—Yes; I had a good deal to do with them; that is to manage or assist in management. For five months I was there alone, and I had the dispensing of the medicines and the visiting of the sick, and the entire charge of the orphans. I had no one with me.

2068. First, with regard to the children specially and the young people, and their capacity for receiving instruction, what is your experience as to that?—I think, the circumstances and the advantages they have had considered, they are just as capable of receiving instruction as the whites.

2069. What do you mean by "Considering the advantages they have had"?—That they were brought up in ignorance of their parents, and they had not regular instruction, like white children, till they came to school. All of them were brought up in the bush, and we could not expect much from them till they were some time in the house.

2070. Do not you think that in some respects they have greater advantages than the white children, for instance, children who come to the State school come sometimes one day and not the next, and never more than six hours a day; had not your children some advantages that State school children have not?—Certainly they had. They were watched over from morning to night.

2071. Do you think that would account for the difference in their getting on, the extra time they received in their instruction?—I think not. I think some of them are quite as smart and quite as capable naturally, but they are very playful, and do not give the same attention as white children.

2072. Have you had an opportunity of judging of those who have left school after arriving at a certain standard, some of the older girls or young people, and of knowing whether they keep up the instruction; do they retain it or lose it?—I had two or three girls who were newly married when I went up, but I had none of experience. I had an opportunity of judging to some extent. Two of the elder girls in the orphanage got married some time after I went there, and so far as I could see they did keep up the instruction they received, and three others at a later date of whom I had not sufficient time to judge.

2073. Were you able to see any of those who lived upon the station who had been to the school; did they keep up their knowledge?—Yes, they lived on the station, and I think they did keep up their knowledge.

2074. Do you think the standard of instruction was high, or too high, or what do you think upon that subject?—I do not think it was too high.

2075. Taking, for instance, the State school standard, is that too high for the blacks?—I do not think so.

Mr. E. M. Curr,
continued,
1st June 1877.

Miss Robertson,
7th June 1877.

Miss Robertson,
continued,
7th June 1877.

2076. Was your school ever examined by an inspector?—No.

2077. You have no idea how they would come out?—No.

2078. Do you think, from what you know of the black children, it would be desirable to board them out?—I do not think so. I do not think they do well to mix with the whites.

2079. Why?—They are attached to each other, and when they are separated I do not think they are as happy; and they are very simple and easily led astray. They require constant watching.

2080. You think they have not sufficient stability to be trusted among the temptations of the world?—No, I am sure of that. They might in a very few families, but they require constant watching. They are like very young children.

2081. Do you find that to be the case when they are grown up?—Yes; they require more watching when they are grown up than when they are young. At first I thought they might do with less, but after some experience I found that they required quite as much watching at last as at first.

2082. They are careless?—Quite careless, and ready to be led astray.

2083. Did you find them amenable to discipline when you spoke to them as to that?—Yes, I did. They are quite obedient; they know that they must obey.

2084. Do not you think that they would be likely to meet with more bad example in a mixed station like Coranderrk than if they were boarded out in a family?—I do not think so; I think they are better if kept by themselves, as far as I have seen them.

2085. Are they not a very mixed settlement at Coranderrk?—I am not aware of that, except the hop-garden manager and his family, and the overseer.

2086. I suppose the aborigines themselves are not all good characters?—Certainly not.

2087. Do not you think the associations with respectable white people would be better for them than the associations they meet with at Coranderrk?—I do not think they have strength of mind to withstand the temptations they would meet with except in a few families where they would be watched like young children. I count the oldest of them just like a child of four or five years.

2088. During the time you lived at Coranderrk what was your impression with regard to its situation, first in a sanitary point of view, as a sanitary station?—I thought it very healthful, but the children are not strong. They require great care; they are careless about themselves.

2089. Their constitutions are not generally good?—They are not at all good, or a very few of them.

2090. Therefore they require great care?—They require great care. They are not at all strong, and cannot do heavy work. If they are obliged to do much they are ill after it. I found that several times; they cannot bear the fatigue that whites do; their constitutions are undermined.

2091. Were there many deaths or much sickness from lung disease or consumption while you were at Coranderrk?—A number; I forget exactly how many, but eight or ten each year.

2092. It is a cold and wet place?—It is pretty high. I found it more healthy than Melbourne for myself. The buildings are on an elevated position, and there is a good fall all round.

2093. But the buildings the blacks lived in were not, as a rule, boarded upon the floors?—No.

2094. Were the floors damp when you were there?—In some of the huts they talked about the damp, but I never saw much dampness.

2095. Was there the same sickness proportionately amongst the children that there was among the people living in the huts about?—I think there was quite the same.

2096. And the children living in the house had boarded floors?—Yes.

2097. Then there was no dampness upon the ground?—No, there could not be, for the boarding is raised up.

2098. Did you find them fond of bathing, ablutions and that sort of thing?—Very fond of it.

2099. Summer and winter?—Not in the winter. We had not the appliances for it. We had no conveniences for that, but they are very fond of it in summer.

2100. When you say you had no conveniences, could they not have been easily obtained as regards the water?—They had no proper baths provided for them, the only alternative being the use of tubs in the house, or the creek running by the station.

2101. Do you think with regard to Coranderrk it is situated in any way dangerously as regards the temptations to which the blacks are subject on account of its being near Healesville?—No, I do not think so.

2102. You did not notice that while you were there?—No; I did not.

2103. Did you see or hear of much drunkenness among the blacks while you were there?—Not much, only occasionally.

2104. Was it general, or confined to a few?—Confined to a few.

2105. Now with regard to the medical treatment that the blacks receive. Was it the practice when you were there to have quarterly visits from a medical man from Flemington?—Yes, and occasionally a doctor from Lilydale. The doctor was sent for, but often before the doctor came the patient would be so bad that the delay was too long.

2106. What was the business of the doctor who visited quarterly?—To examine all the children and prescribe for them. Every one who was complaining was examined, children and adults.

2107. Who was the doctor visiting from Lilydale at that time?—Dr. Elms.

2108. Were you satisfied with the quantity of food that was issued to the children and the blacks there?—Quite satisfied as to quantity, but not so as regards changes.

2109. Did you ever hear complaints as to their not getting sufficient meat and flour?—I often heard them complain that they had not sufficient, but I think they had enough.

2110. What was the dietary of the children?—There was no dietary scale for the children.

2111. How many meals did they get?—Three in the day.

2112. What had they for breakfast?—Generally tea and bread. If there was any cold meat from the meal before, they had it: if not, they had just tea and bread. If there was any butter, they had that; if not, they went without.

2113. For dinner?—Meat almost every day, and soup.

2114. Vegetables?—When we had them, which was very seldom.

2115. Had you not always vegetables?—No; and we had not always milk and butter.

2116. When was that?—In the winter. We had jam instead of butter.

2117. And for tea?—Tea and bread and jam.

2118. Was there a slice of bread apiece?—Just what I thought sufficient. They got as much as would be good for them.
2119. Did they ever ask for more?—Often.
2120. Did you give it to them?—When I thought they required it I did. If they did not eat it at table they could eat it afterwards.
2121. In the store had you anything beside plain bread?—Rice. We could have rice once or twice a week.
2122. Had they any other diet?—No; except they were ill, and then they had sago.
2123. No change of diet?—No; except now and then a few puddings of flour, and in the fruit season there was fruit for them; that was the only change they had.
2124. How was the meat cooked?—Occasionally roasted, generally it was boiled; there were such a number of children in the house.
2125. How many were there?—We had twenty-eight or thirty.
2126. Who did the cooking?—They took it in turns.
2127. The children themselves?—Yes; the bigger girls. They are quite capable of cooking almost anything that you give them.
2128. Are there natives from all parts of the colony at Coranderrk?—Yes.
2129. Did you ever hear them complain that they did not think it good for their health to be there?—I never heard of their saying that there was any difference; but at the time we had fever and measles some of them said they would rather go somewhere else, where they would escape it they thought. Those were the only times that I recollect anything of the kind. Young and old had measles at one time.
2130. Had they fever and ague then?—No, measles; it is not general for the grown-up people to have measles, but they almost all had it.
2131. Did you notice any want of discipline amongst them whilst you were at the station?—Sometimes, if they were not properly controlled; the grown-up people that is.
2132. Yes. The question referred to their behaviour to those in authority over them?—Yes, sometimes they did not behave well.
2133. Was disobedience constant or only occasional?—Just occasional. They would refuse to work and so on.
2134. Was any religious training given to the children?—Yes, regularly, in the house only.
2135. What were they taught?—To read and sing; and there were prayers morning and evening every day.
2136. Do you think they understood and profited by it?—Yes, some of them have really profited, though many of them are indifferent. Some of them have benefited and are quite anxious for instruction, especially when they are ill.

The witness withdrew.

Mr. John Green examined.

[*The witness handed in the following paper*]:—

Mr. John Green,
7th June 1877.

1. What is your opinion of Coranderrk as a place for an aboriginal station?—(1.) As a sanitary station?

1st. It is one of the most healthy positions that could be found in the colony. I know that it has been asserted by those who should be able to judge that it is not suitable, "that it is too cold and wet a climate for them (the aborigines) to remain in all the year round."

But from what data this decision was arrived at I am at a loss to know, for during the first fourteen years of the station's existence there were only about fifty-one deaths on the station. Fifteen of those who died came to the station sick with a complication of diseases, principally pleuro and syphilis. Four died of old age, two were killed, and one drowned, and several of the others (29) were born while their mothers were suffering from the effects of syphilis (four at the very least), in all twenty-six (26), leaving twenty-five (25) to have died of diseases that could be in any way ascribed to the climate at Coranderrk. And even eleven (11) of the twenty-five were the children of syphilitic parents; they died of "pleuro," the other deaths were principally of low fever. If it be borne in mind that nearly all the aborigines, old and young, when they first came to settle at Coranderrk, were suffering in some way or other from syphilitic disease, the decision would be in favor of Coranderrk.

As a proof that it is a healthy situation I will instance; there are now on the station some twenty who were brought from the Murray; they have been on the station from six to ten years, only one has died, and by natural increase they now number twenty-nine or thirty. Now if we go to the same part where these were brought from, we will find that out of every five that were left there three at the least have died.

(2.) As to its situation and the temptations to which the inmates are exposed by reason of its proximity to population?

I know that it could not be improved by being removed further from a white population. It is a well-known fact that drink is more easily procured by the aborigines who are living in the very part of the colony (Kulkyne) where I see it has been recommended to remove these to; yea, and prostitution is an every-day occurrence in that part of the colony. But prostitution must soon cease in those parts, for nearly all the women have passed away where prostitution is unknown. All that is required to keep them from these evils is care and watchfulness and Christian persuasion.

During the fourteen years I was in charge of them at Coranderrk there were few cases of drunkenness after the first two years, and for several years none; and only one case of prostitution. The aborigines have as keen feelings about prostitution as any of their more favored white brethren, if they are only shown how degrading and sinful it is, and only require to be taught and persuaded daily that drunkenness and prostitution would prove in the end their ruin. Unless this is done, to remove them to some other part of the colony will not improve them.

2. Can you make any suggestions for improvement of its management, or as to maintenance of discipline at aboriginal stations?

1st. I would suggest that the station be handed over to one of the churches who is able and willing to supply men to manage it, not so much for the salary they could get as for their love for their (the aborigines') welfare. There are such men to be found, I am happy to say, in our churches.

2nd. There should be no white labor employed on the station but those required for the management, and all should be married men of known Christian principles. If this is done, the missionary or manager, if a man of tact, will very easily with his advice get the aborigines to make rules for the maintenance of discipline. If they once pass a rule that such and such shall be their law, they will, with very few exceptions, readily comply with it.

Extracts from Journals, 1865.—In looking over one of my old journals, 13/4/65, I find the following entry:—"Had a long court to-day, about Buckley, Locket, Dick, Davey, and Andrew drinking a bottle of grog; and there was a law made (this day) that every one should be fined 5s. for the first offence; for the second offence, 10s.; for the third offence, if any young man, he would forfeit all right to a wife from among the young women on the station—(it was a rule that none could get married to any of the young women until they had been two years on the station)—and for married men, £1—Agreed to by all the aborigines on the station, 110 in all." Very soon was the above rule put into operation, for I find, on the 4/5/65, "Had court to-day about drunkenness; several were fined 15s., viz., Timothy, Jemmy Webster, Dick, Morgan, Johnny Webster, and Jemmy Barber."

ABORIGINES.

L

Mr. John Croon,
continued,
7th June 1877.

This rule and Christian persuasion had a very good effect on all of them, and produced a great change on them many of them being years without tasting strong drink; and it is only within the last two years that they have turned to this old habit (at Corranderrk). I asked one of them lately, who had kept from drink for several years, "How is it that you have turned back to the drink again?" His answer was, "Because I have no one to tell me how to keep from it."

Extract from Journal, 1866.—Another entry from one of my journals, 5/2/66, showing how immoral conduct was treated. "Jemmy Webster was ordered to leave the station to-day, for lying with Harriet, and for threatening to stick Simon, when he reproved him for his wickedness. I told all that were not going to stand to the right way that they would have to leave with him. But all said that they were going to stand on the side of right."

I may here state that he went away, and came back some time after and said that he was sorry for what he had done and said, and got married to the same woman, and they are both living at Coranderrk.

And while on this subject I may say that I am quite confident that, if the aborigines are treated as free and independent men and women, and at the same time remembering that they are but children in knowledge, any one with fair tact may lead them any way. But the rule must be—Come men, let us do this or that; or, I think it would be good for us to do this or that. Neither is it of any use for any one to try to convince them that it is not good for them to drink while they know that the same party drinks.

3. Do you think it desirable to pay for the labor of the aborigines?

The aborigines, I consider, are well able to keep themselves independent of any Government supplies; and, when they do so, I say they have a right to wages, according to their worth. But, to give them Government supplies, as they are now getting—and should they only work one or two days in the quarter they get paid for those days—such a system can have but one tendency, and that is to degrade the aborigines, and gives them the means of getting strong drink.

4. If so, in what manner; whether by money alone, or by money and rations and goods, and at what rates or prices? I think this should be left to those in charge of the station. Some of the aborigines would make good use of any money they would get with some one to advise them; others would simply squander the whole away, if not in drink, on things that are of very little use. I found it a good plan, before giving them even the money that they often placed in my hands, to ask them what they were going to buy, and when I found that they were going to buy something which I thought they did not require, I would tell them that they should buy such and such, and, as a rule, they would do as I told them.

I know that to be banker, &c., &c., to a community of aborigines entails an amount of labor that very few are willing to perform.

5. Do you think it advisable that rations and goods should be purchased on the station, and a store kept for that purpose; and, if goods, of what kinds should a supply be kept?

I think a good supply of all necessary rations and clothes should be kept for the general use of the aborigines, of which they should each get a fair supply; good workers should get something extra.

It would be well to keep a supply of white sugar, many of them would readily buy it; but, as a rule, they would not buy any clothes that would be kept, they like better to buy from some of the hawkers who visit the station.

6. Would it be practicable to pay to the managers of the stations the wages earned by aborigines instead of to the aborigines themselves, and thus encourage a resort to the stations for what they want, instead of squandering their money elsewhere?

It would not do to make it a rule to pay the managers the wages of the aborigines unless they were consenting parties. I had this plan in operation at Coranderrk many years ago with the consent of the aborigines.

When they went to the sheep shearing, which they did for several years, I made arrangements beforehand with the squatters to send me their cheques. Those who objected to this plan at first very readily agreed to it the following years, after seeing how long the money lasted that was sent to my care. But the success of this plan would altogether depend on the tact of the manager.

The only suggestion I can make on this head is to try and get the aborigines themselves to make a rule that it shall be the law of their station. I know that if they once consent and agree that it shall be their law it will only require a little tact on the part of the manager to get them to carry it out.

7. Do you think it advisable to board-out orphan children?

I am sure that it would prove ruinous almost to every one of them if they were boarded-out, unless they were quadroons, in that case I think it would be well to try the boarding-out of orphans. In many cases the quadroons are so white and so unlike the aborigines that none would know them (but an expert) to be related to the aborigines. I have two in my family, and any stranger coming to my house never thinks but they are my own children; they are very likely to get amalgamated with Europeans.

I have known several cases where aboriginal and half-caste children have been kept in European families and educated the same as one of the family. All would go well until they came to an age that they would like to make love. So soon as this was seen by mamma or papa, there must be something done to stop it, so the white daughter or son is told that they must not make so free with the darky; they must remember that, although he or she has been educated in the family, it would be degrading to make love with them. So the cold shoulder is soon turned on the darky; they very soon feel it, and a change is seen in the darky; instead of being one of the most cheerful they will mope about until they can find a chance to join their old friends the aborigines. Now, says the wise ones, "Did I not tell you what would be the end of all your kindness to these darkies? There is that J— R—, who was sent to college, he is gone back to the camp and has married an aboriginal." The wise ones forgetting that it was mainly themselves that was the cause of the poor fellow's downfall by raising him too high and not providing those supports that are so beneficial to keep young men from falling, viz., the prospect of getting married with some one they love.

8. Do you think it desirable to encourage the aborigines to hire their labour out to employers in the country, either for long or for short terms?

In but very few cases would it be at all beneficial to the aborigines to be hired out as laborers. I do not think that it should be made a rule to do so; but in some cases they should be allowed to hire out, but in all cases care should be taken to see that they are only hired to those who would watch over them with great care. It would prove ruinous to hire them into families that would only look after the body.

9. Having regard to the disposition and habits of the aborigines, do you think it desirable that the youths should be apprenticed to learn trades or occupations?

I am quite sure that, as a rule, if the youths were apprenticed out to learn trades that it would prove ruinous to nine out of every ten, just for the same reasons I have given against boarding-out.

10. Do you think it desirable to encourage handicrafts at the stations, and of what kinds?

I think it very desirable to encourage all kinds of handicrafts that would be of service to them on the station, such as to build their houses, make their own clothes, &c., &c.; and I can assure you that some of them make good builders, &c., &c., with some one to guide them. They built all their own houses at Coranderrk years ago, also the small hop-kiln and cooling-house.

11. Should the main object of a station be to train the aborigines to earn their living abroad, or to form self-supporting communities on each station?

I consider that the main object of the stations should be to train the aborigines to become self-supporting communities. If those in charge of the stations are men of fair tact and energy they will not have so much difficulty to attain that as is often thought. A man that can lead the aborigines will get about as much work out of them as out of a white laborer, and, for my part, I would prefer many of them to white men, for, as a rule, they will do their work more cheerful. Mainly by the labor of the aborigines the Coranderrk station was self-supporting three years ago. They cleared all the ground and prepared it for the hop plantation, &c., &c., picked all the hops (nearly eight tons), also built the first kiln and cooling-house with little white labor; and I am sure, if they had been properly managed, they would have done the whole of the work (and more) that has been done on the station by white labor at a cost to the Government of over two Thousand pounds (£2,000).

12. Have you any suggestions to make as to the treatment of the aborigines?

The only suggestions I would make as to the treatment of the aborigines is—first, to place the whole of the stations in the hand of the Christian churches, who are able and willing to manage them; exact nothing of the churches but quarterly returns of any Government supplies which may be placed in their care to be distributed to the aborigines. Second, the churches should be authorized to collect those of the aborigines who are still wandering about, principally on the Murray river, the Government to pay the expense of collecting them. If this is done at once, in the course of three years the aborigines will be self-supporting communities. Coranderrk could be made, in less time, to support 400 or 500 or one-half of the whole aboriginal population of the colony.

13. Can you give any information as to the aborigines who are not at the stations; the number in your district, their condition, and mode of obtaining a livelihood; and can you make any suggestions for the amelioration of their condition? There are still some 500 or 600 aborigines wandering about, principally on the Murray river; some sixty or seventy are children under fourteen years of age, the most of these could be easily induced to go to some of the stations. There are a number of young unmarried men among them, they readily would go to the stations with the prospect of getting married. When I visited Kulkynce, on the Lower Murray, some twenty-two months ago, I found there several young men who were anxious to go with me to the Coranderrk station. I reported the fact to the Board at the time, but I got no reply, and when I left they were very much disappointed that they could not go with me. All the young men are generally employed on stations, and get good wages, but, as a rule, they spend nearly all on drink, which they never have any difficulty in procuring, if not on the Victoria side of the Murray on that of New South Wales.

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2137. You were for some years, I believe, connected with the Aboriginal Board, and had a good deal to do with forming one or two of the stations, Coranderrk at all events?—Yes. I have been in connection with the board since ever it was in existence.

2138. How many years is that?—In 1861.

2139. And you induced a great many of the blacks, I believe, to come in to the station?—Yes; nearly all that are at Coranderrk, and many others who have died there since.

2140. From what parts generally did those natives come as a rule, the blacks that were at Coranderrk?—The first instalment were from the Goulburn, and the next from Jim Crow, and about Sandhurst the next, and then down towards the Terricks and the Murray and Echuca, and in that direction.

2141. Did you find when you got some in from a district that it assisted in getting others to come?—Whenever I got one or two the rest were ready to follow as a rule.

2142. Did they all come voluntarily?—The whole of them.

2143. There was no coercion used in any case?—Two or three women at Mount Hope; a little was used there. Mr. Green, a settler, wanted them taken away, because they were living as common prostitutes amongst his men.

2144. Do you remember a blackfellow of the name of Campbell who was living at Mr. Fisher's?—Alick Campbell. He is a half-caste.

2145. Yes?—Yes; I remember him.

2146. Did you induce him to come in?—No; he came in of his own accord. He wanted to marry one of those women that I referred to just now. He came himself.

2147. He came in from Mr. Fisher's?—He came of his own accord from Melbourne to me.

2148. Did he want to get away after he came to the station?—He never wanted to get away from me. I have heard he wanted to get away several times since.

2149. He did not ask to go back to Mr. Fisher's while you were there?—Yes; I got a certificate for him in the usual way, and he went away with it, and came back again to the station of his own accord very soon afterwards.

2150. Do you know a blackfellow called James Edgar?—Yes.

2151. Where does he come from?—From near the same place. He came in company with those women and married one of them afterwards.

2152. Did he come with the women?—Yes, at the same time, of his own free will.

2153. You did not use any threats to induce him to come?—No; the women were the only ones.

2154. Did he ever express a wish to leave the place?—No.

2155. Not after he came in?—No; not to me. I have heard that he has since, but not to me that I remember.

2156. What process did you adopt to induce them; was it merely persuading and speaking to them?—Yes; merely speaking and persuading them to come for their temporal and spiritual good. I always urged that.

2157. Do you think they understood anything about their spiritual good at that time?—Not so much at that time; still I used the persuasion then.

2158. Do you think that had any influence upon them?—Yes; I think so.

2159. Even then?—Yes; even then.

2160. How had they been taught to enable it to influence them?—They had always been in contact with Europeans. I could tell you a most remarkable case of that, but it would be a digression from the point just now. A woman was dying; she died in the hospital at Sandhurst on the way, and I brought her child down.

2161. Then those natives must have been under some aboriginal protection?—A good few of them had been at Jim Crow.

2162. Under Mr. Parker?—Yes; when they were children.

2163. Off those stations you had no right to expect that they would receive religious instructions?—No, not as a rule.

2164. Do you think it would be effective, taking the children first, to induce the mothers to follow?—In some cases at Coranderrk I got the children even freely given up by the mothers, and then afterwards they followed themselves.

2165. They gave them up in the first instance as if they were indifferent?—Yes.

2166. About what ages were those children?—Four and five and six years of age; that was from Ballarat way; King Billy and wives came after their children.

2167. From infancy and childhood, because after that the children would be of use to them?—No, they would never give up a girl if she was ten or twelve years of age readily.

2168. No, nor a boy either, I should think?—Yes, a boy readily.

2169. At any age?—Yes, at any age if he was away from suckling, when he was weaned.

2170. Do you think they have any strong or any very strong affection for their children?—Yes, very strong.

2171. Up to what age?—Even to manhood.

2172. It is difficult to reconcile what you state with their giving up those children aged from four to six if they had strong affection for them?—Yes, because I persuaded them that they were better off with me than exposed to strong temptations as they would be there.

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2173. How do you reconcile your getting the child away from the mother with the assertion that they have very strong affection for the children. We have evidence that they have very strong affection for their children while infants, then it seems to weaken again, and we then understand that that affection must strengthen again on approaching the age of puberty?—No, the girl is generally betrothed, and hence the influence to keep her.

2174. Were girls or boys more numerous among those given up to you readily?—Boys and girls about equal.

2175. About equal?—No, rather more girls. I find that the number of girls was 41, boys 42.

2176. How many children altogether did you get?—About fifty or sixty altogether.

2177. About how many would be girls?—About forty; they would average from thirty to forty.

2178. You have had some experience among the natives, do you think those boys or girls would, with advantage to themselves, be apprenticed or put in charge of a careful master or mistress?—No, I do not think so.

2179. Why not; what is your apprehension; what do you dread?—I have known some cases where it has been done.

2180. I do not mean as pets. Many ladies and gentlemen take a fancy to a black and spoil him. I do not mean that, I mean a fair master who will take proper care and endeavor to bring him up carefully, but at the same time teach him some trade or occupation; for instance, a boy a trade and a girl to become a good house servant or a cook, and enable them afterwards to earn their bread. Is there anything, do you think, in the nature of the aboriginals to prevent their earning their bread?—Decidedly not if they are, as you just observed, properly looked after out of hours. They are just as capable, with good management, as we are of doing that.

2181. Supposing a proper man is selected as master, to whom the boy is apprenticed, and a married woman to take care of the girl, do you think there is any objection to their being bound apprentices to them?—Decidedly not, if they look after them out of hours and not allow them to associate with low characters.

2182. Supposing that boy grew up and learned his trade, could he reasonably be expected to earn his own bread; could he battle with the world?—Yes, I think he could; but still I think it would be very injurious to them to be so exposed, because as a rule Europeans of the middle class shun an aboriginal, they will not associate with them, and hence they are driven to associate with a lower grade, and the tendency thus is to degrade them by the company they have to keep. There was one boy I remember distinctly now who used to be in the Mining Office, apprenticed, and he was an excellent draughtsman; but at night, because the other officers would not associate with him, he went and associated with the lowest characters about town, and it was a source of the greatest trouble to Mr. Thomas, who had charge of him at that time, that possibly could be. He became quite unmanageable from his associations in the town; but he was an excellent draughtsman in the office, and did his work as well as possible.

2183. What became of him?—He died.

2184. Have their capacity for sustained effort; can they work as Europeans do, day after day and year after year, or is their own natural tendency to give it up?—I think there is a strong innate tendency to return to their old habits.

2185. Do you think they may be trusted by themselves, or would they always want watching?—I think ultimately, after a generation, they might be trusted.

2186. But we must deal with the present, that is too far to look forward to?—Then as to the present generation, or even the rising generation, they must be watched.

2187. Does that apply to half-castes and quadroons?—I find no difference between aboriginals and half-castes, they are quite as quick at school.

2188. And memory?—I do not see any difference at all. I may observe that I will leave a paper with you if you like; it enters into that, but I may say that in some cases I think quadroons might be well boarded into nice families where they are orphans, for I think, in some cases, they might ultimately get amalgamated with Europeans, for they are so white and so unlike the aboriginal in caste that they cannot be readily detected, and hence they can associate with Europeans freely; at present I have two of them with me belonging to the manager, and no persons coming to the house ever suspect that the children are not of my own family, so white are they.

2189. They may be more than quadroons, they may be octoroons?—No, I know the family well; the father was married to a half-caste woman.

2190. But can you trace that line back?—Yes, I know the whole line; her mother was a real aboriginal.

2191. You attribute the probability of their relapsing into bad habits to their being shunned by the ordinary white class, and thus being driven to low company?—Yes, that is principally it.

2192. Then their physical appearance is of importance; with the quadroon or the octoroon, the less he is like a native the better the chance of success?—Yes.

2193. What plan would you suggest to get the natives not now upon the stations to come into them?—It would not be very difficult to get all the young people now outside to come into the stations.

2194. Surely you would not separate the children from their mothers?—No, but probably there are not fifty children now in the colony not upon the stations, but there are young men wandering about the Murray.

2195. But how would you induce them to come; they can earn something for themselves?—It is easy to induce them; there are young women at the aboriginal stations, and there are none now outside except perhaps a very few, and the prospect of getting a wife would make them come very readily.

2196. What estimate would you make from your own knowledge and information of the number as to the whole number of natives outside the aboriginal stations. I do not mean those who come for a short time and then go away again, for I reckon them as practically upon the stations?—I reckoned that there are about 500 wandering and 600 upon the stations.

2197. Where are the greater number of those?—They are principally to be found now about Wodonga and Echuca and lower down; all down the Murray towards the plains. There are a few there.

2198. Is there any site along the Murray to which they would be likely to come if a new station was formed; would that be advantageous for them?—There is a site.

2199. Have you had any experience yourself of that country?—Yes, there is a site there ; but I do not think it would be judicious to form a station there myself. There is a site at Kulkyne.
2200. That is very low down ; a very wild and very poor country?—Yes, very wild and very poor.
2201. By a site do you mean the site reserved?—No, that site is completely covered with water.
2202. The site you speak of is near Wodonga?—No.
2203. Where is it?—Kulkyne.
2204. Is that reserved?—There was a reserve there.
2205. How many acres do you know?—I do not know. Gayfield is the place.
2206. The land reserved you think is unsuitable?—It was literally covered, every foot of it, with water when I was there.
2207. In winter?—Yes.
2208. What site do you speak of?—It is lower down the Murray on the Kulkyne run, but eight or ten miles lower down the Murray.
2209. There is a reserve at Wodonga, upon the Wodonga flats. You say there are blacks about Echuca?—No ; it is about 50 miles above Echuca.
2210. Is there no land about the junction of the Ovens?—No. There are not many blacks there ; they are all about Ulupna.
2211. It is not far off?—About half-way.
2212. Is there any land that would be suitable to be reserved about there?—No.
2213. Then in what locality would you put the reserve if you had your choice?—I pointed out one at Gunnawarra at Mr. Fisher's station, that is below Echuca, between Swan Hill and Echuca.
2214. Near Gunbower?—Yes, below Gunbower.
2215. There are not many blacks there?—No ; they are nearly all at Coranderrk.
2216. Then where are the 500?—Principally between Echuca and Wodonga. There are about 120 there.
2217. Is there no spot there?—Not one that I am aware of.
2218. But is there a spot you think would be suitable near it if we could get it?—Cobram is suitable if there is ground there ; it is nice and dry, but I fear it is all selected. That is the only place I know of. Ulupna is very wet.
2219. How many of the 500 belong to New South Wales?—They belong to both sides of the river. You cannot divide them, because the aboriginal boundary was not the river, but a certain part along the river. They crossed and re-crossed all along the river ; the river was not a boundary to them.
2220. They were the Murray tribes?—They were the Murray tribes.
2221. And the Murray tribes were entitled to both banks, the one just as much as the other?—Just so.
2222. Do you know whether there was or is a reserve at Wodonga?—No ; and the nearest to Wodonga is at Little River, Tangambalanga. There is 640 acres there ; it is no use. I have brought them all from there to Coranderrk.
2223. Do you think that any of those that you speak of as being abroad were ever upon stations?—Very few of them. A few that are at Kulkyne were at the Wimmera station, and settled there for a few months. Just a few of those were on that station ; but none of the rest were upon stations.
2224. Do you think those blacks living in that district could be induced to go to Ebenezer?—I believe part of them could, and part to other stations ; but my belief is that, with very little difficulty, they could be got to the stations now existing.
2225. Without forming a new station?—Yes.
2226. With gentle suasion?—Yes ; very gentle, and with very small difficulty.
2227. Do you think it is injudicious to supply them with rations and clothing off the station?—Yes ; coax them on and get them on, and get them to work and earn their food and clothing. They will work well if they are well led, but they will not be driven. No man can drive them ; you must lead them.
2228. Do not you think they would be more content in the neighborhood where they were bred and born, than having to go 200 or 300 miles?—Yes ; but there are so few in any locality. If you form a station at Wodonga there are perhaps only ten or fifteen blacks there.
2229. But there must be a good many between Echuca and Wodonga?—Yes ; but it would be just as difficult to move them from Echuca to Wodonga, and they would be more likely to go back to their old place than they would if they were down here.
2230. If you break at all, it is best to make a complete break?—Yes, and it is better to do that, because there are little petty feelings between neighboring tribes that would not exist down here. They are more ready to move a long distance than a short one. When I was at Kulkyne there were twelve young men ready to come back with me.
2231. What prevented their coming?—It was not sanctioned.
2232. What was the inducement?—The prospect of getting wives.
2233. We have reason to fear that there is a good deal of illicit intercourse between black women and white men ; is there much between black men and black women?—Very little.
2234. Therefore they are very anxious to get married?—Very.
2235. Are there any restrictions among themselves as to the persons whom they may marry among themselves?—Yes ; very many.
2236. They consider it wrong to break those restrictions?—Their original law about that was that within a tribe they could not possibly intermarry. All inside the one tribe were brothers and sisters, and even any case of departure from morality was very severely punished. In some cases death was the original penalty, and a female, if she gave way to this with any of her tribe, would have a spear sent through the calf of her leg and pinned to the ground for a certain time, as a punishment for cohabiting with any of her own brothers in the tribe. Within the tribe no such thing as intermarriage was allowed. Then they would go outside ; but there again there was a great barrier existed, because there were relationships created outside through intermarrying, and they could not marry when we would say there was only one-hundredth part of blood in the veins. They knew of it and would not marry. It was one great conflict that we had at the station, to get the old people to consent to the marriage of some of the young people. They would count blood when we could not count it.
2237. Have they a conscientious feeling about that?—Yes ; the old people decidedly.

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2238. They consider it morally wrong?—Yes.

2239. It is not a mere question of what is wise or desirable?—No; their idea was that it was morally wrong. They are a most remarkable people in their ideas of morality and chastity; and at a certain time, even after I built a house, or huts, the female had a little place at the back of the hut, where she had to sit apart from the men for a week every other month, and she would not touch with her hand anything belonging to the man, and the man would not touch a thing belonging to her while she was in that state. I knew a case where a woman in that state went across a river, and the natives would not drink a drop of water out of it afterwards.

2240. You could not of course violate those prejudices?—No; but I got them to make two beds inside, and not to go outside, so that people might not ask me why they were sitting there, and so on.

2241. Is the prejudice gradually disappearing?—Yes.

2242. Are those old feelings as strong as they were?—Mostly all the old people are gone now, and the young generation are guided by our views upon that matter now.

2243. More than the old ones were?—Yes.

2244. When you speak of tribes of course you do not mean what we understand by the Loddon tribe, or the Goulburn tribe, or the Murray tribe; you mean families?—Yes; they are all families.

2245. You do not mean that none of the members of the Murray tribe would intermarry with another member of the Murray tribe?—No; this is the point. There was a certain tribe belonged to the Yarra here; in that tribe there were 300 or 400 aborigines; in that tribe they never intermarried, though there were 300 or 400 of them, and they would go to some part of the Goulburn, upon which river there were seven or eight different tribes, and the same upon the Murray, and they will never intermarry within the tribe belonging to that particular district.

2246. That must be peculiar, because that does not agree with the usage of the tribes upon the other side of the Murray; they will intermarry within the different tribes, but not within the same family?—Such was their custom.

2247. Do you think those men upon the stations, if they received a certain small payment for their work, day's work by contract or time, or whatever is desirable, would invest that money wisely, or would it all go in careless expenditure?—Great care is required in the matter. Many years ago I adopted a system by which, with their consent, eight, or ten, or fourteen of them would go to shear sheep, and I got them to make a rule that all the money would be forwarded to me and not draw it themselves, and I would give it to them when they returned. This rule was adopted and it became pretty general, and even those that refused to comply with it at first, when they saw that the money lasted out a considerable time, readily complied in the following year. I always inquired before I gave them money, even their own money, what they were going to do with it; and if I thought it was anything they did not really require I would advise them to leave it, and I must say that as a rule they complied with my wishes and left it there, and some of their money would even last through the year that way with judicious management; but, I think, to make it a compulsion would make them kick against it, but if they get a voice in it themselves, and they once pass it as a law of their own, they would stick to it.

2248. They like to have the money even if they give it back to you?—Yes; but I think it very injudicious to pay them for work unless they really give an equivalent. They work for their food first and their clothing, they see that very well; and if it is properly represented to them they will even shrink at the idea of taking what they have not earned. They are very proud and sensitive, and you can work a great deal upon their pride; in that way you can make them see that it is disgraceful to take what they have not earned. I had many proofs of that, of how they will give way when you can touch their pride properly in the matter. I remember one case particularly of a young man, now at a station, who came of his own accord with a nice young wife; and he had not been there many days when he wanted to go away, and we made it a rule with their consent that none who came could go away without the sanction of all upon the station; hence there was always a general assembly called to discuss the matter. This young man presented himself as wanting to go away, and I asked the aborigines to give their views first, and they said, "Oh well, he can go; all right." I said he should go, so I stood up and said, "You can go, that is the way there. You are a smart young man, Jimmy, and you have a nice smart wife; here you have a capital home, everything is your own here, but whenever you go away over to the station there you will be standing up at the door, 'Please ma'am a drop of cold tea, any cold meat.' 'Get away you dirty fellow.' And now, Jimmy, are you a man there now?" Jimmy saw his position at once, and he said, "I will not go." He is there at the station now. In many cases where you can touch their pride that way you can work upon them wonderfully.

2249. Do you think it was the pride or the stomach?—I think it was the pride; he did not like the picture of himself being driven away asking for bread.

2250. The system of getting money to pay them is a difficult one to carry out of course?—I will tell you another case. I had no trouble with it. That was before there was any money at all except a very small portion. There were about fourteen of them there, and there was so much fencing to do. I said to them, "I will allow you the same price for it as the Europeans will do it for, that is, 10s. a chain, and I will only charge you for the Government exactly the net value of your food, and you will go and do that fence." They all agreed, and were quite lively upon the matter. There were ten of the real lazy crawlers that you could get no work out of, and I sent them off to work, and they put up a good piece of fence, but they took a long time; and I kept account of the food they used and put it down at the net price that would be paid by the Government for it; so when they finished the fence they came and told me. Of course I had been there often; and seeing them I went and measured up, and I said, "Now, gentlemen, you owe the Government £14." "Oh, we do not want any money; we do not want it; we want to go back to the old way again. We want to go and hunt two days in the week; we do not want any money." That was the real state of affairs. They had consumed £14 worth of food above their earnings.

2251. As long as that state of things exists it would be no use to send them abroad in the world?—No, not at all. There was one man that I believe you had here, he is another case of that, Farmer; he and another one were tried up at Jim Crow under the eye of Mr. Parker. Shortly after I was appointed as inspector I was sent up there to see how they were getting on. Two of them had a small farm up there, and had a good deal of money at the start. I found them both away from their farm, and Mr. Parker had to reap the wheat for them, and when the whole affair was investigated, that which had cost the

Government about £100 or £150 twelve months before I could only get £30 for, and if I had recognised all the charges that were brought forward against them there would not have been a penny, but the Government would have been in debt for those two, and they were two of the best of them; they could not manage for themselves that is certain.

Mr. John Green,
continued,
7th June 1877.

2252. Were there any complaints about the meat supply when you were at Coranderrk?—No.

2253. Do you think the supply is sufficient for their requirements?—It was always a source of great trouble to me, but I considered they always had ample.

2254. What was the amount?—I never had above I think £100.

2255. What did they get each?—That I used my own judgment about. Good working men I always gave a good bit of meat to, and those that were lazy I gave a little bit to and sent them away hunting. That was my rule. Those that would work steadily I was always careful to give a good supply of everything to, and the lazy ones I sent away hunting when they wanted more.

2256. It is very undesirable to give them all they ask for?—Yes, the more you give the more they want.

2257. They do not show their pride in that then?—Yes they do if you can touch it, but that is very difficult to do.

2258. Do you think the children are subject to any bad influences by being among the old blacks?—No; if you teach them properly I always find the old blacks very careful upon the subject of morality if you only keep the point prominently before them. I have mentioned one case here where we dealt with a man guilty of immorality upon the station. There were some thirty or forty aboriginal men there at that time, and to a man they all determined that he should be sent from the place. He cohabited with a woman but would not marry her, and he was sent away and told that he might come back when he was sorry for it and would marry her; and he came back twelve months afterwards and married her, and they are living now upon the station as man and wife, and that is ten years ago.

2259. Do you know of any cases of prostitution at Coranderrk?—That one is all I knew of.

2260. But between the women and white men?—There was one very lamentable case.

2261. That is all you heard of?—Yes. I heard of them all.

2262. Were there no more?—Not that I know of.

2263. Did any young women come to Coranderrk who had been living as prostitutes?—Yes, several.

2264. Do they mix with the children?—No.

2265. How are they kept separate?—They live in the houses.

2266. Do not they talk to the children?—My rule was that the children should not go outside the fence.

2267. Do you think it practicable to keep the children within the bounds?—I really did it. I had forty or forty-five there, and just by a snap of the fingers I had them all in the school-house before you could count twenty.

2268. Were they never allowed outside the fence?—Yes, when they were with me or the schoolmaster.

2269. Not outside at all?—Yes. There is plenty of room; there are five or six acres.

2270. Do not they play down by the river?—No, not unless some one was with them.

2271. Who went with them when they went out?—Myself or the schoolmaster, or Miss Robertson, when she was there.

2272. It seems more natural that the fathers and mothers and children should be all together?—These are orphans that I am referring to; or if not orphans the parents were not there. The children who had parents there were living outside with their parents. There are good large families round.

2273. The orphans have a good large house to sleep in?—Yes, two houses, one for girls and one for the boys. I used to go every night with the boys, twenty boys sleeping in the brick house, which you have no doubt seen, and every night I went there and saw them all to bed. But it is just as well to state that I attribute the whole of the influence and the success there to the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ amongst them. I attribute the result principally to that. There is no doubt about it, in my humble opinion. My success lay there.

2274. That was the elevating influence?—No doubt that was it. I conducted there regularly morning prayer and evening prayer. On Sunday I had services with the aborigines, and almost to a man and woman they every one came. I had morning prayer first and then service at eleven o'clock, and then afternoon school for the children, then service at three o'clock with all the people, and in the evening service again, and almost to a man and woman they all turned out; and I attribute the whole success to the power of Christianity. While I am upon that I may just say that if any real good is to be done with them it must be done with that.

2275. While you were managing Coranderrk were you much troubled with Europeans upon the station?—No.

2276. Did you employ many about the hop season?—No, none whatever.

2277. Had you no Europeans there at all?—I think Mr. Cameron was there upon one occasion, and that was the only season I had them; I had just two men burning charcoal, two local farmers.

2278. With reference to the half-caste children; were they born at Coranderrk, or did they come from other parts of the colony?—They came from other parts of the colony.

2279. Principally, or all?—Principally; very few have been born at Coranderrk. One I happen to think of at present; I brought her (the mother), while she was with child, from the Goulburn. I do not remember any more.

2280. At the time you formed the station there was not such a place as Healesville at all?—No.

2281. Had there been as many Europeans in the neighborhood as there are now would you have selected that place for an aboriginal station?—I believe I should; I do not see where I should find a better.

2282. We want to know your experience. Have you not found it most difficult to manage the blacks when near a white population?—No, I did not find any more difficulty with them after Healesville was commenced than I did before, none whatever. The difficulty was before that time, when the public-houses were twenty miles away; they were more apt to get drunk than they were afterwards.

2283. Did you ever find any difficulty in keeping the youths of Healesville away?—No, I never allowed any of them to come near.

Mr. John Green,
continued,
7th June 1877.

2284. You did not allow it, but had you to use any influence to prevent it?—No, I just told them to leave; I never used any compulsion.

2285. In your paper you say that the station should be self-supporting; would it not be necessary to fence Coranderrk?—Not necessary to make it self-supporting.

2286. Would it not be a good thing?—Yes.

2287. Would it not be necessary in order to keep the cattle?—Not necessary, but it would be much better to keep them in that way. All the cattle from the township and the station come on, but they just go off again to the hills.

2288. Are they much more troublesome to look after because they go to the hills?—No; they just come back to the flats from the mountains of themselves in the summer.

2289. Not without looking after them?—No, of course.

2290. Looking after them at a distance must be more troublesome than looking after them at home?—You just go through them now and then to see what they are doing.

2291. How many of the offspring of the Yarra tribe are still living at Coranderrk; can you tell?—Yes; but I have not noted it. There are very few of the real ancient Yarra living.

2292. They are children or grandchildren?—Yes, very few; perhaps ten or twelve altogether.

2293. How many did you bring from the Acheron or the Goulburn?—Forty altogether.

2294. Are there many of them left?—I suppose with children and all together that number remains about the same. I mentioned one case in my paper where I brought about twenty from Mount Hope and that region, and it is from six to twelve years since they came here. There were twenty of them. Out of the twenty one has died, and by natural increase that twenty is now twenty-nine or thirty at Coranderrk.

2295. Did those whom you brought from the Goulburn and that direction complain of the cold in winter time?—Never.

2296. Did those you brought from the Murray?—Yes; they have complained of the cold occasionally in the winter.

2297. You seem to attach great weight to the inducement offered to these young men to come to the station, but what is there to prevent their coming to the station now and being received?—They are frightened without some one coming to take them.

2298. What causes that alarm; is it shyness?—Partly shyness and partly fear of the old blacks; the old aboriginal fear of going to a different tribe of their own kind.

2299. They want somebody to introduce them?—They want some one to bring them there.

2300. You said just now you did not employ any white men upon the station at the time of hop-picking; what number of acres have you under hops then?—Ten.

2301. Supposing you had the place and held that acreage, would you employ any labour or let the hops spoil?—I put in twenty, and I believe I could manage the whole with the aborigines, because the aborigines could pick more than the ten acres. I picked nearly eight tons with these, and we were frequently playing at cricket and other things at two or three o'clock in the afternoon, having picked as many hops by that time as the kiln could dry.

2302. Was it not assigned as a reason that year that the weight was light because you had not sufficient labour to pick it?—No. I may say that there will be no difficulty in picking all the hops that will be grown upon those twenty acres with the aborigines that are there.

2303. Does any other point occur to you now to mention that you have not been asked upon?—No; nothing more.

The witness withdrew.

Adjourned to to-morrow at Four o'clock.

MONDAY, 23RD JULY 1877.

Present:

Sir W. F. STAWELL in the Chair;

G. W. Rusden, Esq.

Edward M. Curr, Esq., further examined.

Edward M. Curr,
Esq.,
23rd July 1877.

2304. How long have you been a member of the Board?—About two years and a half, I think.

2305. Of how many members does the Board now consist?—I do not know positively, but about ten, I think.

2306. What is the quorum?—Three form a quorum.

2307. Do you think the quorum being so small a number tends to break the continuity of the policy of the Board?—I do not think so, for there are about six who attend, and the same six members attend nearly every meeting.

2308. And hitherto the remaining members have not attended?—I have only seen them once or perhaps twice; practically they do not attend.

2309. Supposing all attended with tolerable regularity, do you think the Board large enough or too large?—I think too large; I think six are plenty to manage the business.

2310. Then if the numbers were reduced, do you think that they ought to be a fixed number, or that the power, which now exists, should be continued of adding to the number?—I think the number of the Board should be a fixed one.

2311. As likely to ensure regular attendance and a consistent policy?—The policy might be overruled by the appointment of new members if the number is not fixed.

2312. But do you think that the policy is more likely to be fixed if the numbers are limited, and that they would be more likely all to attend?—I think so.

2313. Do you think the members should be appointed with reference principally to the interest they exhibit in the condition of the aborigines, or would you have any reference to denominations?—I do not think it is necessary to introduce the subject of denominations at all.

2314. Would you select those who, from one cause or another, exhibited more interest, and therefore would be presumably more competent to deal with the business?—I think so.

2315. The secretary, I presume, ought not to be a member?—I think not.

2316. And would you confer any greater powers upon the chairman than he already possesses?—The chairman, I may say, has never attended in a single instance, or acted since I have been upon the Board; the chairman is the Chief Secretary of the day, and he has never been at the Board or acted at all. When the Board has had to refer to the Chief Secretary it has been as Minister and not as chairman.

2317. Do you elect your own chairman?—A vice-chairman is elected; the Chief Secretary is chairman *ex officio*.

2318. How often do the Board meet?—Not less than once a month.

2319. Is there any occasional special meeting?—Frequently. Meetings have also on one or more occasions been held at night, when members were unable to attend during business hours.

2320. There is a power to appoint local committees; has that been exercised?—No, I think not. I have never heard of any such committee while I have been a member.

2321. In the expenditure of funds, we have heard of complaints occasioned apparently by the unnecessary embarrassment or the unavoidable embarrassment attending the expenditure of public moneys; do you think any real benefit would arise from advancing or impresting to the Board a certain sum for which they would have afterwards to account?—I think it would be a great advantage.

2322. At certain periods there must necessarily be an expenditure, laying in necessary stores at the most suitable times?—Exactly; if the money is not there the Board have to wait till they get the money, and then they have to buy stores at dearer times, when the roads are bad and the cartage heavier, and so on.

2323. And the Board would be just as liable to account for the money under the one system as the other?—I think so; it seems to me no more difficult for the matter to be kept in order than in any other Government department; it ought to be under the auditors like the others.

2324. You think, however, that the Board ought to be able to supply stores at the cheapest time?—Yes, there have been constant complaints that the flour was not bought till it was too dear, and the blankets could not be sent to the stations till the blacks were all half-dead with cold and so on.

2325. In fact the black stations are much like the ordinary stations, they should get their stores at the best seasons of the year?—Yes, when they send down their wool and so on.

2326. It has also been suggested that comparatively a small sum should be advanced to each manager; he has small expenses, tools broken and other things have to be supplied, and if they are not furnished the work is stopped?—I think there is that necessity, and he ought, I think, also to have something at his disposal for wages to the natives.

2327. So as to pay them promptly too?—To get them to work by paying them a small wage, which when tried has been found very advantageous in dealing with them; they will not work if they are to get absolutely nothing for it; but if they get even a shilling or two a week they work pretty well.

2328. Do you think any special advantage results from prompt payment at once; if the promise is made and ultimately performed is there any difference?—With the blacks I do not think that prompt payment has the same importance as with us. Payments, however, should not be deferred too long; and the usual precautions taken by the Government in money matters should I think be extended to the local expenditure on the stations.

2329. Do you think any convenience would arise from those advances, the manager accounting in the usual way afterwards?—I think so. The same steps could be taken by the secretary in Melbourne that are taken by the Under Secretary in reference to my department for instance. The managers of course would require to be drilled into it a little, but they would soon get into it; every police sergeant sends in far more complicated returns than they would be required to make.

2330. Do you think it would be necessary for managers to give security for the amount advanced?—I think so.

2331. An amount of security proportioned to the amount that would pass through their hands at any given time?—Yes.

2332. Of course if the cash advanced is small the security would be small?—Yes.

2333. Then the secretary, would he be regarded as a mere clerk—not to speak of it invidiously—or ought he also to possess certain power as supervisor of the different stations?—I think he ought to visit them and report to the Board.

2334. Would you give him any special power?—No; he would advise the managers, and if they did not take his advice he would report to the Board, and they would decide what should be done; but I do not think he should have further power than that.

2335. Has the vice-chairman a casting vote as well as an ordinary vote?—I am not aware.

2336. There is no provision for that in the Act?—I think not.

2337. You have at present exemption from certain regulations, such as the store and transport regulations; you can buy your own stores at any time, and direct from the tradesmen?—Yes, that we do.

2338. You think that that should be continued?—Yes, certainly; but there was an effort made to compel the Board to return to the Government contractor, but the secretary found that he could get stores cheaper elsewhere, and he bought them.

2339. Was that sanctioned by the Government?—Yes; of course I only look at the matter from the side of the Board. I have nothing to do with the penal establishment; that is a different view of the case.

2340. The secretary, from his position, and from his visiting the stations, knows better the wants of the stations, and therefore is better able to buy?—Yes, just so. I think no one—the secretary, or any one else—could visit one of those places without learning something that would be useful. I think the members of the Board ought to see those stations occasionally.

2341. You have seen all the stations yourself?—No, not all of them; I have not seen those in Gippsland; I have seen the three to the westward, and Coranderrk.

2342. In reference to that it was that the question was asked whether it might be desirable to give the secretary power to give certain directions. He might see certain small things in which, from his experience, he might give valuable directions?—If he were to give provisional directions on small matters his doing so would be an advantage.

2343. But it would destroy the uniformity of the operations of the Board to have a travelling authority who would give directions?—I think it would were he to be allowed to do more than you have just proposed. In a general way, since I have been a member, the Board has exercised but little authority over

Edward M. Curr.
continued,
3rd July 1877.

those stations which are under the care of missionaries, nor has it found occasion to do so up to this time. Experience, however, has led me, and perhaps others, to the conclusion that the management of some of them is very faulty; for instance, we got a requisition the other day from Lake Condah station for meat; the cattle at that station being, we are told, too poor to kill. Now this should not be so: Condah is a fine country; but with all the labor on it, it has not yet been fenced in. Other circumstances of the sort might be mentioned.

2344. That is a great obstacle to the provision of animal food at Condah, the absence of fencing?—Yes; Condah is a fine fattening country, and fully capable of supplying meat if properly managed. Up to this, in all these years, it has not yet been fenced. At our stations generally the labor power on them is but poorly availed of. With black labor in Queensland and New South Wales, stations have been managed, sheep washed, shorn, and lambled, fences erected, and so on, and this by far less civilized blacks, and far fewer of them. Our managers, in my opinion, are not energetic; they have in some cases built huts, houses, and churches, and knocked off work. It seems to me that the training of the blacks to work, teaching them the habit of labor, has not been kept in view. Primary works even have not been executed.

2345. Latterly have they not been improving in those respects, fencing at Coranderrk for instance?—I have not been there lately.

2346. Have you not touched the real spring of that in speaking of wages?—I have recommended that the industry of the people should be stimulated by low wages. Indeed this course has occasionally been adopted by the Board, and with excellent results. If properly used it is a great power in the hands of the manager. At Coranderrk, however, where labor has been more availed of than at some of the other stations, it has been represented last week to the Board that the two plough horses cannot be kept in condition for want of hay, oats, and grass. Now this I look on as ridiculous, not to use a severer term. Again, a selector who has our hands can fence in his farm, and why not the manager of an aboriginal station with abundant labor, backed up by a large annual grant of money.

2347. In an economical point of view, you think there is room for improvement in the farming?—Decidedly. I should think it was difficult to find such farming anywhere else.

2348. And besides that you are improving and civilizing the men?—Yes.

2349. In regard to attendance or non-attendance at the Board, do you think a provision that for non-attendance for a certain time a member should vacate the office; would that work well?—Yes, I think so, especially if the number of members is limited.

2350. Non-attendance, except by arrangement satisfactory to the Board?—Yes, sometimes a person is unavoidably away. That will occur if a man is sick, and so on; in fact I do not think the line ought to be drawn too finely. I think if a man does not attend for six months, for instance, unless he is sick or something of that sort, it is plain he does not want to have anything to do with it.

2351. And by filling up vacancies in that way the whole number of the Board might reasonably be more limited?—I think six a very good number.

2352. Will you in revising the proof of your evidence add anything that may occur to you upon which we have not asked you questions?—I shall be very glad to do so.

The witness withdrew.

Adjourned.

MEMO.

As the Royal Commission have asked me, in the course of my examination, what I would recommend, in respect of the future management of the 1,000 blacks still in this colony, I have thought it well to offer in short, at this stage, some additions to what I have already suggested on this subject.

To this end I will begin by remarking that when I first visited our aboriginal stations I was surprised and gratified to see the people whom a few years back I had known as wandering savages apparently brought within the pale of civilization. They had now churches, schools, and huts. They had learnt to read and write; had come to wear clothes and work a little; given up polygamy, and, it was to be hoped, had come to learn something of their Divine Maker and of their own individual responsibilities to Him. At a later date, however, and with more knowledge, the conviction forced itself upon me that what I noticed had been accomplished some time back, and that the advancement attained *showed no signs of being progressive*; that the proposed goal had been reached, and that nothing further was to be accomplished. The black and his manager, as was very natural, had, unconsciously perhaps, become content to let well alone and enjoy the good things provided by the State with the minimum of labor to themselves. On these grounds I feel convinced that no adequate further advance need be expected under the present system, and to meet the case would recommend as follows:—

That the aboriginal reserves should, where necessary, be increased to such an extent as will enable the blacks at no distant time to live by reasonable work on their produce, independently of Parliamentary aid; that the managers of such reserves should be appointed by and wholly dependent on the Board, any funds subscribed privately for the aborigines being dispensed by the Board. In offering this advice, however, I would guard the Commission from supposing that the removal of the present managers is recommended, as I believe many of them would be found to render valuable services under a better system and proper responsibility. I would also suggest that the salary of each manager should, to some extent, be made to depend on the prosperity of the station he managed.

In addition, I would recommend the appointment of a general manager, a considerable portion of whose time would be spent on the various stations, seeing that they were properly conducted in every respect. The general manager would, in my opinion, have a difficult duty to perform, and one as honorable as any under the Crown in this colony. He should, I think, be a first-class man, as very early experience convinced me that the blacks (even in their savage state) both clearly discriminated between the educated gentleman and others less fortunate, and that to the former they yielded readily an obedience and confidence (most beneficial to themselves) which the latter never succeeded in obtaining. On the proper choice of a general manager hangs, in my opinion, the fate of the remnant of our black population.

From the measures which I have proposed, I shall anticipate, besides great advantage to the blacks, a considerable saving to the Treasury.

EDWARD M. CURR.

6th August 1877.

TUESDAY, 31ST JULY 1877.*Present:*

G. W. RUSDEN, Esq., J.P., in the Chair ;
 E. H. Cameron, Esq., M.L.A., | F. R. Godfrey, Esq.
 J. G. Duffy, Esq., M.L.A., |

Mr. James Stewart Deans called and examined.

Mr. J. S. Deans
31st July 1877.

2353. How long have you been at Coranderrk ?—Fifteen months.

2354. What has been the state of the health of the people there ?—I think they have been in tolerably good health, with the exception of a few cases shortly after I arrived, through the damp, cold weather, principally—people with an affection in their lungs.

2355. Their general health is good now ?—Their health is very good now. I think there is one man on the sick list ; that is all.

2356. Is that lung disease increasing ?—I think not ; I think it is decreasing, if anything.

2357. Are there any laid up by it now ?—There is one I think, who caught cold when he was cutting the hop-poles, but he is I believe progressing very favorably.

2358. Have they expressed any desire to leave Coranderrk ?—There are a few I think, but the majority wish to remain.

2359. Do you know from what parts of the colony those few that you speak of originally came ?—I do not. I have not sufficient intercourse with them to know that. My attention is particularly directed to the children.

2360. Are the children in good health ?—They are in capital health—I do not know a single case of sickness on the station.

2361. The orphans' large building, with proper ventilation under the floor ?—Yes.

2362. That is not the case at present with the huts ?—They might be improved, but many a white person has a worse hut to live in.

2363. Have any of the children under your care complained of ailing from any disease ?—No, not that I am aware of ; they are very healthy at present.

2364. There are a number of half-castes amongst the children ?—A great many.

2365. Are any whiter than half-castes ?—Yes, decidedly.

2366. How many that you would consider quadroons ?—About a dozen I should think.

2367. Any whiter still—octoroons ?—One or two I should think.

2368. How many children are there altogether ?—There are forty-five on the school roll.

2369. Is yours a State school ?—Yes, but not under the Board of Education, but under the Mining Department.

2370. Is your school officially inspected ?—No, I have applied for that, and an inspector is expected, but he has not yet come.

2371. What I want to get at is how many of those children might be casually mistaken for white children ?—I think there are only one or two who might be.

2372. How many of them could mix with white people without attracting observation as aborigines ?—Very, very few.

2373. How many do you think ?—Well, I should have to think that well over.

2374. Take your time ?—Amongst the orphans as well ?

2375. On the station altogether ?—I think that there may be a dozen that are nearly quadroons.

2376. Who might be taken, say, for southern Europeans ?—Yes, decidedly.

2377. What ages are they ?—From six to twelve I should think.

2378. You have applied for the school to be inspected ?—Yes. An inspector called once, and expressed himself pleased, but he did not give in any regular report of results. He was passing through the district, and merely called, and I then expressed a wish for an inspector to come.

2379. Are you troubled much with visitors ?—No ; in the summer time we have a few, but not any in the winter.

2380. Is your work on the station interfered with by so many visiting ?—Not at all ; of course if they happen to come into the schoolroom the school is interrupted for a short time.

2381. Have you ever noticed anyone taking away young girls from the station ?—Never.

2382. If you had, you would have interfered ?—Of course I should have informed the superintendent at once of anything of the sort, though that is not part of my duty.

2383. What means are adopted to prevent that ?—The girls are very strictly watched by the matron, Mrs. Halliday. They are continually under her charge except when they are with me in the school.

2384. Is the matron always there ?—When she is away I think the place is locked up. They are secure, as there is no way of their getting out, excepting the few who are at work doing their various domestic work that is required to keep the place in order ; they have to run in and out, but they are continually under her watch.

2385. You say they are locked up ; suppose the matron is away all day ?—I have never known Mrs. Halliday to be away excepting on Sunday. It is then they are locked up ; Mrs. Halliday has one key, and I have the other.

2386. For how long—a whole day ?—Oh no, merely for a couple of hours or so.

2387. As a rule she never absents herself from the station ?—Very seldom indeed.

2388. Is there anybody to supply her place when she is absent ?—Her daughters I think have orders to keep a watch on the girls.

2389. What age are they ?—About seventeen or eighteen.

2390. You have a wife there too ?—Yes.

2391. Are Mrs. Halliday's daughters, from their position, able to exercise a kind of influence ?—I do not think they have any authority.

2392. I do not mean that ; but suppose they speak to any of the inmates of the station, have they sufficient apparent authority in their manner to be attended to ?—I cannot say.

2393. Are they old enough to observe and tell their mother if there was anything wrong ?—Decidedly.

2394. They are not employed or have any sort of authority ?—They have continual intercourse with the native-girls, running in and out of the schoolroom.

2395. Do they not sleep in the schoolroom with them ?—Yes, they do.

2396. In that way they exercise a beneficial influence you think ?—I think it naturally must do, considering that they live with them and make themselves very sociable with them.

Mr. J. S. Deane,
continued,
31st July 1877.

2397. Have you ever known those girls locked up for a whole day?—Never. I have known them locked up sometimes for the afternoon, during Mrs. Halliday's absence on a Sunday afternoon; but only on a Sunday afternoon.

2398. Is that because they are afraid they will go away and wander about?—Yes, I should think they decidedly would do so. I do not think, if I may be allowed an opinion, that they should be allowed to wander during the matron's absence—that they should be left at large.

2399. You have never known any instances of improper conduct since you have been there?—Never the least.

2400. Has a medical man visited the station lately?—I think it must be two or three months since he was there. There has been no occasion to require him that I am aware of.

2401. Do you know whether the medical practitioner who visited ever complained that it was against the health of the natives to be locked up in the room for a portion of the day?—No, I never heard anything of the kind.

2402. Did anyone else?—Yes; Mr. Mackie called one Sunday to conduct service, and it was during Mr. Halliday's absence, and the girls were locked up, and I mentioned it; he called at my place and asked if Mr. and Mrs. Halliday were in, and I said "No;" and also at the same time he asked if he could get into the school, and I said he could, and left it to himself whether he liked to conduct service or not. At that time I mentioned to him about the children that they were locked up in the school, and he spoke to me about it.

2403. Mrs. Halliday had not the key with her?—I had one, she had the other. I am obliged to have one because I have the Sunday school. I can always go there, and during that time I am held responsible for anything that might occur.

2404. She always tells you when she does that?—No; the key is sent to me in the morning so that I can let the children out of their sleeping-room and take them to the schoolroom. I am responsible for them till the return of Mrs. Halliday.

2405. Do I understand that the children are always under lock and key?—Oh, certainly not; I am only talking of when Mrs. Halliday is away—it is only in regard to the door that I have the key and that I am speaking of.

2406. They are not kept like prisoners?—No, decidedly not. I said on certain occasions they were kept like prisoners.

2407. Did Mr. Mackie wait?—No, he came back in the evening.

2408. Does he visit the station regularly?—At first he attended every month regularly, and then for a few occasions afterwards every fortnight; but now I believe he has altered his plans again for every month.

2409. Are many of the aborigines away from the station at present?—I only know of one man, who came down by coach to day; he is leaving to go to Echuca.

2410. Has he got a pass?—I suppose so.

2411. How many did you say were desirous of leaving Coranderrk?—I could not say—it is principally by hearsay—a few stated so, but it is more by what I hear; I think it is very few. Especially the old men who have been a long time in the district, they wish to remain.

2412. From your observation during the time you have been there do you think there is much difficulty in keeping the intruders away from the place, such as idlers or larrikins?—I hardly understand you; do you mean visitors?

2413. They might pretend to be visitors?—I never saw any visitors except most respectable people.

2414. Have you heard any complaints about the young population of Healesville visiting there—young lads about fifteen?—No, I never heard anything of the kind.*

2415. Have you ever seen or known anything of the sort?—No, never.

2416. You think it is as safe from people of that sort as if twenty miles from Healesville?—I do not say that. I think that Healesville offers many inducements for them to go into the township. I have no doubt if the station were further away it might be beneficial for them in many respects.

2417. That is theoretically, but practically you know of no instances of inconvenience?—Not as regards the young people. Of course it is known that men occasionally get drunk at Healesville, which is one of the results of the township being near the station, but not more so than would occur in any white population, with a certain class of people. I think, as a rule, they are a very steady lot of men. There are one or two exceptions, men that will get drunk if they possibly can, but never to cause any serious disturbance.

2418. What are your hours of teaching?—From 10 to 12 and 2 to 4, and evening schools for the lads that are not able to attend, twice a week. I started it three times, but they would not attend.

2419. Do they attend well now?—I never have more than six.

2420. What is your experience of the intellect of the aborigines as regards their capacity for receiving instruction?—I think they are quite as intelligent as the average class of white children, and I should be glad for the inspector to compare them with the white children at Healesville.

2421. And what books do you use?—The same as used under the Board of Education.

2422. What is your experience with regard to those that have left school, and have started for themselves—do they keep up their knowledge?—I think they will gradually fall away from it decidedly; they seem to take no interest after they leave; they have no liking for reading at all.

2423. They do not keep up their instruction?—No. I used to give them books for prizes, but they never cared for them.

2424. There is no compulsion as regards their attendance at school?—Yes, compulsion in this respect: I have stated to the parents that unless they attended I should have to report them.

2425. What class of people attended the night-school?—The lads who were working during the day.

2426. What ages?—From 15 to 18.

2427. Lads working on the station during the day?—Yes.

2428. Do you find the parents as a rule desirous to send their children to school?—Very.

2429. So that compulsion is not required?—No.

2430. With regard to religious instruction, you conduct service I believe on Sunday?—Yes.

2431. What form do you adopt?—The Church of England.

2432. In the morning, or when?—In the morning and evening during the summer; the morning only during the winter.

2433. And the Sunday school as well?—Yes.

* Since giving my evidence, I remember a circumstance in connection with question No. 2414, viz.:—At a dance which took place about three months ago, some young men from Healesville were present. N.B.—This quite escaped my memory at the time I gave my evidence.—J. S. DEANE.

2434. Do the natives attend both the services and the Sunday school?—Yes, the native children regularly attend school, but the adults service only.
2435. Do those that live outside with their parents come into the Sunday school?—Yes, very regularly; they seem to take more interest in the Sunday school than anything else, because of the singing I think.
2436. And besides your services, Mr. Mackie comes there at certain intervals?—Yes, once a month.
2437. Does he conduct the Church of England service?—No, the Presbyterian.
2438. Some belong to one denomination and some to the other?—I do not know that; they go to both services.
2439. Are any other services of other religious denominations held there?—No.
2440. The Moravians have no mission there?—No.
2441. Do they sing with equal zest at both the services?—Yes, they take a very great interest in the singing.
2442. Do you teach them any dogma?—No.
2443. The Church of England catechism?—Yes, they learn portions of it occasionally. I chiefly read passages from the Bible, and explain them. I find that is the best. I have avoided the catechism, because it is absurd to talk to them about godfathers and godmothers, and so on.
2444. Are they not baptised in any way?—Not that I am aware of.
2445. As far as you are concerned, you confine your teaching to explaining the broad principles of the Bible?—Yes, I find that interests them more than any other subject. Catechism they take no interest in.
2446. You avoid technicalities and intricacies?—Yes.
2447. You were on the station at the time of hop-picking?—Yes, the whole time.
2448. How were the blacks paid?—I believe the same as the white men and the Chinamen who were working there.
2449. By the day or by the bushel?—By the bushel; but I do not know the rate.
2450. Had you an opportunity of seeing them during that time?—Very seldom.
2451. You do not know whether they were as energetic in the work as the whites or Chinese—able to compete with them?—A few might have been, but I think as a rule they were not as active.
2452. There are some young girls in the school of about 15 or 16—are there not?—Yes.
2453. And have been since you have been there?—Yes.
2454. Have any of those girls gone wrong in any way?—Not that I am aware of. I have never seen any instance of immorality of any kind.
2455. And since you have been there some of them have been married to blackfellows on the place?—Yes.
2456. Do you think that they conduct themselves in their homes?—Yes; some of them I think are very happy.

The witness withdrew.

Mr. Thomas Harris examined.

2457. What is your occupation?—Farm overseer at Coranderk.
2458. How long have you been there?—Over fourteen years.
2459. How many aborigines are at Coranderk just now?—I do not know to one or two, but I think there were about 125 when we last took the numbers, and there are three dead since then.
2460. Any births?—No births since.
2461. Are they as a rule healthy now?—There is not much complaining now. There are just two sick with cold, one through being out hop-pole cutting.
2462. There are not so many complaining as there were two years ago?—That is the only two now.
2463. Did not one of those suffer before with his lungs?—He did.
2464. Are any of them anxious to leave the station?—Three have been to Mr. Halliday lately.
2465. One came up with you in the coach to-day?—Yes—Bobby Bains—I think he is going to Mr. Macbain's station.
2466. Had he a pass?—I cannot say.
2467. Is he a married man?—No, he is quite a young lad. He has been away before. He is not going to stay away this time.
2468. Do any of those who have been any length of time at Coranderk wish to go away?—Sambo, Mooney, and Dan Hall.
2469. How long have they been there?—Dan Hall has been twelve years; Sambo and Mooney since 1872 I think.
2470. Are those single men?—Married.
2471. What part of the country do they come from?—Echuca way.
2472. Do you know what their motive for wanting to go is—change of climate, or what?—I do not think it is change of climate; I think it is the shearing is coming on, and they want to earn money.
2473. And they want to leave their wife and children at the station?—I do not know.
2474. When you say they are anxious to go, do you mean they are discontented with the station?—Sambo went away before, and came back with nothing.
2475. They have been away before?—Yes, and returned again.
2476. When they went away before, did they leave their families at Coranderk?—Yes.
2477. Did they ever send any money to them while they were away?—I did not hear of any.
2478. Do they rebel against the authorities now at Coranderk?—Some of the men have something now. I do not know whether they have been to Mr. Halliday. They said that Sambo's wife's son should not be allowed to go. His name is Dick. He is thirteen years of age—an active and useful lad—and they think he will go to ruin, and they do not want him to go away. I have heard that amongst the people themselves.
2479. How long has he been there?—Ever since the year 1870.
2480. Do the aborigines complain of the cold now?—No, only just those three. I have heard them, but the generality of them do not.
2481. Has this been a cold winter?—Yes, up there; I have not seen such a cold winter for five years—so much wet and snow right down to the camp. We were six weeks cutting poles, and there was rain every day.
2482. And yet there has been less sickness?—Yes; only the two.
2483. Do you notice any immorality going on about the station?—No, I have not seen any.
2484. Have you ever seen any on the station?—No, never on the station.

Mr. Thom. Harris,
31st July 1877.

Mr. Thos. Harris,
continued,
31st July 1877.

2485. You think they are well conducted?—They are well conducted so far, but the games that they play after hours amongst themselves, such as card-playing, and such like as that.

2486. You never meet with any indecent conduct there?—No, never.

2487. How do you account for there being so many half-castes then?—All the half-castes that are there came with the mothers.

2488. They are not natives of Coranderrk?—No; except one, Aleck, a little lad, whose mother came there about three weeks before she was confined. That is the only one that is unmarried on the station.

2489. But there are one or two married women of light color?—Yes.

2490. I suppose, having lived so long on the station, you would have seen or known if there was any great amount of immorality going on there?—Yes; I have never seen any. I would have seen it if it had been on the station.

2491. Did you hear of any reports of immorality?—I heard of one man selling his wife for a bottle of brandy. That is the only one.

2492. When was that?—Many years ago, when Mr. Taylor was there.

2493. Have you heard that young people are in the habit of going out and meeting young people from Healesville in an improper way?—I never heard or saw it.

2494. You do not believe in the truth of such reports?—No.

2495. Do you know any case there in which the parents are black and have had a white child, or even a half-caste child?—No, I cannot point to one.

2496. And have any of the young people had children without being married?—There was only one case in connection with one of the officials, who was dismissed for it.

2497. How long was that ago?—It must have been more than four years ago.

2498. Did you not suspect some immorality on that occasion?—Not before it was found out.

2499. When it was found out?—The person who used to take charge of the rooms where the girls slept used to sleep in some other part, and this young man used to go and put the key at the window, and the girl took the key and went out to him in the night. That was how it was found out.

2500. Was he turned away?—Yes.

2501. But you stated just now that you knew of no instances of immorality, and here is one that turns up—can you think of any other?—No; none that I remember.

2502. Was the child a half-caste?—I never saw it; it was dead.

2503. Are the young men about Healesville in the habit of visiting the station?—At hop-picking time there were, as they had some dancing and a brass band.

2504. But they are not in the habit of coming at late hours?—Not that I am aware of, and I am out pretty late.

2505. On Sundays do they come?—Yes; on Sundays they are sometimes about, and our people over to them. I am generally pretty well inside on that day, but I know some of our young men go to Healesville. Whether the Healesville young men come out to our place I could not say.

2506. You have been farm overseer all the time you have been there?—Yes.

2507. Do you consider that the cattle have increased on the station as much as they should have done?—Well, it takes two head of cattle to kill a week to supply the station, and has for the last three years.

2508. Are they all supplied from the station?—There have not been sufficient cows this year to allow the increase, so they have not been. Forty-three I think there were branded this last year.

2509. Do you think that the station has had the benefit of all the calves during past years?—I do not think anybody else has got the benefit of them. They are branded.

2510. Yes, but may some not have strayed away?—They may have strayed away, and other people might have taken them away. People are in the habit of coming there to see after their own cattle.

2511. Is the place fenced?—No.

2512. If the run was fenced, and you had the benefit of all the grass, what increase would it make in the weight?—Twice the weight, if the cattle had the grass of the whole run.

2513. You would not then have to kill so many beasts?—No, not if they were heavier.

2514. Would it be possible to fence it with the natives?—It would take time.

2515. They are not occupied all the year?—No.

2516. Do they manage the hop garden under your superintendence?—No. I have been in the hop garden (but not in charge) the last fortnight because the men refused to work under Edgar.

2517. Are they paid by the bushel or the day for picking hops?—By the bushel.

2518. How much?—Threepence.

2519. Do they get through as much work as the white men or Chinamen employed?—Yes; I think there were some who did.

2520. Do they average as much?—No, not all; some picked better than others.

2521. Could you say whether the aborigines on the place or any other laborers—Chinese or European—picked the most of the hops?—I could not say.

2522. Were you much in the hop garden?—No; I only visited it twice. I was principally at the hop kiln.

2523. Do the blacks work with you at the kiln?—No, a white man.

2524. Have you been accustomed to fencing work at all?—Yes, in my earlier days I was—not lately.

2525. Do you think there are some blacks who could assist in the fencing if you instructed them?—I could pick out six or eight very good fencers there.

2526. A few months would make a great hole in the fencing?—Yes, no doubt.

2527. Is Briggs's son at the station now?—Yes.

2528. Does he work?—He does not regularly.

2529. Do the other natives complain of his conduct towards them?—They have done. He is very saucy.

2530. Does he behave better lately?—Yes; I think he is reformed lately. He does not show any of his temper latterly.

2531. How often do you brand the cattle?—Every six months.

2532. Who superintends that?—Mr. Halliday is there to mark down while I brand.

2533. Has it always been done in that way?—Yes, except when Mr. Green was there. He used to brand, and one of the young lads used to do the marking, and the boys assisted.

The witness withdrew.

Adjourned.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX A.

CENSUS Return of the Aboriginal Natives in the Colony of Victoria on the 15th day of March 1877.

Place.	Black.					Mixed Blood.					Marks of Smallpox.	Married to European Women.	Total.		Grand Total.
	Adults.		Children.		Total.	Adults.		Children.		Total.			Males.	Females.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.		Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.						
Coranderrk ...	22	16	6	7	51	15	24	19	26	84	...	...	62	73	135
Lake Condah ...	23	13	6	9	51	4	7	8	11	30	...	...	41	40	81
Lake Hindmarsh ...	17	4	6	5	32	6	6	7	9	28	1	...	36	24	60
Framlingham ...	29	11	4	1	45	5	8	4	7	24	...	1	42	27	69
Lake Tyers ...	18	18	16	10	62	...	2	1	3	6	...	...	35	33	68
Lake Wellington ...	18	12	11	12	53	2	4	6	8	20	...	...	37	36	73
Werracknebeal ...	2	...	...	...	2	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	3	...	3
Colac ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	1
Balmoral ...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Wickliffe ...	3	1	...	...	4	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	4	1	5
Warrnambool ...	2	1	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1	3
Elmhurst ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	1	1
Banyenong ...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Cheltenham ...	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Beaufort ...	1	1	...	...	2	...	1	...	2	3	...	...	1	4	5
Skipton ...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	1	1	...	1
Camperdown ...	2	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	2
Casterton ...	6	5	2	1	14	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	9	6	15
Tarndwarncourt ...	3	2	...	...	5	1	1	1	1	4	...	...	5	4	9
Little River ...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Dergholm ...	...	1	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	1	2
Corop ...	2	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	2
Myrtleford ...	1	1	3	...	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	1	5
Fitzroy ...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	1
St. Arnaud ...	2	2	...	...	4	2	...	...	...	2	...	...	4	2	6
Portarlinton ...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Geelong ...	2	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	2
Romsey ...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Apsley ...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Edenhope ...	10	2	...	...	12	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10	2	12
East Charlton ...	5	2	...	...	7	1	1	...	...	2	...	...	6	3	9
Kulkyne ...	7	2	2	1	12	2	...	1	...	3	...	...	12	3	15
Ned's Corner ...	17	4	1	2	24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	18	6	24
Wyuna ...	10	5	...	...	15	2	1	2	2	7	1	...	14	8	22
Swan Hill ...	72	39	...	...	111	2	1	...	...	3	...	...	74	40	114
Avenel ...	1	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	2	...	2
Towanninie ...	17	5	...	1	23	...	3	3	...	6	2	...	20	9	29
Durham Ox ...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Narung ...	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Terrick Terrick ...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Wharparilla ...	1	1	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	1	2
Kerang ...	6	4	4	1	15	1	...	1	...	2	...	...	12	5	17
Cowana ...	17	6	1	...	24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	18	6	24
Mildura ...	18	7	...	...	25	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	18	7	25
Horsham ...	3	1	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	1	4
Coleraine ...	2	1	...	...	3	2	...	...	...	2	...	...	4	1	5
Barton ...	2	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	2
Navarre ...	1	1	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	2
Merino ...	1	...	...	...	1	1	1	1	1	4	...	...	3	2	5
Cavendish ...	6	3	...	2	11	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	6	6	12
Hamilton ...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Portland ...	2	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	2
Castlemaine ...	...	2	...	...	2	...	1	1	...	2	...	...	1	3	4
Heywood ...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	1	1	4	...	...	2	2	4
Nareen ...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Belfast ...	2	...	...	...	2	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	3	...	3
Dunkeld ...	2	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	2
Hexham ...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Carr's Plain ...	4	1	1	...	6	1	2	4	...	7	...	...	10	3	13
Wangarratta ...	10	5	...	1	16	...	1	...	1	2	...	...	10	8	18
Bairnsdale ...	14	9	8	9	40	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	22	18	40
Toongabbie ...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	1
Livingstone ...	2	...	...	...	2	1	1	6	6	14	...	1	9	7	16
Alexandra ...	3	6	...	...	9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	6	9
Sale ...	2	2	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	2	4
Bendock ...	5	...	...	...	5	2	1	2	1	6	...	...	9	2	11
Ulupna ...	19	13	...	5	37	5	1	5	5	16	...	...	29	24	53
Total ...	425	211	71	67	774	64	70	73	86	293	5	3	633	434	1,067

APPENDIX B.

ABORIGINAL STATIONS.

Name of Station.	Locality.	Superintendent.	No. of Blacks.	Remarks.
Ramahyuck, or Lake Wellington	Near Lake Wellington, Gipps Land	The Rev. F. A. Hagenauer	86	Presbyterian Mission Station.
Lake Tyers ...	At Lake Tyers, Gipps Land	The Rev. John Bulmer ...	87	Church of England Mission Station.
Framlingham ...	Near Warrnambool ...	Mr. W. Goodall, jun. ...	59	Exclusively under the Board for Pro- tection of Aborigines.
Lake Condah ...	Near Lake Condah ...	The Rev. J. H. Stähle ...	85	Church of England Mission Station.
Ebenczer, or Lake Hindmarsh	Near Dimboola (Wim- mera District)	The Rev. F. A. Kramer ...	65	Moravian Mission Station.
Coranderrk ...	Near Healesville ...	Mr. H. H. Halliday ...	145	Exclusively under the Board.
			527	

APPENDIX C.

PART I. (PAGES 98 to 115).—CERTAIN CORRESPONDENCE, VIZ. :—

No.	Date.	From whom.	
	1877.		
1	24th Feb.	J. L. Speer, Esq.	Offering suggestions.
2	...	The Rev. F. W. Spiesske	Stating his views regarding the treatment of the aborigines.
3	15th Feb.	The Secretary to the Commissioners	Circular to local guardians inviting information or suggestions.
4	26th "	J. Ralston, Esq., Local Guardian of Aborigines, Casterton ...	
5	28th "	J. Dawson, Esq., ditto, Camperdown ...	
6	19th "	Sergeant L. Fawcsett, ditto, Swan Hill ...	
7	22nd "	J. H. Jackson, Esq., ditto, Sandford ...	
8	3rd March	P. Learmonth, Esq., ditto, Hamilton ...	
9	8th "	C. M. Officer, Esq., ditto, Mount Talbot ...	
10	17th "	C. Warburton Carr, Esq., P.M., ditto, Avoca ...	Replies to circular of 15th February.
11	16th "	J. N. McLeod, Esq., ditto, Castlemaddie ...	
12	22nd "	Dr. W. T. Molloy, ditto, Hawthorn ...	
13	28th "	S. H. Officer, Esq., ditto, Murray Downs ...	
14	8th April	A. McEdward, Esq., Honorary Correspondent, Mildura ...	
15	9th "	J. Miller, Esq., Local Guardian of Aborigines, Kulkynne ...	
16	14th "	The Secretary to the Commissioners	Circular conveying Commissioners' thanks for replies to circular of 15th February, and requesting a further expression of views with regard to certain definite points. Printed list of questions enclosed.
17	14th "	Ditto	Circular to those gentlemen who had not replied to circular of 15th February, inviting expression of views on certain definite points. Printed list of questions enclosed.
18	10th "	The Rev. U. Coombs, Warrnambool	
19	...	F. Tozer, Esq., Local Guardian of Aborigines, Wangoom ...	
20	30th April	J. Dawson, Esq., ditto, Camperdown ...	
21	20th "	A. Dennis, Esq., ditto, Birregurra ...	
22	...	Dr. T. Embling, Kew	
23	19th "	C. Gray, Esq., Local Guardian of Aborigines, Nareeb Nareeb ...	
24	26th "	H. L. McLeod, Esq., ditto, Benyeo, Apsley ...	
25	19th "	P. Learmonth, Esq., ditto, Hamilton ...	
26	30th "	J. N. McLeod, Esq., ditto, Castlemaddie ...	
27	5th May	J. Ralston, Esq., ditto, Casterton ...	
28	April	J. Finley, Esq., Honorary Correspondent, Towaninnie ...	
29	19th "	W. H. Lloyd, Esq., Local Guardian of Aborigines, Dimboola ...	
30	18th "	Jos. C. Watson, Esq., ditto, West Charlton ...	
31	21st "	H. H. Wettenthal, Esq., ditto, Carr's Plains, Glenorchy ...	Replies to the printed questions forwarded by circular of 14th April.
32	18th "	Sergeant L. Fawcsett, ditto, Glenorchy ...	
33	25th "	C. M. Officer, Esq., ditto, Mount Talbot ...	
34	28th "	J. Miller, Esq., ditto, Kulkynne ...	
35	4th "	Mr. H. H. Halliday, Superintendent Aboriginal Station, Coranderrk ...	
36	...	The Rev. A. Mackie, Lillydale	
37	19th June	Dr. J. Gibson, Flemington	
38	15th "	Dr. J. H. Elmes, Lillydale	
39	27th April	B. Mogg, Esq., Honorary Correspondent, Wirimbirchip ...	
40	27th "	J. Mackenzie, Esq., ditto, Wyuna ...	
41	12th "	P. Beveridge, Esq., Local Guardian of Aborigines, French Island ...	
42	6th June	The Secretary to the Commissioners	Enquiring with reference to the very high percentage of marks obtained by children in State schools of Aboriginal Stations, the average percentage obtained in other State schools.
43	15th "	The Secretary, Education Department	Reply to the preceding.

PART II. (PAGE 116 *et seq.*).

SYNOPSIS OF ANSWERS TO THE LIST OF QUESTIONS FORWARDED BY CIRCULAR OF 14TH APRIL.

NOTE.—Replies to the printed questions by the Rev. M. Macdonald, on behalf of the Missions Committee of the Presbyterian Church, by Mr. W. E. Morris, Honorary Secretary to the Church of England Mission to the Aborigines, and by Mr. J. Green, will be found in the evidence of those gentlemen respectively.

No. 1.

GENTLEMEN,

Charlemont House, Connewarre, Geelong, 24th February 1876 (*sic*).

Having seen much of the Australian aboriginal race in all stages of their progress and decay under their past government, and having for some time taken a considerable interest in this race and their management, I have the honor to forward for the consideration of the Commission a report on the future treatment of the aboriginal race in Victoria.

The two principal objects to be attained with this race are, firstly, to maintain them independently of hunting and the chase, and thus wean them from their wandering habits, and, secondly, to make them self-supporting by means of their own labor.

The system pursued by Governments of regularly doling out gifts to blacks, while nothing further is done to improve them permanently or draw them from their savage and nomadic life, is almost as mischievous in its ultimate effects on ignorant barbarians as the too long-continued employment of force and terror only, for, like all other paupers when only treated as such, they soon learn to do nothing but beg, and, acquiring a taste for ardent spirits, they quickly run to a rapid and melancholy decay, as all our experience fully proves.

The *South Australian Register* of 10th April 1876, in furnishing the précis of a report from the S.A. Sub-Inspector of Aborigines, states that much is being done to ameliorate the condition of the aborigines under the South Australian Government, and that these efforts are not to be relaxed, but that, in some instances, the field of usefulness is even to be extended. The report adds that a reserve of 900 square miles has been set apart by the South Australian Government for those natives who have been deprived of their ordinary means of subsistence by the extension of settlement. It is further stated that there are fifty-three depôts for the issue of blankets and other necessaries to blacks. Forming a large reserve of land for blacks as above is the germ of the idea which it is here desired to advocate, and is most valuable in being, so far as I know, the first public recognition on a large scale that the Australian aborigines are equitably entitled to a share in the soil of this continent, if only to preserve them from a sudden and terrible extinction. But, good as this concession undoubtedly is, it stops short in its real and practical utility. If the country so ceded be really bad, then it is a poor gift, and most unworthy of bestowal; but if it be even fair medium grazing country, it is a serious waste of means, and it is, for many reasons, to be regretted that it should be kept only as a grazing ground for opossums and kangaroos. In such a state this tract is comparatively useless, either to the country at large or to blacks themselves, while they merely continue to hunt upon it and live in their old savage fashion, only to perish miserably in the course of a few short years. But did the liberality of the South Australian Government take one step further, with the addition of a few stock and a proper superintendence, then such a reserve might not only be made a great and permanent benefit to the aborigines who might reside on it, but it might also cause an entire change in the treatment of the whole race on this continent.

Mere gifts, even in the most lavish profusion, will never materially improve blacks or elevate them, except in so far as such may be made reproductive by means of the labor of the blacks themselves. And there is no gift in the power of our race to bestow which can so easily be made reproductive by the labor of blacks as land, in good large quantities. But successfully to manage the location of blacks upon land—so as to make them a self-supporting and moderately civilized people—upon the quickest and easiest terms, the land must not be parsimoniously doled out to them in too small quantities. By means of sheep and cattle grazing blacks can be easily made to produce a maximum of animal food from a minimum of labor, together with a considerable income from wool, making it evident that grazing would be a most useful and effective substratum from which we could soon lead them on to agricultural industry. And there can be no question that, with our facilities in this country, grazing is the mode in which the labor of blacks can here be most profitably employed.

To be most successful with blacks they must live, as regards the close restriction of their personal liberty, as nearly as possible as they have always done, that is, on good sized runs, as extensive as fairly procurable, on which they should be exercised in out-of-door, free, open-air industry; all intrusive trespassing being kept away as much as possible by giving the officer in charge of such a run, while inviting all useful visitation, summary powers for preventing any real trespass.

To serve blacks effectually, reserves should be granted to them consisting of as good country, and in blocks of as large a size, as can fairly be procured.

These reserves should, if possible, not be much under a carrying capability of from 3,000 to 4,000 head of cattle, and from 10,000 to 15,000 sheep each; and each such run might be commenced with not less than 1,000 head of cattle, and from 1,500 to 2,000 sheep. Five such runs, when fully stocked, would be self-supporting, and should maintain all the blacks at present in Victoria; and though, collectively, five such runs would form a considerable property, they would not be an extravagant grant for the maintenance of the whole aboriginal race of this colony. The Victorian Government have adopted a kind of half measures towards this race after the greater number—that is to say, two-thirds—of the whole Victorian aboriginal race have been allowed to perish, by maintaining at Coranderk and other stations 557 blacks, at a cost of nearly £8,000 per annum. And the remaining number of 1,000 blacks who continue to roam at large are now rapidly degenerating into drunken and worthless vagabonds, whom a few short years of apathy and neglect will doom to a certain and miserable extinction.

Most fortunately there can be no better starting point to induce aborigines to work than cattle will afford us, they being easily and wholly manageable by black labor alone, while the whole of the work with cattle is in such perfect accordance with the well known tastes and habits of black boys that, instead of scaring them away in the first instance, it is perfectly certain that the very best and smartest of the young men and lads would soon be attracted by it, and might soon be induced to enter on other industries. When young, blacks are easily manufactured into smart stockmen, and may be made most useful and attentive in this capacity when under proper control, to which they are most amenable when at work as stockmen.

After forming a cattle station sheep should be introduced as soon as possible. Among blacks many of them will shepherd willingly and well for a time, particularly if two be allowed together, which ought to be done at first, if they desire it; and there would be sufficient numbers to do this, and to change them frequently and regularly, so as not to weary them at first by too long a continuance in the monotonous duties of a shepherd's life; and the care and management of sheep would grow upon the people as the flocks increased. But the sole attention of such a people need not be confined to flocks and herds; at the earliest possible opportunity other industries should be introduced among them, as milking largely and regularly for the supply of their own wants, the rearing of poultry and pigs, with the growth of vegetables, melons, pumpkins, fruit, sweet potatoes, and maize, all of which productions find great favor with blacks. In short, much might be done by working at every species of industry where the labor is lightest and the food return is largest—the species of industry which would find most favor with aborigines during our first attempts to induce them to adopt fixed habits of ready obedience and steady industry as the ordinary habits of their every-day life.

A grazing run is a large source of profit to people of our own race, and must become a real and intrinsic benefit to blacks which can never be measured by any mere money standard only. The action, the energy, the order, and the self-reliance which the possession of such land and its accessories would call into play must, in no long time, fit them for the heavier duties of agricultural industry, at least to such an extent as to be of the very highest value and importance to themselves in yielding what are, to them, prime necessities of existence, namely, civilizing employment and food at one and the same time.

An officer in charge of blacks would be invested with only one-half of his proper powers were he merely enabled to feed, clothe, and reward the diligent and industrious. To be fully efficient in governing blacks such an officer should be appointed a magistrate of the territory, with the power of punishing all offences committed by aborigines, under the grade of capital crimes, in his own court, regularly constituted by Act of Parliament, Government inviting ordinary justices to sit in such court at their own discretion. It may be objected that it would be too much power to give a man, to constitute him a magistrate with power to act singly; but India furnishes excellent precedents, where men singly rule large districts where large interests are involved; and it is to be presumed we could find a few men here who would do the same thing, where only comparatively small numbers and small interests are concerned.

Such blacks as were fed and supported under authority must be subject to proper restrictions, and though, at first, no blacks should be obliged to reside on a station by any coercion, they would soon learn that those who continued to roam at large would receive no assistance from the officer whose authority they declined to obey, while those who remained steady in residence received a definite and steady support, which would soon induce others to follow their example.

And after a certain period—say a year or two, which actual experience would best determine—we would then be fully justified in taking measures to compel the wandering and incorrigible among blacks to become fixed residents upon such stations; and, in doing so, we would not only have the unanimous support and concurrence of all civilized races, but also of every soul among the aborigines who were themselves workers.

I have the honor to be, gentlemen,
Your very obedient servant,

JAMES L. SPEER.

To the Commission for Enquiry on the Aboriginal question.

No. 2.

SIRS,

Though I have resigned my position here, and if possible would return to Europe at once, I still feel an interest in the welfare of the work in which I have been so long engaged; and I beg therefore to state here my opinion and ideas about it. Government has promised the aborigines here, about seven years ago, land enough for 3,000 sheep, but the land granted will only carry 1,200 sheep, but with two and a half miles of mallee, ceded some years ago by Mr. Edols, we can carry about 1,500; that that is not near enough to produce an increase of sheep for meat will be seen at once; had it not been for the begging of sheep from friends at a distance the flock would be reduced at once, leaving no standing flock. I feel confident you will help the aborigines to get now the promise made them fulfilled. The land will before long be alienated, and there will be nothing left to make good that promise. Should, in future, the land not be required by aborigines it could be taken back. As to self support—my opinion is that growing wheat, oats, or barley, for that purpose would be fruitless. The ground is too poor, it would soon be worked out, and then the labor available—though there are some fine men here—would be insufficient for so hopeless an undertaking. What can be done with prospect of success and comfort is to cultivate small blocks of land near the river by means of irrigation. The ground well worked, and can be kept in manure—say two or three acres hops—judging from a trial made with success, if a sheltered place can be found; also two or three acres lucerne for cattle; perhaps two or three acres with fruit and vines, and a small patch of potatoes for children under our care. All this can be done; and this was our plan two years ago, but illness, &c., has necessitated a postponement; but soon another missionary will be here. I have no doubt other tropical fruit would do. Some of it could be dried and sold, and as there is hardly any fruit grown in the district besides much finds ready sale amongst residents. Two years ago a pump, &c., for that purpose was brought from Woolmerang at a cost of about £60.

And now I would say a few words about amalgamation of aborigines with whites. We could point to several cases to-day at our place, and show that it does not do well, even with half-castes. They will ever have to take a dependent inferior position, and this makes them dissatisfied. They are happy amongst their own race. And besides all this, in too many cases, when mixed up with whites, little is done for their moral or religious training—there are exceptions. On the contrary, especially the half-castes, they are exposed to every temptation for evil. Still, would some wish to take an honorable position amongst the whites we should only be glad if our training had helped to it. But if Government would fulfil their promise I feel confident the station would, with management soon be self supporting, and there would be no need of a Parliamentary supply. There are amongst them some good bush carpenters, stonemasons and plasterers. They cut their own boards, make an excellent repair of a dray, &c., of which the work on the place will testify. They want, of course, directing at first.

Yours respectfully,

F. W. SPIESEKE.

Gentlemen of the Royal Commission, &c.

P.S.—The income from the sale of wool and skins should be, however, the chief resources for self support. Two years ago it amounted to about £340; that was the highest. It has always been our plan, and the wish of the people, instead of living so close together, they should have their homes more separated along the river. This can be done when more land is given, at present it is not well practicable. South from here, at Bonyavis, there is fair land for agriculture.

No. 3.**CIRCULAR ADDRESSED TO LOCAL GUARDIANS OF ABORIGINES AND HONORARY CORRESPONDENTS OF THE BOARD FOR THE PROTECTION OF ABORIGINES.**

SIR,

The Treasury, Melbourne, 15th February 1877.

His Honor Sir W. F. Stawell,
President.
F. R. Godfrey, Esquire, M.P.
E. H. Cameron, Esquire, M.P.
G. W. Rusden, Esquire,
Clerk of the Legislative Council.
A. W. Howitt, Esquire,
Police Magistrate.

I have the honor, by direction, to inform you that the gentlemen named in the margin, having been appointed a Royal Commission to “enquire into the present condition of the aborigines of this colony, and to advise as to the best means of caring for and dealing with them in the future,” are desirous of availing themselves of any information or suggestions on the subject that you may be so good as to afford.

The Commissioners are in course of ascertaining, by personal observation, the condition of the several aboriginal stations; but will be much obliged if you will be kind enough to convey to them your opinion upon the present condition of the aborigines, and the steps which you think could advantageously be taken for improving existing stations, or for ameliorating the condition of the aborigines who are not domiciled at them, either by attracting them thither, or otherwise dealing with them.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,

E. J. THOMAS,

Secretary to the Royal Commission.

Esquire,

No. 4.

SIR,

Prospect, Casterton, 26th February 1877.

I am in receipt of your printed letter addressed to my brother Mr. R. H. Ralston, who I may inform you has left the district; and I am recognised by the Board for the Protection of Aborigines as their guardian for the Dergholm district, in lieu of him. In answer to your letter I may inform the Commission that there are four (4) males, three (3) females, and their children permanently located in this district. At the Board's request I have been trying to prevail upon them several times to go to Lake Condah Station, but it is impossible to get them to leave their birth place, and consequently have been in communication with the Board for a few acres of land in this neighborhood for a camping ground, which I think when they will not go to a station, will be greatly to their advantage. At my recommendation they have already built themselves bark and slab huts, which is more comfortable and also better for their constitution. Any further information that is in my power I will be glad to give the Commissioners. Please address as above.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Yours obediently,

JOHN RALSTON.

The Secretary to Royal Commission on Aborigines, Melbourne.

No. 5.

SIR,

Wuorong, Camperdown, 28th February 1877.

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 15th instant, requesting my opinion of the present state of the aborigines, and the steps to be taken for advantageously improving their condition, and to advise as to the best means of caring for and dealing with them in the future.

With a strong desire to obtain information on the subject of the treatment of the aborigines I, many years since, had an opportunity of conversing with several very intelligent natives of the Port Fairy district, whose homes were at Framlingham and Lake Condah stations. At that time they were very much dissatisfied with their treatment; and I was convinced that their discontent proceeded from the restraint imposed on them by the superintendents of these establishments, which, however much in keeping with instructions from the Government, and in the estimation of the white man,

necessary for their management and control, was incomprehensible to the understandings and contrary to the habits of a race unaccustomed to restraint. Latterly the injudicious discipline has been relaxed at the Framlingham station, and the resident natives express themselves as very well pleased with the kindness of the superintendent, Mr. Goodall.

Of the management at Lake Condah I have heard little for some years, and the complaints, as elsewhere, of too many prayers and religious exercises have ceased. But the Framlingham native residents have their grievances, and in dealing with them, my long experience of the aborigines as servants, and full possession of their confidence, enable me to state that it is a mistake to imagine that they are not fully aware of the position the occupation of their country by the white man has placed them in, and of their strong claims on him for proper maintenance and protection. They are very sensitive on that point, and assert that they are entitled to be well housed, well clothed, and well fed, in consideration for the loss of their "hunting ground," and that they ought not to be called upon to work on the aboriginal farm without fair wages, any more than a hired white laborer.

Since the receipt of your letter of the 15th instant two very intelligent aborigines, who can speak and understand English very well, complained to me that there was no encouragement given at Framlingham, under the Government regulations, to a hard working man more than to a lazy loafer, and although the former worked hard from morning to evening grubbing trees, ditching, and fencing, he only received a little more food than the latter, and that he was not allowed any extra clothing to compensate for tear and wear, and no hat, or stockings, or boots to save his feet from stakes, or coat of any kind to protect his body from the wet and cold. In short, his position is decidedly inferior to the convict in Pentridge. To the credit of Mr. Goodall, I am informed that any little article of luxury given in addition, and by way of encouragement to get work done, comes out of his own means, and consequently must be very limited.

The departmental allowance of body and bed clothing does not meet their requirements, and they complain of cold during winter. The men are annually furnished with one blue serge shirt, one calico shirt, and a pair of moleskin trousers. The women with one calico chemise, one flannel petticoat, and one wincey dress; and the children in proportion—supplies too scanty and insufficient to keep them comfortable. For bedding they get one double blanket a piece, and children a half blanket, which is not enough under the modern system of hutting and bedsteads, a system so very different from the aboriginal warm "waurn" that in my opinion it has given rise to the late excessive mortality amongst the aborigines, the more especially as they have to a very great extent discarded the opossum rug and adopted the blanket.

The difficulty, as far as I can understand, with the management of the aborigines at the Framlingham station, and I suspect with the others, is to prevail on them to remain steadily at home and work, but that is a circumstance no reasonable thinker need be astonished at when he is informed that the good laborer receives no pay whatever, and works with the knowledge that he can readily command elsewhere half-a-crown a day, with food of the best description for himself and family, accompanied with the feeling that he is once more his own master and can do as he likes. As long as this system of bondage exists there will be discontent, which will probably terminate in a general dispersion, and a return to the aboriginal mode of life.

After every consideration of this important matter, and taking the opinions of the two aborigines referred to, I have, in accordance with their ideas, come to the conclusion that the best thing to be done is to make the Framlingham and other stations places of retreat where the natives would feel themselves at home and under no restraint whatever, except as to good conduct and sobriety, that the able bodied men should be encouraged to work on the aboriginal stations and elsewhere for wages, and the women also, as in Great Britain and on the continent of Europe, where the greater portion of field labor is done by females, and that young men, and young women, and girls should, after a reasonable course of education, be apprenticed to respectable country settlers for such a term of years as would induce employers to take them. With old people unfit to work it would be impolitic to interfere, except by way of inducing them to reside on the aboriginal stations, and away from the temptations of the public houses. In the case of families of young children I think it will be necessary to enforce the conditions of the Education Act, and either compel the parents to take them to an aboriginal station or to a school. To attempt the separation of the children from their parents would be labor lost, as no power or watchfulness would prevent the former from running away. There would also be insurmountable difficulties in collecting and inducing the very old natives, to be met with scattered over the country, to go to an aboriginal station, or even to leave their old haunts and custom of living in waurns. I have found it so with the two old men of Camperdown, nearly the last members of the local tribe, who refused to occupy a comfortable hut I erected for them in the outskirts of the town at an expense to myself of Ten pounds, preferring to live in a waurn of the most miserable description. To deal with such as these as may be scattered in small numbers over the country, and who refuse to be moved, local guardians might be appointed, and I think there would be no difficulty in finding gentlemen to undertake a surveillance and distribute necessaries, and at the same time act as a check on the supply of spirits to them.

There is one other matter deserving the serious attention of the Royal Commission, and that is the absence of suitable rewards for the detection and conviction of persons supplying the aborigines with spirits. As local guardian I have occasional complaints made to me against the aborigines of Camperdown for getting drunk, but in the absence of some inducement to an informer, I see no prospect of being able to bring the guilty parties to punishment. I have no doubt that the police know the publican who sells the spirits for the use of the aborigines, but there is a difficulty in detection, for the natives employ white people to buy the spirits for them, and I see no other means of reaching the vender than the offer of a reward to be paid on conviction.

Any further information required by the Royal Commission, and in my power to give, I will gladly afford.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,

E. J. Thomas, Esq., Secretary to the Royal Commission.

JAMES DAWSON, Local Guardian.

No. 6.

Sir,

Swan Hill, 19th February 1877.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of circular from you dated 15th inst., respecting the present condition and future means to be adopted with the aborigines, and in reply to state—

That when Mr. C. S. Ogilvie, of the department of the Aborigines, was here, some eighteen months ago, he and I had much conversation on the point, and his suggestion to collect them all on to some self supporting sheep station down the Murray appeared to me then, and does still, the best course to adopt.

I should lose my appointment here by this plan being carried out, but I would lose that and more to see the unfortunate creatures removed from the debasing influences of the townships.

They will get drunk, and though in my capacity as in charge of police here I lock them up right and left, the remedy, I fear, is only imaginary.

They obtain drink in some mysterious way (at Euston, N. S. Wales, particularly), and though they have not latterly been drunk here I have no doubt they drink elsewhere.

I strongly advise the adoption of Mr. Ogilvie's suggestion, and further that the person placed in charge of them at any station to be so formed have special powers not only to destroy all the drink he can find amongst them, but that he be authorized to place drunken offenders under personal restraint for a few days—a mode of treatment they abhor.

You will probably smile at my "policeman's" view of the subject, but I fear there is no way of keeping them sober in any other way.

If by means of sharp discipline they could be kept from drink everything else would be easy.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,

LEONARD FAWSETT,

E. J. Thomas, Esq., Secretary, Royal Commission on Aborigines.

Sergeant of Police, Local Guardian, &c., &c.

No. 7.

SIR,

Sandford, 22nd February 1877.

I am in receipt of yours of 15th instant, asking my opinion upon the present condition of the aborigines, &c. I think very little more can be done for them than is being done. I think the great point at the stations is to get men to superintend them who have a knowledge of the habits and customs of the blacks, and who have their *welfare at heart*, who can by tact and kindness exert a good influence upon them. Most of the older ones have acquired such a craving for strong drink that little can be done to cure them of it, but if the young are placed out in service, and *bound* for a period long enough to give an employer time to see good results from their teaching, and to hinder their friends taking them away, the rising generation would be much benefited. The above course was adopted in the case of a half-caste girl whom I took from the tribe here, and she is now married to a white man who has a selection, and she is now one of the most thrifty wives about, making her own and children's clothes, and most of her husband's. Having her apprenticed hindered the tribe taking her away, which they often tried.

I enclose you the indenture signed by the girl and her mother's mark, which may interest the Commission, as the subject of it has been the most successful instance of the kind that I have heard of.

E. J. Thomas, Esq., Secretary, Royal Commission.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,
J. H. JACKSON.

This Indenture made the twenty-sixth day of April in the year one thousand eight hundred and sixty-five between Sarah Sandford, now of Sandford, in the county of Normanby, of the first part: Looy, mother of Sarah, an aboriginal native, of the second part: John Henry Jackson, Esquire, one of Her Majesty's justices of the peace for the colony of Victoria, and correspondent of the Board for the Protection of the Aborigines, and his wife Mary Anne Jackson, both of Sandford, of the third part: Witnesseth that the said Sarah Sandford, of her own free will and with the full consent and approval of the said Looy, moved by the desire to have her daughter the said Sarah delivered from evil and vagrant ways, doth hereby place and bind herself apprentice to the said John Henry Jackson and Mary Anne Jackson to serve them or the survivor of them for five years from the date hereof, to learn all the duties and work proper for a household servant and seamstress; and in consideration of the acceptance by these, the said John Henry Jackson and Mary Anne Jackson, of the said Sarah Sandford into their service, and of the covenants on the part of the said John Henry Jackson and Mary Anne Jackson hereinafter set forth, the said Sarah Sandford doth promise and engage that she will at all times during the said term of five years faithfully and diligently serve the said John Henry Jackson and Mary Anne Jackson, and will not, except from illness, forego such service or ever absent herself without leave of said John Henry Jackson and Mary Anne Jackson from their house, and will conduct herself with honesty, sobriety, and good temper and respect, and will not be guilty of any profane or lewd conversation or conduct, or of gambling, or any other immorality: And in consideration of the premises the said John Henry Jackson and Mary Anne Jackson doth hereby jointly and severally for himself and herself, their heirs, executors, administrators, and assigns, doth covenant with said Sarah Sandford that they will teach her during the said term the duties of a household servant and seamstress, exacting no more work than is meet for years, strength, and sex, and using only such chastisements and restraints as parents might fitly bestow upon their children for correction, and afford opportunities of learning to read, write, cast up plain accounts, and further regularly and carefully instruct her in the faith, precepts, and duties of the Christian religion according as the same is taught by the United Church of England and Ireland, and give her allowance and encouragement to attend the public worship and other sacred ordinances enjoined by the discipline of said church, with a view of qualifying her as household servant and seamstress for earning her bread in all honesty as becometh a good Christian and dutiful subject of Our Sovereign Lady the Queen; and as a further recompense for her services they hereby bind themselves to pay at the expiration of the said term the sum of twenty-five pounds coin of the realm unto the said Sarah Sandford to her own proper uses, and supply her during the said term of her apprenticeship with wholesome food sufficient in quantity, lodging, decent apparel, washing, medicine, and attendance during sickness, and guard her from all harm, injuries, and wrong-doing at their own costs, not sparing labor in this behalf: Provided always, and it is here agreed between and by all parties hereto, that should said parties of the third part remove beyond the dominions this indenture of apprenticeship shall, if the requisite consent can be had of two justices of the peace, be assigned and made over to some fit, qualified, and respectable person for residue of said term; and all stipulations herein contained shall be as binding and effectual in all respects between such master in the one part and Sarah Sandford in the other part as if these presents had been entered into with and by such receiving master in his own person.

In witness whereof we put our names and seals on date within written.

J. H. JACKSON,
MARY ANN JACKSON,
SARAH SANDFORD,
her
LOUY ×
mark.

We, whose names are underwritten, justices of the peace acting in the county of Normanby, consent to the placing-out of said Sarah Sandford as apprentice according to the meaning and intent of this indenture, and do sign and seal this our allowance of such indenture of apprenticeship before the same has been executed by any other parties thereto, in pursuance of the laws and customs in such cases made and provided.

GEORGE CARMICHAEL, J.P.,
JOHN S. MURRAY, J.P.**No. 8.]**

SIR,

Hamilton, 3rd March 1877.

In reply to your circular of the 15th ultimo, asking me to convey to the Commissioners appointed to enquire into the present condition of the aborigines of the colony my views relative to the enquiry, I have the honor to state that, in consequence of the removal many years ago of nearly, if not all, of the aborigines of my district to the station formed for them at Lake Condah, I am not in a position to give any information or suggestions that would be of use to the Commissioners.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
P. LEARMONTH.E. J. Thomas, Esq.,
Secretary to the Royal Commission, Melbourne.**No. 9.**

SIR,

Mont Alto, Toorak, 8th March 1877.

In reply to your communication of the 15th ultimo, asking my "opinion upon the present condition of the aborigines, and the steps which might advantageously be taken for improving existing stations, &c.," I beg to say that my knowledge of the aborigines only extends to the Wimmera district; and, so far as the mission station at Dimboola is concerned, I think that everything is being done for the natives that humanity and a regard for their temporal and spiritual welfare can suggest.

I believe I am correct in saying that all the natives of the Wimmera district, except perhaps three or four old persons, are now resident at the mission station. The exceptions referred to cannot be induced to give up the habits of a lifetime, even for the comforts of a mission station; but, as they are old people, they may well, in respect to residence, be permitted to follow the bent of their own inclinations. They are always kindly treated by the occupants of pastoral runs, and are never allowed to want either food or clothing.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
C. M. OFFICER.

To E. J. Thomas, Esq.

No. 10.

Avoca, 17th March 1877.

I regret to say that I can offer no information or suggestions on the subject referred to.
I have seen no aborigines in this district for some years.

C. WARBURTON CARR, P.M.

No. 11.

Castlemaddie, 16th March 1877.

SIR,

In answer to your circular of the 15th February, I forward you my opinions with regard to the aborigines.

First, I think that all the present stragglers should be brought to one of the six stations already formed, or, if required, to another station formed on the River Murray for the married people with the children and old people; but any single men or women under engagement to settlers to remain so with them, but the employer to send copy of agreement to the Board, with full particulars of the party with him.

With regard to the stations, I would recommend that the young people should be apprenticed out to respectable employers, say at the age of fifteen, for three years, to be taught some useful employment, and receive £8 or £10 a year, just to clothe them comfortably. At the end of that time they would be able to earn good wages. They would then be eighteen years of age, so that if they were industrious, and saved say £100 in the next four years, when they would be twenty-two, on their showing that they had that sum—or, if a woman, £50—let the Government give them 100 acres of ground as a farm to settle down on. It might come out of the present reserves for them, as this would eventually work off all further aid from the Government; whereas, if carried on as at present, the annual grant from the Government will require increasing at the system now carried on, allowing the young men to go and earn money—and some of them do get large sums by running and jumping at athletic sports about—which money they spend, if not in drink, in the most reckless way, and then return to the station, where they are clothed and fed for doing very little work; consequently they do not realise the value of money, except to gratify their own pleasure. Nor will they do otherwise while they have these stations to fall back upon when they like, without a penny in their pockets or perhaps a rag to their backs.

The young people have now at the age of fifteen a better education than most of the farmers' children of the same age, and quite as intelligent, and are both able and willing to go to work.

I have had one this last month, who has done well and is very happy. I have supplied him with one pound's worth of clothes.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

J. N. McLEOD, Local Guardian.

E. J. Thomas, Esq.,

Secretary, Royal Commission to Aborigines, Treasury, Melbourne.

No. 12.

Hawthorn, 22nd March 1877.

SIR,

I have the honor to state, in reply to circular letter dated 15th February 1877, that I have no personal knowledge of existing aboriginal stations, and having now been seven years residing in Hawthorn, I have no recent experience which would enable me to make suggestions for the amelioration of the aborigines. My knowledge of them is derived from twelve years' residence at Balmoral, county Dundas. From the experience then acquired I make the following suggestions:—

1. That they should have during sickness better medical attendance and more careful nursing than hitherto.
2. That the punishment inflicted on persons guilty of conveying alcoholic stimulants to them should be, not a fine, but imprisonment.
3. That the money granted annually for use of aborigines should be as far as needful expended upon them. In 1872 there was an unexpended balance of £8,320; in 1873, £6,165; and in 1874, £4,669, while to my knowledge there was ample room for further expenditure.
4. That it should not be of first importance to make existing stations self-supporting.
5. That all persons, except the aboriginal and the half-caste, should be excluded from the benefits of the stations. The mixture of races in a further degree would thereby be checked, if not absolutely prevented.
6. That as I am persuaded the aboriginal race will disappear from Victoria in a few years, I should recommend that all healthy aborigines should, as far as possible, without compulsion, be hired out and bound by indenture, care being taken in the selection of employers.
7. The education imparted to the aboriginal should be of the simplest kind—reading and writing only; when pressed to attend school after obtaining this much information they become tired of the effort and grow sulky. The females can be taught sewing and dressmaking in addition.
8. In case the station system is continued, the blacks should be allowed to go off the stations for hunting, &c., at times during the summer, under protection of a reliable white man, who would know how to join them in their amusements.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

W. T. MOLLOY.

E. J. Thomas, Esq.,

Secretary to Royal Commission on Aborigines.

No. 13.

Murray Downs, 28th March 1877.

SIR,

In consequence of my usual absence from home at this season of the year, your letter of 15th ultimo did not come into my hands for nearly three weeks after date.

In reply to the enquiries of the Royal Commission—

- 1st. As to my opinion regarding the present condition of the aborigines.
- 2ndly. The steps which I think could advantageously be taken for improving existing aboriginal stations, or
- 3rdly. For ameliorating the condition of the aborigines who are not domiciled at them, either by attracting them thither, or otherwise dealing with them.

The first is a very wide question, and to answer it fully and do justice to the subject would require many pages of writing, and also a great deal more general knowledge of the state of the aborigines throughout the rest of the colony than I am possessed of. These conditions being impracticable, I shall therefore confine myself to a few remarks on the condition of those in my own neighborhood.

It is almost unnecessary to state what is well known to every observant European resident among them, and what must of course be equally so to the Royal Commission, that the aborigines are yearly degenerating, and fast approaching final extinction. The adults of both sexes are almost without exception inveterate "drinkers." This vice in them is far stronger, and, if possible, more rapidly fatal in its results than with the same class of white men. They will work hard and continuously, as far as their constantly lowering energies will admit of, for weeks or months for the sole purpose of accumulating a few pounds at the end, and then having a great drinking bout and general debauch. Formerly many of them used to save up their earnings and buy clothes, blankets, rations, guns, or articles of luxury, but now their acquired degradation has too strong a hold upon them for any such wiser purpose to prevail. They trust either to the charity of friends or to the Government aid to provide them with old or new clothes, and with blankets and rations, but they rarely give money for these things themselves.

They will do anything practicable for drink, and even, if possible, will sell their clothes for money to obtain it. To deprive them or to prevent their obtaining possession of it, when in their near prospect, will often excite their bitterest enmity and aggressive hostility. On one occasion lately I went into a camp, and forcibly took away a whole bottle of brandy and a portion of another from under a gin, who was sitting on them quite sober, and as quietly and dignified as

Rachael on her idols, and broke them before her face. The rage of herself and coolie at this sacrilege knew no bounds, and the first thing they did, after giving vent to volleys of black and white oaths, was to take their new Government blankets and burn them on the nearest fire. These were pulled out half consumed; but the act signified their contempt for my official position, their greater love for the spirit than for the blanket, and their present non-appreciation of my attempt to do them good. In time they came round again, but not for several months.

Many of them work on my own and on neighboring stations for money, and at particular seasons will collect emu and other eggs, or catch fish for sale, as a more easy and agreeable manner of obtaining the means for a good drink. For a week or more at a time I have known them on several occasions during last year, and often before, collect in considerable numbers on the New South Wales side, or on Pental Island, immediately above Swan Hill, and enjoy in their peculiar manner the fruits of months of labor of several of the working coolies, to the very great annoyance of my own people and of any others within ear-reach of these midnight aboriginal orgies. In these places they are safe from the police, and can then imbibe, fight, and debauch to their full desire.

Being thus so improvident themselves, at the beginning of winter they often suffer greatly from want of rations in the township or away on their own account; and as the Government aid in this respect, and in the article of blankets, is often too late of arriving—and they depend too much upon such aid—their personal discomfort is greatly increased, and sickness more easily attacks them.

This, therefore, is the present condition of the aborigines coming under my observation, and the cause is almost solely, as you have seen, drink. Had this been withheld from the race for even the last twenty years, for every single native we now have in this district we should probably have had ten. Their other vices are as nothing compared to this, and they might easily have been combated. But when drink is always so readily obtainable, we might as well contend against Satan and his angels as attempt to morally and physically improve these unhappy victims of a vicious and nationally degenerating but legalized traffic.

To the second question I can give no reply, as I know but little of the management of the aboriginal stations, though from the many good results I have seen of a considerable residence and course of training at them, in the cases of both young and grown blacks, I cannot doubt their very useful and beneficent character.

To the third question—In the true interest of the aborigines themselves I consider that if they can voluntarily be attracted to place themselves in the care of any of the institutions established for their benefit, that very great good and prolonged life, of a tolerably enjoyable character, and possibly something infinitely better, would be insured for them. There are many cases of young children (not here alone) where coercion would be highly desirable, as was instanced lately by a young girl I had the Governor's authority to send to a station. This child, of apparently twelve years, was being ruined by her foster-father and some wanton whites, but now has a good chance of permanent reform.

If all willing to go, and a few necessitous cases taken by coercion, were placed in the various stations, most of the small miserable remnant would very soon, I believe, with a little persuasion and inducement become willing to save themselves from speedy destruction, and take advantage of the asylum offered to them.

The present great objection the Murray blacks have to entering the aboriginal stations is the great distance they would then be removed from their own country, and the scenes and faces they have known through life, feelings which are far stronger in them and more difficult to combat than in the whites. For the few which would, in spite of persuasion, remain in their own hunting grounds only a speedy and miserable end could be predicted. As stated before, to attempt to ameliorate their condition, with drink ever ready at stores, public-houses, and even private places, for less than the asking, is simply a delusion and waste of money, excepting in the way they are at present relieved by having a good supply of *firewood*, blankets, clothing, and rations, though all but the first are often too late in reaching the unfortunate creatures.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

S. H. OFFICER,

Correspondent to the Board for Protection of the Aborigines.

E. J. Thomas, Secretary to Royal Commission
for enquiry into Condition of Aborigines.

No. 14.

GENTLEMEN,

Mildura, 8th April 1877.

Absence from home has prevented me from answering your communication of 15th February sooner.

With few exceptions, the aborigines on Mildura, and those who have been receiving rations, are in a healthy condition. I am not aware of any deaths having taken place during the past twelve months, nor, to my knowledge, have there been any births.

There are no aboriginal stations near me, and, therefore, I am unable to pass an opinion or give any information with regard to them.

To remove any of the blacks from off their beat is a mistake; they are as a whole contented and well off where they are. My advice would be to appoint an officer whose duty it would be to look after the aborigines from Swan Hill to the South Australian boundary, but whose chief duty would be to watch the wine-shops and several of the low public-houses on the banks of the river.

The rations, &c., distributed by me were of great service to the aged and infirm, but were not nearly sufficient to supply the demands of the many aborigines who made application at the station for them.

I am of opinion the local guardians should be empowered to obtain medical advice and medicines for the aborigines when actually necessary.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours, respectfully,

A. McEDWARD.

To His Honor Sir W. F. Stawell, President; and Members of the Royal Commission
appointed to enquire into Condition of Aborigines.

No. 15.

SIR,

Kulkyne, 9th April 1877.

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your circular of 15th February, and regret exceedingly that my absence from home has prevented an earlier reply.

With regard to the position of the aborigines on other stations, I am not in a position to speak; but as the principal ones have been, I believe, personally inspected by the members of the Commission, they will not require my opinion thereon.

As regards the aborigines here, I am sorry to say their condition is most unsatisfactory, and I really see no remedy, at least in the case of adults.

They are universally addicted to drink, and situated as we are here on the River Murray, they can at any time procure liquor by crossing into New South Wales, in defiance of the Victorian police.

All able-bodied adults and lads can readily obtain employment at high wages, and are therefore quite independent, and would be difficult to retain on any station.

I would suggest that all female children, whether black or half-caste, should be removed to some permanent station, such as Coranderrk, as they merely grow up prostitutes here.

There are, however, none at present on this station, though I believe there are a few on the river, but sometimes on one side and sometimes on the other. Women of any age are very few, and are rapidly dying off.

Black evidence should be made available, and the police be entrusted with large powers to enable them to enforce the Act against persons supplying intoxicating liquor to the blacks.

Yours, obediently,

JOHN MILLER.

E. J. Thomas, Esq., Treasury, Melbourne.

No. 16.**CIRCULAR TO LOCAL GUARDIANS OF ABORIGINES AND HONORARY CORRESPONDENTS OF THE BOARD FOR THE PROTECTION OF ABORIGINES.**

SIR,

The Treasury, Melbourne, 14th April 1877.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the _____, and to convey to you the thanks of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the condition of the aborigines, &c., for the observations therein contained.

I am directed, however, to state, that while glad of your general opinion on the subject of the condition of the aborigines and their future treatment, certain definite points have arisen on which the Commissioners feel it desirable to invite the local guardians of aborigines to express their views more particularly, and I am accordingly to submit to you the accompanying list of questions, for your answers to which the Commissioners will be obliged.

For your convenience in replying, I beg to state that, in doing so, it will suffice to indicate the questions by their respective numbers.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

E. J. THOMAS,

Secretary to the Commissioners.

Esquire.**LIST OF QUESTIONS.**

- 1.** What is your opinion of _____ as a place for an aboriginal station ?
 - (1.) As a sanitary station ?
 - (2.) As to its situation and the temptations to which the inmates are exposed by reason of its proximity to population ?
- 2.** Can you make any suggestions for improvement of its management, or as to maintenance of discipline at aboriginal stations ?
- 3.** Do you think it desirable to pay for the labor of the aborigines ?
- 4.** If so, in what manner ; whether by money alone, or by money and rations and goods, and at what rates or prices ?
- 5.** Do you think it advisable that rations and goods should be purchased on the station, and a store kept for that purpose ; and, if goods, of what kinds should a supply be kept ?
- 6.** Would it be practicable to pay to the managers of the stations the wages earned by aborigines instead of to the aborigines themselves, and thus encourage a resort to the stations for what they want, instead of squandering their money elsewhere ?

If so, what suggestions can you offer for carrying out this object ?
- 7.** Do you think it advisable to board out orphan children ?
- 8.** Do you think it desirable to encourage the aborigines to hire their labor out to employers in the country, either for long or for short terms ?
- 9.** Having regard to the disposition and habits of the aborigines, do you think it desirable that the youths should be apprenticed to learn trades or occupations ?
- 10.** Do you think it desirable to encourage handicrafts at the stations, and of what kinds ?
- 11.** Should the main object of a station be to train the aborigines to earn their living abroad, or to form self-supporting communities on each station ?
- 12.** Have you any suggestions to make as to the treatment of the aborigines ?
- 13.** Can you give any information as to the aborigines who are not at the stations ; the number in your district, their condition, and mode of obtaining a livelihood ; and can you make any suggestions for the amelioration of their condition ?

No. 17.**CIRCULAR TO LOCAL GUARDIANS OF ABORIGINES AND HONORARY CORRESPONDENTS OF THE BOARD FOR THE PROTECTION OF ABORIGINES.**

SIR,

The Treasury, Melbourne, 14th April 1877.

Adverting to my circular of the 15th February, I am directed by the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the condition of the aborigines, &c., to state that, while they will be glad to receive your views generally on the subject of the condition of the Aborigines and their future treatment, as requested in my previous letter, it is deemed desirable to specify some points with regard to which more particularly the Commissioners desire to elicit information.

I have therefore the honor to enclose a list of questions, for your replies to which the Commissioners will be obliged.

For your convenience in replying, I beg to mention that, in doing so, it will suffice to indicate the questions by their respective numbers.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

E. J. THOMAS,

Secretary to the Commissioners.

Esquire.

[NOTE.—The enclosure to the above letter was the same as to the preceding one.]

No. 18.

SIR,

Independent Parsonage, Warrnambool, 10th April 1877.

In reply to your communication of the 3rd ultimo, relative to the Framlingham aboriginal station, I beg to state :—
1.—That I think favorably of the reserve at Framlingham and its suitability for the aborigines for the following reasons :—It affords them a good hunting ground for native game, and at some seasons of the year a supply of fish from the river Hopkins. There are portions of the land well suited for cultivation, and other parts, with moderate exertion, could be considerably improved so as to be profitable for cattle or sheep. The natives appear from their habits and traditions to be attached to certain localities, and consequently many of them to this part.

- (1.) The climate of the Western district is probably the most charming of the colony of Victoria, enjoying as we do immunity from the extremes of heat and cold to which other parts are liable. A judicious system of drainage applied to the reserve at Framlingham would probably improve it in a sanitary point of view as well as increase the fertility of its soil.
 - (2.) I should upon the whole think the station favorably situated; the camp is about three miles from the nearest public-house, and yet near enough to settlement for the natives to occasionally obtain remunerative employment, and to call forth the efforts of those who sympathize with their moral elevation.
- 2.**—In addition to the central board and frequent inspection by its officer, probably a local committee, and a code of concise practical rules, with the loss of privileges upon their infraction, would have excellent effect.
- 3.**—I have the fullest confidence in benefit resulting from the payment of labor. It would be an important factor in developing intellect, manliness, and self-reliance, as well as being the natural stimulus to industry. The Framlingham natives evince, in a laudable degree, an appreciation of the surroundings of civilized life, and a desire to possess property, as seen in the ownership of a gun, a horse, a cart, or superior articles of furniture to their neighbors.
- 4.**—As the community of Framlingham is made up of the old and feeble as well as invalids and orphans, and from other considerations, as that they have had no proper training to labor, I believe the better method would be to combine rations and payment in addition to say an allowance of tea, sugar, flour, meat, soap, calico, flannel, serge, moleskin, and tobacco, I would place it within the power of every industrious person to earn from five shillings to twenty shillings per week. And this could be so conducted as to be reproductive. The rates for labor should be similar to those ruling in the locality.
- 5.**—I think an attempt at a store would be but a partial success, with considerable liability to expense, loss, and abuse.
- 6.**—I think it desirable that the manager should be invested with some authority and influence, that all payments should be made by him, that he be required to keep proper accounts, and that these accounts be subject to the inspection of the local committee and the officer of the central board.
- 7.**—The orphan children could be boarded out amongst families on the station, allowing such families additional rations, a slender money payment, and requiring suitable house accommodation.
- 8.**—The capabilities of the station lands for affording employment should be the first consideration. Liberty should be given for employment in the locality; but I would discourage in every form a disposition to roam about under any pretence, as it is found by experience that no good comes of this. They should engage in such employments and for such periods as are compatible with the station being their home.
- 9.**—The youths on the station are but few, and do not appear to possess much strength of constitution. I think apprenticeship would be of very doubtful benefit.
- 10.**—There are several young men that would benefit from instruction in this way—one showing aptitude in using carpenters' tools, another as a mason. I think, therefore, that some little expense in imparting suitable instruction where aptitude is first shown would be judicious, with a view to their supplying their personal wants and the requirements of the station.
- 11.**—I think that circumstances clearly indicate that the aim should be to make them self-supporting communities. The half-castes, for example, so far as my knowledge goes, all gravitate towards the station life; they are attached to their own people, and exhibit generally a soft feebleness of character. There is an absence of force and vigor of any kind, and are consequently much the better for a kind of paternal supervision.
- 12.**—I think the judicious payment of labor of the first importance. That more attention should be given to elementary education, both as to children and young men and women. The frequent appearance of scrofulous affections indicates the necessity for more attention to the growth of vegetables and fruit, which has hitherto been neglected. The grazing capabilities of the reserve are largely in excess of any legitimate use to which as yet it has been applied. I fear it has been largely used as a common by surrounding farmers.
- 13.**—There are six natives in this neighborhood who refuse to reside at the station; their habits and moral condition are degraded to the last degree. The improved condition of the station, and an informed public sentiment, would operate favorably upon these vagrant ones.

I am, your obedient servant,
 URIAH COOMBS.

To E. J. Thomas, Esq., Secretary to Commissioners, &c.

No. 19.

FROM F. TOZER, ESQUIRE, WANGOOM, NEAR WARRNAMBOOL.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1.—That it (Framlingham station) is very good.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1.) Good. (2.) The best to be had in the district. <p>2.—No.</p> <p>3.—Yes.</p> <p>4.—By rations and goods at usual rates.</p> <p>5.—Yes, kinds most required by the aborigines.</p> <p>6.—I do not think they would work did they not receive the wages themselves.</p> <p>7.—No.</p> | <p>8.—I think it should be left to the discretion of the manager.</p> <p>9.—Not in their own district, as they would not stay away from the station.</p> <p>10.—No.</p> <p>11.—I think this also should be left to the discretion of the manager.</p> <p>12.—I suggest that the half-caste children be sent to the industrial school.</p> <p>13.—Five or six, who obtain a livelihood by working on farms occasionally and sometimes staying at the station.</p> |
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No. 20.

Wuorong, Camperdown, 30th April 1877.

SIR,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th inst., to which my absence from home prevented me replying sooner. I now with pleasure comply with its request.

- 1.**—About the very worst piece of country (Framlingham) which could have been selected for an aboriginal station.
- (1.) With the exception of the river bank on which the village is built, I consider it cold and unhealthy, and a place the aborigines would not reside on if left to their own choice, as they always prefer open, dry, warm country for permanent residence, which it is not.
 - (2.) Its situation is favorable in relation to distance from white population, which is its only recommendation.
- 2.**—Of its management I cannot judge accurately, but believe it to be well conducted by Mr. Goodall. Formerly it and other stations had far too much of the religious element imposed (I presume, by instructions) on people who could not understand it; and, as far as I could ascertain from reluctantly-expressed opinions of very intelligent natives, was considered a bore. I disapprove of prayers and religious exercises during week days, and cannot see why the native races should in that respect be treated differently from white laboring men on stations and farms, where such things as daily prayers are unknown. I believe the "discipline" is relaxed now. Drunkenness can only be checked by the determination of the manager, but extreme measures for its prevention would drive the offenders away altogether.

- 3.**—Certainly, as they are very well aware of the market value of their labor.
- 4.**—By money alone, and not by cheque; because, should a publican get the latter, the whole amount is certain to be spent in dissipation.
- 5.**—A store should be kept on the station, and everything required by the natives, excepting intoxicating drinks, retailed to them at wholesale prices, to induce them to deal there, and to dispose of skins, rugs, baskets, weapons, &c., in exchange for articles they may fancy. I am strongly of opinion that the sight of merchandise in a local store would tend very much to the saving of wages and spending them on articles to be obtained at a cheaper rate than from the shops.
- 6.**—I am very doubtful if they would consent to this, for when they work on stations and farms they expect to get paid in cash. Some employers might give a cheque payable to the manager of the aboriginal station, but I fear the adult natives would not readily consent to this more than once.
- 7.**—Yes, to respectable persons for a period of years.—See Note 1.
- 8.**—Yes; I have employed them for lengthened periods as shepherds and stock-keepers, and also to cut thistles, ring trees, and work among sheep. In many instances, at their request, a written agreement was signed and exchanged, and faithfully observed, except when the chief of their tribe demanded their presence elsewhere—an order they dared not disobey, and which even now might prove a barrier to steady service.
- 9.**—For reasons stated in previous paragraph, an apprenticeship to a trade would not be possible, as the chief's orders must be obeyed, and the indenture would be broken.
- 10.**—Yes; rough bush work, such as splitting, fencing, and erecting huts; but I am very doubtful if they would settle down to a trade. When the old chiefs are dead and their laws are obsolete, it may be otherwise with the pure natives. The half-breds are more manageable, and would, I think, willingly consent to be apprenticed to tradesmen, such as carpenters and blacksmiths.
- 11.**—Yes, and be encouraged to seek employment abroad, instead of the present system of endeavoring to keep them at home, in order to make a show of numbers, and also to get work out of them against their inclinations. Many refuse to go to Framlingham, because they are expected to work for nothing; and I believe nearly all the able-bodied men and women would leave were it not for the society of their friends there. They never will form a self-supporting community at Framlingham, in consequence of the very miserable nature of the soil; neither will they be self-supporting anywhere else, if they are dealt justly with and paid for their labor.
- 12.**—I would not do away with the present stations, because the natives have been ruthlessly driven from their hunting grounds, and have the strongest and most undeniable claims on the people of this colony for support and protection, without labor of any kind in return; and while residing on these stations they should have every "creature comfort," and be allowed to go and come at will.
- 13.**—There are only two aboriginal old men now belonging to this district, and they live in the brewery in Camperdown, and are well fed by kind friends about town, and also by Mr. Jackson, the brewer. As local guardian I have never supplied them with anything at the expense of the Government, and as they are kindly treated, they will not go to Framlingham.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,

JAMES DAWSON,
Local Guardian of Aborigines.

NOTE 1.—With reference to boarding out children, I have to-day ascertained that a very respectable woman, Mrs. Harrison, a neighbor of mine, has obtained possession of a pure-bred aboriginal girl, about five or six years of age, which she intends to maintain and educate. I think the department should encourage such kind acts by an allowance of clothing.

E. J. Thomas, Esq.,

Secretary to the Commissioners (Aboriginal Department), Treasury, Melbourne.

No. 21.

SIR,

Tarndwarncourt, near Birregurra, 20th April 1877.

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your circular for improving condition of aborigines. In reply about the questions concerning Framlingham, I have never been there or near it, and therefore can give no opinion concerning it in any form.

- 3.**—I think it desirable to encourage them to work by paying for their labor.
- 4.**—I think it better to pay them partly in money, and the remainder in clothes (and rations a certain quantity every week). If they were paid all in money, they would probably spend a large portion in intoxicating drink, and beg for old clothes instead of buying new ones.
- 5.**—Where there are a number of blacks, I think it advisable that rations and goods should be kept for them on the station; blankets, woollen and twill shirts, trousers, and boots; also women's clothing; also tobacco, rice, and oatmeal, if required.
- 6.**—Where there are a number of aborigines, I should think it advisable to pay the managers of stations, and let the managers pay the aborigines in money, and supply clothing, just as the manager of a sheep station would to shepherds and other workmen. Probably the way in which Lake Hindmarsh station was conducted is as good a plan as any I have heard of.
- 7.**—The best plan would be to send orphan children to a station like Lake Hindmarsh.
- 8.**—I think it desirable to encourage aborigines to hire themselves to a good master in the country for short terms, as they might get tired when hired for a long period, but they might continue in one place for many short terms. I have known two in the Colac district—one half-caste called Richard Sharp, and one black called Billy—who lived for many years with Mr. Andrew Murray, on a cattle and sheep station, and could earn wages enough to keep themselves independent of Government supplies. Billy occasionally comes to Colac, on a spree, spending some of his money, but generally returns to his master again, as he considers that place his home. I have never seen Richard Sharp intoxicated; he was married about two years since to a white woman, and then left Mr. Murray, and has since been working on another sheep station; he now rents a forty-acre paddock which the Commissioner of Lands gave me permission to fence for the aborigines; the Colac shire council granted funds for the fencing. The aborigines asked me to apply for the land, that they might have a place of their own to reside on. I have a brick house and a wooden one built for them, but I cannot get them to cultivate any part or stay there long together; if they would, I would buy two or three cows for them, to milk, with the money I have from the rent. I built one of the cottages with part of the money. Richard Sharp, the half-caste, and his wife have rented it since 1st October 1876 at £18 per annum; he has paid one quarter's rent.
- 9.**—I do not think it suitable to their habits to apply themselves to any kind of mechanics.
- 10.**—I do not think they will apply themselves to handicrafts.
- 11.**—If they could be persuaded to do it, it would be well to form self-supporting communities on each station.
- 12.**—From what I know of the Colac tribe, they do not like, in general, to work long in one place; but they should be and are encouraged by some settlers to do light work, such as cutting thistles, assisting about sheep-shearing time, and boundary riding, &c. There are some now, and for many years past, at my sheep station on Carr's Plains who are very useful, and Jim Crow here is often useful about the sheep; also in the garden, shooting birds and pulling up weeds occasionally. He has not worked with me since December.
- 13.**—The number and names of aborigines in this locality are:—Jim Crow and his lubra, Donna Ives, 1 boy and girl, 4; Gellibrand and lubra, Alice (both of them often intoxicated), 2; Jackey Cocoin and lubra, Susan (the lubra often intoxicated), 2; Billy, generally working with Mr. Murray (drunk occasionally), 1; Richard Sharp, half-caste, married to a white woman; he keeps himself independent of Government, and is a well-behaved man. I have never seen or heard of him being disorderly. Jim Crow saved money enough to buy an old horse and cart, and drives his lubra and children from one place to another. I may give you some information of his integrity. The year before last he was some months

working at Mr. Manifold's, and when about to remove he asked Mr. P. Manifold for some old clothes, which Mr. Manifold gave him; but before Jim Crow left he told one of the servants next day that he wanted to speak to Mr. Manifold again; and Mr. Manifold asked Jim Crow what he wanted; so Jim Crow asked Mr. Manifold if he knew what he left in his trousers pocket, and then held up three £1 notes and said, "You see that," which rather surprised Mr. Manifold, and he said, "There are not many white men so honest as you are, Jim," and then gave him £1 for his honesty.

It is rather difficult to answer all the above questions, but I hope you will find them of some use.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

E. J. Thomas, Esq., Secretary to the Commissioners for Protection of Aborigines.

ALEXR. DENNIS.

No. 22.

Kew.

1.—I consider Framlingham an admirable location for the aborigines. It is very elevated above the river; is well timbered; the soil appears capable of being very productive; and there is abundance of land for pastorage or the pursuit of native game.

(1.) As a sanitary station, I think very highly of it.

(2.) I should imagine it to be free from many of the dangers usually accruing to the natives from the proximity of the whitefellow. Absolute inclusion is hardly possible, if even desirable, and Framlingham is largely protected from the whites by its execrable roads, which do not present the same drawbacks to the natives as to the white man.

2.—No. (2) will have prepared the Commission for my reply to this question. Framlingham is so "out of the world" as to be beyond the direct control, to be of effect, of the Board in Melbourne. It is some fourteen miles, I believe, beyond Warrnambool. I would therefore respectfully recommend that, in lieu of Mr. Lane, P.M., being the honorary representative of the Central Board—and his duties keep him continually on the travel—a local board of, say, three gentlemen should be appointed, as Mr. Lane, Mr. J. G. Cramond, of Warrnambool, and Mr. Tozer, who resides near Framlingham, or any other gentlemen whom the Board might approve, and that this local board should have the sole control of the station under the authority of the Central Board. This would be a great protection and comfort to the manager as well as to the natives. I mention this with some anxiety, as oftentimes letters from the station have been long unattended to. Once I know Mr. Lane, on pressing appeal, had to order supplies at his own risk, which had long been written for, and, on Mr. Lane communicating, the answer involved a sharp reprimand on Mr. Goodall, the manager, for not writing, whereas his applications had covered many months, and had remained utterly unanswered till then. I would submit that Framlingham should have a small building in which the natives could assemble in the evenings, and where a library should be formed for their use. When last there, in 1876, there was only the store, in which all the provisions, &c., were kept, with no appliance to render it usable as a place of amusement or worship. I respectfully remind the Commission that old heathendom has died out at Framlingham, and the natives are largely Christianised—wholly civilized—as their cottages, gardens, furniture, ornaments, books, &c., testify, and they would highly value a meeting room. If the timber, &c., were supplied, they would soon run it up. Some moneys are already available toward a library. If the Board should appreciate the value of such an institution to a tribe of some eighty, more or less, and whose members can read and write, and many of whom, especially among the women, have received an education among Europeans, and more especially as from their peculiar isolation they must draw all amusement from and among themselves, it would confer an inestimable boon on these people. J. G. Cramond, Esq., can advise the Commission as to the money in hand, held, I believe, by Mr. Goodall as well as himself. I have collected and placed in Mr. Cramond's care, I think, more than £10 toward a library, and have had promises of a good supply of books if only a place to keep them in be provided. The natives have neither money nor materials.

3.—I would suggest that natives should not be employed by a manager. I would have his house and work wholly carried on by whites, otherwise natives may be used in duties not remunerative to themselves. This they do not like. These men and women I have found willing to work, but they want to be paid, and cannot understand why they should not be paid. Their pretty homes on the banks of the Hopkins will testify their capacity to value the social comforts of civilization, and they would like to have the means of procuring these things. Framlingham long since would have been more than self-supporting had proper means been taken. The men and the soil were there. Application was made for hop canes. I believe the number sent was so ridiculously small as to be useless. This feature of the case deserves rigid enquiry. Mr. Lane or Mr. Goodall have of course every information.

4.—Granted a local board, I would pay in money and rations and clothing, as might be determined by the board. Now the natives are clad in cast-off garments. They desire dresses like the whites. They are smart fellows, the men, and any little bit of good clothing they have they stow away, and put on immediately a white visitor approaches. Some of the young women are accomplished needlewomen. But this could all be wholly left with a local board.

5.—Is answered in No. 4.

6.—Is also so answered.

7.—I would not "board out" a black child. I believe there is sufficient earnestness of purpose among the white Christian women of this colony to guarantee more than a supply of persons who would willingly take in and train up the very few little ones needing homes. The station itself is amplest evidence of the influence of Christian women, whose half-caste female proteges have greatly tended to make Framlingham what it is.

8.—I would leave to a local board. Many natives may be trusted anywhere—more might be but for the infamous conduct of the whites.

9.—I can scarcely answer this. Only here and there probably would a case occur of a youth desiring or being willing to be apprenticed, and that could be dealt with by the local board as it arose.

10.—I think handicrafts should be encouraged at every station.

11.—Having regard to the too probable hapless fate of these poor people—that of soon dying out of the land—I think the chief object should be, for the present, to induce them to remain as much as possible at the stations. I would make them the freeholders of their plots of land, without right of sale, mortgage, or transfer. There I would encourage them to dwell. White people little know how the black loves a bit of land, the independent step with which he walks over his reserve, so long as he thinks he is secure in the possession of it, and the distress of mind he feels if a rumour be spread that Government is going to take it away. Anything like compulsion to stay on the land I would utterly repudiate: they are free men and women. But I believe, if a fair effort be made to help them, the blacks of Framlingham will be proud of their station, and show the white man that they can help themselves.

I would only further add that I think it desirable that the white people should cease to regard or speak to the blackfellow as though he were an inferior being. This self-assumption greatly hinders any attempt at moral influence upon them. They are as keen and as sensitive as we are; they know they are almost helpless at our feet. And white men utterly forget that the difficulty of conversation between the races is not that the black cannot talk with us so much as that the white man is ignorant of the native tongue: the fault is on either side.

Should a library be conceded, I would place it wholly in the custody of the natives. William Good and his wife, two excellent Christian blacks, would act admirably as librarians.

THOMAS EMBLING.

Appendix.

I respectfully submit the following lines as a kind of history of the Framlingham natives. They are the Hopkins River tribe, and are very much attached to their own district:—

Some ten or eleven years since an effort was made to bring all the tribes into three or four localities. The Hopkins tribe were almost forced to Lake Condah. That tribe was a hostile one, and together they could not—would not—live. The Hopkins tribe drifted back towards its own land, and in doing so fell out of the list of those supplied by the Central Board. Round Warrnambool and its district they appeared in groups, destitute, starving. One of the little girl piccaninnies disappeared, supposed to have been killed and eaten by one of the old men, who soon went mad, and died in the Yarra Bend. The steam company of Warrnambool kindly gave a free passage to three of the natives, who appeared before the Chief Secretary in Melbourne as suppliants. He instantly called the attention of the Board to the case, and they were conveyed back to Warrnambool; and soon all clustered on the Hopkins on their own land. Again and again white men have sought to get this land; but I believe, at least I hope, it is now really gazetted for the poor blacks. On this spot, from a wild lot of people, they have steadily advanced in the customs of civilization and the culture of the higher life of Christianity. I have had many opportunities of seeing them, and I have had the privilege of watching the dying beds of some of them. Never have I witnessed a purer and more perfect triumph of the religion of Jesus as testified in these death-bed scenes—never so fully comprehended what Uncle Tom uttered to Mas'r George, "Oh! what a thing it is to be a Christian."

No. 23.

Sir,

Nareeb Nareeb, 19th April 1877.

I have to acknowledge receipt of your circular of the 14th instant, with the accompanying list of questions. The circular of 15th February I found here upon my return from New Zealand a short time ago. Having been some months from home, I found much to occupy me upon my return, so your circular was laid aside and overlooked, for which I must apologise.

I now return the list of questions, with my answers.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Yours obediently,

E. J. Thomas, Esq.

CHAS. GRAY.

- 1.—I have never visited Lake Condah, but believe the country round it is very wet.
 - (1.) Too wet.
 - (2.) The country in the vicinity of Condah must be thinly populated, and the blacks living there cannot be subjected to much temptation.
- 2.—No.
- 3.—The aborigines object to work unless paid.
- 4.—I have, if possible, paid the larger proportion in rations and goods; but the aborigines like to get money, which is too often spent in spirits.
- 5.—Many of the aborigines like to lay out at a store the money they have earned, in the purchase of tobacco, caps, gaudily-colored handkerchiefs, &c.
- 6.—The aborigines would not consent to their wages being held by another, and would not work if this were to be done.
- 7.—I have invariably seen orphan children well taken care of by the women of the tribe.
- 8.—Decidedly encourage the aborigines to work for long periods, if possible; but this is difficult, as they do not like to remain long in one place.
- 9.—I would recommend that the boys be taught trades, and the girls trained as nurses and domestic servants.
- 10.—Employment as stock-keepers, shepherds, grooms, &c., suits the aborigines best; such indoor trades as shoe-making, tailoring, and the like, blacks could not be got to work at.
- 11.—If they could be got to remain on the station they would be kept from much temptation.
- 12.—I would recommend that the few still left should be well fed and clothed. Doubtless in a few years the race will be extinct.
- 13.—Of the forty or fifty who, fifteen or twenty years ago, were supplied with clothing and rations by me, a few have gone to the Framlingham station. As far as I can learn, there are not more than eight left in the neighborhood.

No. 24.

Sir,

Benyeo, Apsley, 26th April 1877.

- 1.—The situation (Lake Condah station) is good, and half of the aborigines were born there, a fact which endears it to them. Fish and kangaroo abound there.
 - (1.) As a sanitary station, very good.
 - (2.) The exposure is more for good than evil.
- 2.—At each station there should be superintendent, teacher, and working overseer; the latter to have charge of all working parties, and to report bad conduct to the manager, for which fines should be inflicted.
- 3.—Yes.
- 4.—Cash to be paid by the Government to the aborigines, through the manager, according to the value of their labor, on a sliding scale, and the Government to supply rations as at present.
- 5.—No; it would act injuriously for the well-being of the aborigines.
- 6.—No. There are two reasons why it should not be so, viz.:—
 - (1.) The freedom of the subject is cut off.
 - (2.) The black would never engage himself on such terms.
- 7.—No.
- 8.—Yes. No better plan can be adopted for their good; it gives them a standing, and helps materially to civilize them. Where practicable, the manager should see that their employers pay them.
- 9.—Yes; very desirable for those who have been educated.
- 10.—Yes; shoemaking, tinsmiths, saddlers, and tailors.
- 11.—The experience of the last ten years would help the belief that the stations never will be self-supporting.
- 12.—Yes. They ought to be treated with more liberality, freedom, and means of comfort by the Government. If the aborigines are kept to labor on the station, they should be paid monthly, and allowed to go to the nearest township to make their purchases, but under the care of either the teacher, overseer, or manager. They ought to be afforded the means of grace daily, say, prayers morning and evening for all on the stations.
- 13.—I cannot state the number; but the way they get their living is by the squatters feeding and clothing them. It is seldom that they will work for the selectors, for they rarely get paid for their labor. Of course the aborigines consider that they have a right to be kept by the squatters, as they made their homes on the stations in the early days before the time of the Central Board or the mission stations.

I am, Sir,
Yours faithfully,
HUGH L. McLEOD.

No. 25.

Hamilton, 19th April 1877.

- 1.—That it is (Lake Condah station) good, standing on high ground, with a running stream constantly flowing past it, and capable of perfect drainage.
 - (2.) It is not free from temptation, but is fairly so.
- 3.—Yes; I think it would be well.
- 4.—By counters representing money, for which the aborigines alone could purchase goods at the store or the station, or put into a savings bank.
- 5.—The description of goods they would be likely to purchase in any general store.
- 6.—I do not think so.
- 7.—It would be advisable, but the plan would be beset with grave difficulties.
- 8.—Yes; very desirable.
- 9.—No; unless they expressed a desire themselves to be so dealt with.
- 10.—I do not think so, unless that of basket making, working in skins, or occupations of a like nature.
- 11.—I believe it would be better to keep them, as a rule, in a community by themselves, yet they should be allowed to hire themselves out. The station should be made as attractive as possible to them, and their return secured by the remembrance of former kindness received; that, in fact, they are returning to their own home, where a welcome, sympathy, and generous kindness they can count on receiving.
- 13.—I know not of a single aboriginal in all the district, taking a radius of thirty miles.

P. LEARMONTH, Local Guardian.

No. 26.

Sir,

Castlemaddie, 30th April 1877.

I hereby send you my opinions in answer to your questions sent me, and trust they may be of use in assisting the Commissioners to draw up an Act of regulations for the improvement and welfare of our poor aborigines, who I have always (now for nearly forty years) taken an interest in, and stood their friend on many occasions, and no one knows their ways better, if as well, as myself. In 1839, a boy of about twelve attached himself to me, and never left me for nine years; went to Sydney and Tasmania; indeed wherever I travelled he went with me. At last, when their tribe was almost extinct (the Buninyong one), a few leading men forced him away to a meeting with other tribes, and he died or was killed soon after; and even here, up to very lately, they have come to me with any complaints against one another, as well as whites, to settle for them; and I shall be glad to give the Commissioners any information and assistance in my power.

I have the honor to be,
Your obedient servant,

J. N. McLEOD.

E. J. Thomas, Esq., Secretary to Commissioners on Aborigines.

1.—Very good (Lake Condah station), and would be much improved by the draining of the fine flat on it, which would, if laid down in clover, keep fifteen sheep to the acre. You could not well procure a situation with fewer people near or public-house further away.

2.—The manager should have the same power as a master over servants.

3.—It would be well to pay them in food and clothing, any money over to be given at the manager's discretion, or kept and invested for them. They would have to enter into an agreement. Women, without children, should be made to work, if in only keeping a garden for themselves.

4.—Goods should be given at cost price; the old people, the helpless, and children not to be charged.

5.—Yes; and comforts as well as necessaries kept for sale, such as jams, raisins, also dry fish.

6.—The manager must have the money and goods to pay them with.

7.—I think not.

8.—Those without families who can procure employment, and grown up single men, should be compelled to leave the station and earn their own living. Getting their food and clothing as it were for nothing has a very bad effect on them, as they will never save money or think of making a home for themselves. All these could, if they like, do as one has done near here, taken a selection of 320 acres and living on it (Jimey Uncles).

9.—Decidedly; the girls also to be trained and sent out to service. I have one teaching to be housemaid, giving her £10 per annum, and she is doing better than several white girls we have had; and I would take two of the boys now, about fifteen, at the same rate, for three years, and teach them gardening and all kinds of farming work; and I think I could get good masters on the same terms for some others. One or two might be trained on the station.

10.—The work on the station would teach this.

11.—They should be taught, so as to earn their own living.

12.—The manager must have the same power as a master of his hired servant.

13.—There are only two married couples without families who have been banished from the station for a time for bad conduct. They are quite able to procure their own living; indeed one couple I would give, as I have done, £30 a year to, if they would settle down to the light work they are capable of doing. Both are troublesome on the station, and are better kept away; but an Act would have to be passed to give managers, with local guardians, these powers, and the present one abolished.

No. 27.

Sir,

Karndoin, Dergholme, Casterton, 5th May 1877.

I beg to submit answers to the questions asked for in your letter of the 14th April, and am exceedingly sorry for the delay, but in the interim have been gaining information.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Yours obediently,

JOHN RALSTON.

The Secretary to the Royal Commission on Aborigines, Melbourne.

1.—It (Lake Condah station) is a very wet situation, and the aborigines, being very sensitive to cold and damp, do not like it on that account.

(1.) But from all I can hear it is much less unhealthy than Coranderrk.

(2.) It is well situated in this respect, of being removed from temptation, the nearest public-house being four miles distant, and the aborigines are strictly looked after in that way.

2.—No.

3.—Yes.

4.—By money, rations, and goods, at the lowest rates that can be afforded.

5.—Yes; the necessary articles of food, good substantial warm clothing, and blankets.

6.—It would be very advisable that the managers of stations, or protectors in a district, were paid the wages earned by aborigines, as they are so easily cheated, both by the amount of wages paid, and in dealing for goods at the stores. No doubt it would be difficult to carry out this; the only means would be for some person to be appointed to look after their interest.

7.—I think it would be better to keep them in a school; boarding out in settlers' families would not be at all desirable.

8.—For short terms; their roaming nature would induce them to break long engagements.

9.—For the same reason, I consider that it would not answer to apprentice youths to trades.

10.—Most desirable; they would be apt to learn.

11.—I think to form self-supporting communities, as from their naturally indolent disposition they cannot compete with white labor, and would always be at a disadvantage in employment abroad.

12.—None, except that they should be treated kindly, made to work when able, educated if possible, and kept from drink.

13.—There are at present ten (10) males, three (3) females, and three (3) children in this district. Occasionally they collect here in good numbers, this being an old haunt; after a time a good many go to the different stations, where, I suppose, they are kept for the little work they do; but when here, some of them catch kangaroos for the sale of the skins, strip bark for the settlers, and at busy times are employed on the farms following the machines, cutting thistles, and some of them are good shearers. The men who live mostly in this neighborhood are good workers, and I have known them keep a great many others in rations by their earnings. In answer to the last clause of this question, I think a room should be provided in all townships where there is a doctor, as a hospital, and provision made for medical attendance and care of them when sick. For want of this, disease goes on until incurable; and when they do go to the towns, they, having no place to go to, are exposed to the temptation of the public-house, and often made worse. I should also suggest that the police be requested to keep stricter look after the publicans, to keep them from supplying them with alcohol.

No. 28.

Towaninnie, April 1877.

1.—At one time I was under the impression that Ebenezer station was a good place for the aboriginals; for some time past I don't think that the aboriginals have improved anything by being there.

(1.) Not suitable for the aboriginal; a great many deaths take place.

(2.) Cannot say.

2.—Impossible for me to do so.

3.—Not on mission stations.

4.—If paid anything, I should say goods.

5.—I do not think it advisable to keep a store for them.

6.—I am afraid it would not be practicable to pay the managers of the mission stations their wages.

7.—No.

8.—Aboriginals are only inclined to stop their own time.

9.—I do not think it would be desirable to learn them trade, as they would not care to be away for any length of time from their wandering habits.

10.—No.

11.—Better, if possible, to make the stations self-supporting.

12.—None.

13.—I sent you the number of aboriginals in this locality a short time ago. They mostly live on the rations supplied by the Government. A few of them work on the stations about. As to their condition, it would almost be impossible to better it. No doubt sometimes they are out of tea and sugar, but that is my fault, as of late I have never been refused rations when I applied for them; besides, twice the number of aboriginal have camped here for the last twelve months that formerly did. They frequently hunt kangaroo and emu, and receive £1 each for all the wild dogs that they kill. From a religious point of view, I have no hesitation in condemning the mission stations; their religion is only nonsense. Am prepared at any time to prove it. No doubt the mission stations might do some good if the children were taken there when about four years of age and never allowed to mix with those that indulge in drink and the wandering habits. One thing I would suggest, and that is, if publicans were prohibited from supplying them with intoxicating liquors; that is their greatest curse, and I do not think they are responsible for their actions when under the influence of drink. As the country is now being taken up by farmers, I think it would be advisable to do away with rations to the local guardians, and establish a station for them some place on the Murray.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,

JAMES FINLEY.

To E. J. Thomas, Esq., Secretary.

No. 29.

Dimboola, 19th April 1877.

1.—Very suitable (Ebenezer station).

(1.) Good. Require water-closets erected at a good distance from the houses.

(2.) Very little temptation, if any.

2.—Require more animal food and milk; also potatoes.

3.—The aboriginals are beginning to know the value of money, and I think they should receive some remuneration for their labor.

4.—Both in money and extra rations; also clothing, &c.

5.—Yes; rations, tobacco, clothing, and a few luxuries; also medicines, such as castor oil, &c., and patent medicines.

6.—Yes.

(1.) Most difficult to answer, as employers would not take the trouble to remit the aboriginal earnings.

7.—No.

8.—Yes, for short terms.

9.—Very necessary that they should be taught a trade.

10.—Blacksmiths, carpenters, shoemakers, and saddlers; also stonemasons, &c.

11.—To form self-supporting communities on every station.

WM. H. LLOYD.

No. 30.

West Charlton, 18th April 1877.

Sir,

I should have answered your circular of the 15th February, but I was from home. I now enclose the list of questions and answers thereto.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,

JOS. C. WATSON.

E. J. Thomas, Esq., Secretary to the Commissioners.

1.—Not having been there (Ebenezer station), don't know.

(1.) Can't say.

(2.) Don't know.

2.—No.

3.—They will not work without they are paid. It is not advisable to give them money, as they buy drink.

4.—Give them clothes and rations, and as little money as possible.

5.—On large stations keep a store, with tea, sugar, flour, rice, tobacco, soap, blankets, and other clothing, as usual.

6.—It would be the best way, but they would not be satisfied if they did not get a little money to spend.

(1.) Very difficult to suggest any plan.

7.—No.

8.—Yes, for short terms, as they will never stop long at one place.

9.—No. Very few would stay long enough to learn a trade.

10.—Farming.

11.—To earn their living abroad.

12.—No.

13.—Number here is about twelve. The most of them are old and not fit for work; they have to be fed and clothed. Those who are fit for work do so for a few months in the year; they expect to be fed and clothed the remainder of the year. Don't think it advisable to alter their condition here.

No. 31.

Sir,

Carr's Plains, Glenorchy, 21st April 1877.

In reply to your circular of the 14th instant, I have the honor herewith to append answers to questions submitted.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,

HOLFORD H. WETTENHALL.

E. J. Thomas, Esq., Secretary to the Commissioners.

- 1.—I have not visited it (Ebenezer station).
- 2.—Can't say.
- 3.—They won't work without they are.
- 4.—If at regular and constant work, I think it best to pay them in money, if only occasionally, clothes and food.
- 5.—I think the stores, *i.e.*, rations, should be, but the clothes not.
- 6.—They would not submit to it.
- 7.—I do not.
- 8.—You cannot depend upon them for any term, therefore it would not be practicable.
- 9.—Yes, if they voluntarily submitted to it themselves.
- 10.—They so soon tire of any continuous work, that I think it would be difficult.
- 11.—I think it were better if the stations were self-supporting.
- 12.—They are so reduced in numbers now, that what few are capable of work have no difficulty in getting it, and I believe they have very little to complain of.
- 13.—I know very little about any except those that visit here, and those are doing very well; there are at present here two men, two women, and four children; they are employed, and receiving weekly wages and rations. At the home station here they have comfortable cottages.

No. 32.

Swan Hill, 18th April 1877.

- 1 and 2.—I never saw it (Ebenezer station).
- 3 to 6.—I never saw a mission station, and cannot give an opinion.
- 7.—Yes.
- 8.—I do.
- 9 and 10.—I doubt if they would continue at any sedentary occupation.
- 11.—The latter is my opinion.
- 12.—No.
- 13.—There is a large number of them scattered along the Murray, probably 200 or 300; they shear in the season, and live by fishing, &c., the rest of the year.

L. FAWSETT, Local Guardian.

No. 33.

Mont Alto, Toorak, 25th April 1877.

Sir,

In reply to your communication of the 14th instant, I have the honor to enclose my answers to the series of questions on the condition and future treatment of aborigines, and trust that they may be found acceptable to the Commission.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,

C. M. OFFICER.

E. J. Thomas, Esq., Treasury.

- 1.—I was never at Ebenezer, but having lived in the same district for a good many years, I believe the locality to be all that could be desired, in a sanatory point of view, for an aboriginal station.
- 2.—Temptations arising from proximity to, and increase of, population, must, more or less, necessarily exist in any part of the country, but are as little likely to affect Ebenezer as any other place that could be chosen, as, from the generally sterile character of the adjacent and surrounding country, there is no attraction to population or any prospect of its great increase.
- 3.—Yes; as a stimulus to industry I have found by experience that the aboriginal will not work for any length of time unless he is paid.
- 4.—At so much money per week, rations being found for them. The rate of wages should be regulated by and bear some fair proportion to that paid to white men in the district. If the latter get 15s. per week, the native would expect 10s.
- 5.—I think it advisable that a store should be kept for the supply of such necessaries as tea, sugar, flour, rice, soap, tobacco, and the ordinary articles of male and female clothing.
- 6.—It would certainly be practicable to pay the managers of the stations instead of the aborigines themselves; but the effect on the native mind would be bad, and would beget distrust in the way they were being dealt with. Moral means alone should be used to dissuade them from spending their money improperly, and to encourage them to resort to the stations for what they want.
- 7.—No; dark-colored children would stand at a great disadvantage in a private family, and there could be no guarantee that they would be treated properly.
- 8.—If remunerative labor cannot be found for the aborigines on the stations, they should be encouraged to hire their labor out to employers for short terms. So long, however, as there is work to be done on the stations, it should be performed by them.
- 9.—No; I approve of the youths being taught trades or occupations, but think that there are many objections to their being apprenticed.
- 10.—It is, I think, desirable that the persons showing most aptitude for learning handicrafts should be taught (provided the knowledge can be acquired on the stations) such trades as that of tailor, dressmaker, shoemaker, carpenter, blacksmith, tinker, &c., as these would be useful, and might be turned to profitable account in the community.
- 11.—The main object should certainly be to train the aborigines to form self-supporting communities on each station. To send them to earn their living abroad is to ensure their speedy extermination.
- 12.—Only that they should be encouraged by every means to take up their residence at the stations, where they should be made more comfortable and more happy than they could be in the outer world. They should be instructed in the principles of the Christian religion, but not "ad nauseam." There should be regular holidays and periods of relaxation, as well as of amusement, both indoor and outdoor; for the native, though willing to work, is full of fun, and keenly susceptible of enjoyment derived from games of all sorts. I look upon the whole question of "Treatment of Aborigines" from the light of experience taught us by history, which clearly shows that it is the inevitable fate of an inferior race to disappear before a superior; and in this belief I consider it to be the duty of the people causing this disappearance, not to look for the perpetuation of the race, but to endeavor to make the last remnants of it as happy and comfortable as is consistent with their position and habits of life.
- 13.—I believe there are not more than three or four, perhaps half-a-dozen, of the aborigines of the Wimmera (proper) who are not at the Ebenezer station. (I do not speak of the electoral district of Wimmera, which extends to Swan Hill.) These persons just live on the charity of the settlers, by whom they are well known. I never knew them to want (lack) either food or clothing.

No. 34.

SIR,

Kulkyne, 28th April 1877.

In reply to your circular of 14th instant, I have the honor to furnish the following replies to your queries.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

E. J. Thomas, Esq., Melbourne.

JOHN MILLER, Local Guardian.

- 1.—Never having visited the Hindmarsh station, I do not feel competent to offer any opinion regarding it.
- 2.—Have none to offer.
- 3.—I do not think it desirable to pay for such labor, but do not see how it is avoidable, unless you make them slaves.
- 4.—Money payments are bad, and as much as possible payments should be in goods of suitable kinds, and rations.
- 5.—A supply should, in my opinion, be kept on each station of such clothing and other goods as the inhabitants are found to require. The locality would affect this to a certain extent.
- 6.—This is most desirable, but will, I fear, be found difficult in practice. To effect this, it would be requisite to make it penal for any one to employ an aboriginal without the written sanction of the officer in charge of the station, and such employer should be bound to deliver to said officer a written statement of account, together with balance due, at the termination of the engagement.
 - (1.) Such a course would be impracticable near the Murray, as the aborigines would enter New South Wales, and hire themselves out, and receive their wages direct, thereby enabling them to satisfy their craving for spirits.
- 7.—I have really no experience to justify a reply to this question.
- 8.—If it is desired to bring them under the influence of moral and religious training, no.
- 9.—Have had little experience of their aptness for such, but do not think it desirable.
- 10.—If they show a fitness for it, yes.
- 11.—I think to form self-supporting communities, else, if they are again allowed to scatter among the population, they will be in a few years as bad as they are now.
- 12.—Have none to offer.
- 13.—The aborigines who are not on the stations earn their subsistence easily enough among the white population, but are rapidly dying out through intemperance and its attendant evils.

I estimate the number between Swan Hill and Wentworth at about 100, but of these perhaps half are natives of New South Wales.

No. 35.

SIR,

Coranderk, 4th April 1877.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 2nd instant, and in reply to inform you I can attend when required by getting forty-eight hours' notice.

I attach my answers to the enclosed list of printed questions. If not considered explicit enough, I shall be happy to explain them more fully.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

E. J. Thomas, Esq., Melbourne.

HUGH H. HALLIDAY, Superintendent.

- 1.—I do not consider the climate of Coranderk during the winter months suited for the constitution of aborigines newly arrived from warmer parts of the colony, but as a sanitary site in the summer time I consider it faultless. Most of the natives, however, on the station have, from length of residence on it, become acclimatised to the place, as they are not now so subject to pneumonia and other lung and chest complaints during the winter season as they were on their first arrival here. By the erection of new huts, and the natives exposing themselves less to the weather while out fishing and hunting, and the continuance of the issue of warm body clothing, such as flannel shirts and pilot-cloth jackets, nearly all sickness might be avoided. Since I instructed the men to wear flannel shirts, or flannel across their chests, I have noticed a marked improvement in them all, and heard of but few complaints about their chests.
 - (2.) The station being situated so close to a township I consider to be a fault, for, as a natural consequence, the males are exposed to the temptation of drinking, and both females and males are tempted with the desire to live beyond their means, in the way of dress, &c. Fortunately, the drinking propensities of the aborigines at Coranderk are confined to a few—about five or six—and it is those who suffer most, if not altogether, from chest complaints, originating in exposure to the weather, at some former time, while under the influence of drink.
- 2.—I think that every manager or superintendent of a station ought to be a justice of the peace, appointed specially to deal with aborigines, and every station be gazetted as a place where petty sessions could be holden. I believe that then drunkenness and other vices would soon be put a stop to, and proper discipline maintained at all the aboriginal stations.
- 3.—I think it desirable to pay for the labor of aborigines, as it teaches them the value of their labor, and that they must rely on their own exertions if they desire to be independent.
- 4.—I believe in money payments alone, leaving it optional with the aborigines to purchase what they think necessary out of the station store, otherwise they would think they were imposed upon. With blacks less advanced in civilization than those at Coranderk, I would advise differently. I would also allow them to draw goods out of the station store on account of their wages, care being taken by the person in charge of it that they did not exceed the amount coming to them at the end of the quarter. This could be seen at any time by referring to the labor book.
- 5.—I consider rations (meat excepted) should be issued free, as at present, but that a small store should be kept on each station for the sale of drapery, &c., at or about cost price, to prevent the aborigines frequenting public-house stores; the class of goods to be kept being dress pieces for women, ribbons, women's hats, shawls, handkerchiefs, men's white shirts, tweed trousers, cloth coats, elastic-side boots, felt hats, and such like, as well as looking-glasses, pictures, combs and brushes, powder and shot, double-barrelled guns, and saddles and bridles; their proximity to a more civilized community having improved their taste, and consequently increased their wants.
- 6.—I think it would be found to be impracticable to pay managers of stations wages earned by aborigines, so many schemes and devices would be resorted to by those employed off the stations to defeat the end in view. By keeping a well-assorted stock of goods in the station store, and leaving it optional for the natives to purchase, from my knowledge of their character, I am certain they would spend nearly if not quite the whole of their earnings in it, as there is no end to their propensity for good dress when they have the money.
- 7.—I think it advisable to board out orphan children who are half-caste males, or three-quarters white of both sexes, who are above the age of 14, to responsible people who would take care of them, the station being always open to them in extremity, and supervision being kept over them while in service by the station superintendents, who should be empowered to license them out.
- 8.—Only such aborigines as are sober and reliable should, in my opinion, be encouraged to hire their labor out to employers in the country, and then for short periods, and I would confine such privilege to single males, as I am of opinion that female aborigines, both full blacks and half-castes, when they come in contact with whites, only descend in the social scale, and become degraded.
- 9.—The half-caste youths might be apprenticed, but I think it would be quite useless to attempt such a thing with full blacks, as they would be certain to run away.
- 10.—They have every opportunity at present of learning everything requisite for an employé on a station or a farm, as well as on a hop plantation, which I think is all that is necessary for them to be learned on the station. The school girls are taught to sew and make their own clothes, and one of the girls (a full black) acts as pupil-teacher.

11.—I would form self-supporting communities of both blacks and half-castes, as I am certain both would die out in a very short time if their stations were broken up, and would lead to their total degradation if the black and half-caste women were allowed to roam about the country in search of employment. I would, where practicable, settle those who have a knowledge of farming, and are besides in good bodily health, on their reserves, a short distance from the station, to earn their own living, on blocks of land of say 40 acres to each family, at a nominal rental of about 6d. per acre per annum, the land being non-transferable, and ninety-nine year leases being granted them and their families. Help in the shape of seeds, tools, and twelve months' provisions (the latter issued weekly) being granted them, with the privilege of living on the station until their ground was fenced in and hut erected. I have two or three families here who would be willing to go on the ground on these terms. I would, besides, give each family a cow in milk, and liberty to run ten head of cattle on the reserve free of charge; supervision being still maintained over them by their superintendents.

12.—The half-castes require to be treated with firmness; the blacks, to some extent, humored.

13.—There are but two aborigines in my district who are not at the station—both half-castes—one a male, and the other a female, both unmarried. The male is working for Mr. Ryan, a farmer residing on the Don Creek, about ten miles from here, at 12s. a week. The female is servant to the Rev. Mr. Hamilton, of Fitzroy, at 5s. a week. Both bear exemplary characters.

I consider the natives of Coranderrk are at present too independent of work, and to bring them more under subjection I would recommend that the meat ration be stopped, and that the pay for labor be increased one penny per hour as an equivalent. Any aborigines unable to work, or under the care of the doctor, to be provided, themselves and families, with 6 lbs. of meat each weekly, at the expense of the State, same as at present. When the hop paddock has been extended to forty acres, I see no reason why the station should not be self-supporting. Eight acres more will be put in this year, making twenty-eight acres under crop.

No. 36.

1.—With a better system of drainage and improved dwellings, I consider it (Coranderrk station) suitable for those aborigines who have been born on the coast side of the dividing range.

(2.) Unsuitable, from its nearness to a European settlement.

2.—I think discipline should be maintained chiefly by a judicious system of rewards. Punishment, as a general rule, to be the absence of any reward.

3.—Yes.

4.—By money, or partly by rations and goods, at the choice of the individual, and at cost price.

5.—Yes; goods and clothing required in a family.

6.—I think not, especially if the following plan were adopted. The managers of the stations should issue licenses to those they think proper to go out for work, and should let them understand that what goods they require would be sold to them at the station, and at cost price.

7.—In some cases it should be done. But I think no real aborigines should be boarded out. In any case, great care would be required in the choice of those who got charge of them.

8.—Yes.

9.—Yes.

10.—Yes; such as joiners' work, turning, tailoring, shoemaking, &c.

11.—In the case of aborigines, the object of the station should be to form self-supporting communities of each station. In the case of those who are half-caste or less, they should be trained to earn their own living abroad.

12.—The real aborigines of this land should be well cared for altogether, without any reference to their own work or earnings. Their spiritual welfare should have a chief place in any treatment they may receive. Medical aid should be provided. The half-castes should be taught trades and habits of prudence and self-respect.

13.—The only aborigines not on the station that I know of are, a real one working with a farmer near Lilydale, and the children of Thomas Harris, of Coranderrk, who, I understand, are living with Mr. Green, at Healesville. On the whole, the real natives require different treatment from the others.

ALEX. MACKIE.

No. 37.

Flemington, 19th June 1877.

1.—(1.) Very good (Coranderrk).

(2.) Its situation in this respect could scarcely be improved, the nearest population being at Healesville, about three miles distant, and no public road intersects the station.

2.—Not any. It is entirely a matter of judicious management.

3.—I do think it highly desirable.

4.—By both money and goods. I would classify the laborers, say 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, at 2s., 1s. 6d., and 1s. per diem; their rations in all cases to be supplied in addition.

5.—I do strongly advise this, and that a store be kept on the station for that purpose, containing all kinds of wearing apparel, also domestic ironmongery, tinware, and crockery.

6.—It would not be practicable. But it should be the manager's duty to encourage them to place their money in his hands as a savings bank.

7.—Decidedly not.

8.—I do.

9.—I think it very undesirable.

10.—I do, such as carpenters, wheelwrights, and blacksmiths.

11.—The main object should be to form self-supporting communities on each station.

12.—None, unless it is the great desirability of keeping them as much apart from the white population as possible, and in communities of their own.

F. GIBSON, M.R.C.S.

No. 38.

Lilydale, 15th June 1877.

Sir,

I have the honor to enclose my answers to the queries respecting the aborigines forwarded to me.

I may mention, in addition, that during the managership of Mr. Stähle I sent a report to the "Board for Protection of Aborigines," urging the erection of a small building as a hospital, with a suitable nurse and appliances, but that no notice was taken of my letter.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN B. ELMES, M.B.,

Visiting Surgeon, Coranderrk.

E. J. Thomas, Esq., Secretary to the Commissioners.

1.—(1.) The situation is healthy; but there is great room for improvement with respect to the dwellings, drainage, &c., and the floors of some houses are below the street level.

(2.) The township of Healesville, about three miles distant, presents the only temptation that I know of; the population around is not large.

2.—The discipline has varied with the managers since I know the station, about nine years. I think it might be more strict; but it is better to refer to the managers, who have had much to contend with.

3.—I think so, if they are to be got to work at all; they are exceedingly lazy, and care for the present only; they receive rations at present, independent of any work done.

4.—Both; part of the rations now issued might be made dependent on their labor, and I do not think there is any great danger in allowing them the possession of money to a certain extent. It is principally among the older hands, who are hopeless, that drunkenness is to be feared.

ABORIGINES.

O

- 5.**—I think that goods and rations should be purchasable at the station at a lower rate than that charged by ordinary storekeepers, to encourage the aborigines to buy there. I should say such necessaries as clothes, blankets, tea, flour, &c.
- 6.**—I think not. It would, I believe, cause great grumbling and dissatisfaction among them; they, as I can judge from several years' experience, know the value of money, and like to have it in their own hands.
- 7.**—No; I believe the difference of race would be a serious objection, and they seem to be fairly cared for at present.
- 8.**—Yes; the neighboring farmers would give them employment readily in most cases, and the aborigines would accept it. I have known an instance where a farmer engaged some of the men to assist him, but they were immediately withdrawn by the then manager.
- 9.**—I think that the youths, many of whom are half-castes, or three-fourths whites, ought to be taught trades.
- 10.**—I think so. *Carpentering, shoemaking, &c., &c.*
- 11.**—A combination of both. To make them altogether self-supporting would, I think, be impossible. Some of the youths, both male and female, might be sent as domestic servants under due supervision; they could not be worse off than the children of white settlers, who continually leave home to work elsewhere.
- 12.**—The older cannot be effectively interfered with; they must get their rations, and liberty to live their own life. All hope of improvement will rest among the younger men and women and the children growing up. They require firmness mixed with kindness, and persons over them whom they can respect.
- 13.**—I can give no information of this kind with respect to my district. I suggest that at every station wandering aborigines should be able to obtain supplies of food, clothing, medicine, &c., when in want, gratis, from the station stores.

No. 39.

Wirimbirchip (*viâ* Donald), 27th April 1877.

- 1.**—Not required in district, as they are old, and prefer staying on the stations.
- 2.**—The only thing I can suggest is to give the rations and clothes. I am a local guardian; and have to give rations for ten old aboriginals for the last three months, as I have had no instructions to purchase stores.
- 3.**—Yes; those that are able to work.
- 4.**—Ten shillings per week, rations, and goods.
- 5.**—I think that rations and goods should be sent from the department, and then a correct account could be kept.
- 6.**—The aborigines should not have money, as it only encourages them to buy grog. Give them rations and clothing in place of money.
- 7.**—I have none in this district that I am guardian of.
- 8.**—I am in favor of long terms.
- 10.**—Don't know; they do not care about hard work.
- 12.**—Treat them kindly.
- 13.**—I have ten old blacks on the station, and no rations for them.

B. MOGG, Local Guardian.

No. 40.

Wyuna Station, 27th April 1877.

- 1.**—There is one already established by Mr. Mathews on the banks of the Murray river, opposite Lower Moira station, on the New South Wales side; it seems to be doing well; it could not be established in a better situation, as the blacks make no distinction of the Murray as a boundary.
- (2.) No public-houses near the station.
- 2.**—No.
- 3.**—I have always paid for their labor. Cash does them more harm than good. Spirits cannot be kept from them when they get money.
- 4.**—By clothing and rations, or the money paid in to the station master.
- 5.**—No.
- 6.**—Yes; and proper account kept.
- (1.) Their clothing to be sent early, before the cold weather sets in. I most complain the Board was always dilatory in forwarding their clothing in time.
- 7.**—Yes.
- 8.**—Yes, short terms.
- 9.**—Yes; very quick in learning station work.
- 10.**—No.
- 12.**—Keep them well clothed in winter.
- 13.**—No.

JOHN MACKENZIE.

No. 41.

SIR,

The Green Hill, French Island, Hastings, 12th April 1877.

As it will be most inconvenient for me to be in Melbourne towards the end of next month, I have the honor herewith to hand you a report on the "better conservation of our remaining aboriginal tribes."

I have based the same as far as was practicable on the list of questions which you sent for my guidance. Should the Commission or any member thereof desire information further than I have here furnished, I can only say that I shall be glad to do my endeavour at any time between now and the breaking up of the Commission.

Any letters containing questions shall be promptly replied to.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

PETER BEVERIDGE.

To the Commissioners appointed to enquire into the condition of the Aborigines of Victoria the following information is respectfully submitted.

For the better conservation and future welfare of the meagre remnants of our once numerous aboriginal tribes the writer is of opinion that there should be an aboriginal station established in every district containing thirty or upwards of these people. In districts containing a less number than thirty, some local gentlemen of known probity, possessing an interest in and thorough sympathy with this fast-disappearing race, should be chosen to look after their welfare. These gentlemen should have full power and authority delegated to them, otherwise their efforts would be of little avail.

The aborigines, although to a certain extent nomads, are still to all intents and purposes a local people—that is to say, their many wanderings are all performed within the limits of what they deem their own districts. This innate proclivity will always be an insurmountable obstacle to anything approaching centralisation; hence the necessity for numerous stations.

The elderly men and women will rarely work or labor hard in the present with the view of remuneration only visible in the far future, such, for example, as planting potato sets in September, even with knowledge that they will have a crop to dig in January. They will plant the sets properly, however, and work hard at it, if they are aware for certain that their daily rations of food and tobacco will always be ready for them as the sun goes down. Of course they require to be well and judiciously looked after, as they are given to scheme when the eye of the master is off them.

The young and capable men, on the other hand, will not work unless for a money consideration; and as they are particularly useful in all ways amongst stock, they can always get employment from the squatters when they feel the need of a cheque. Doubtless, however, had they all stations, where the old men, women, and children of their respective tribes lived, they would gravitate to them frequently as to a home, and ultimately, perhaps, become reconciled to live and work thereat as a permanency.

These people will not learn trades such as carpentering, tailoring, &c. To this, however, there is an exception, and that is, they become excellent shearers. This, though, can scarcely be called a trade, as it is merely one of the many stock phases, and in everything connected therewith they are invaluable assistants.

At each station there should be a store containing all necessary kinds of supplies, under the control of the manager, to which the young money-earning men of the tribe could return to invest their respective cheques, and from whence good-conduct prizes could be drawn for the laboring men and women of the station.

The idea of the wages earned by the young men being drawn by the managers of the stations would be scouted, as the mere handling and carrying the cheque earned counts very considerably with them. Underselling the come-at-able stores in the neighborhood would be the best and surest means of inducing the young men to resort to their own stations to invest their wages.

In the matter of orphan children, there are old crones in every tribe who would gladly rear them, if means were only placed at their disposal for that purpose; besides, there are always relatives of a greater or lesser degree of affinity who deem it their duty to look after such waifs; and to take even one of these away (no matter for what purpose), would cause an outcry that would be painful; besides, it would tend considerably to weaken the status of the manager, and that would be ruinous, as the success or failure of each station will depend entirely on the esteem in which that gentleman is held by his dependents.

Employment should always be furnished for those willing to work, but no objection should be made to them should they wish to engage with others outside of their own station; of course, after a time, it is more than likely that they would consult the manager as to whether they should accept a certain service or not; and if the manager had endeared himself to them (and if he had not he would be the wrong man in the wrong place), they would be almost certain to be guided by his advice.

The innate savage love of freedom, together with their distaste to anything approaching to sedentary pursuits, will always militate against apprenticing the youths to any kind of trade. Matters of a rural nature are alone fitted for a people of their peculiar characteristics.

The advantages derivable from these aboriginal stations, in the opinion of the writer, are as follows:—The old, the sick, the women and children, would all be thoroughly cared for, and such of them that could and would work would have congenial employment furnished for them. The children would be educated and trained to habits of industry, whilst an eye of supervision could be kept on the young men and their neighbor employers, which would be conducive to both in their respective relations; and ultimately, as the children grew in years and stature, the stations might become self-supporting as well as happy communities.

There is only one thing which the writer fears may tend to nullify the success of these aboriginal stations, and that is *grog*. All our aboriginal natives drink spirits wherever and whenever they can procure them, and, when under the malign influence thereof, they are perfect fiends and altogether beyond moderate control. If, however, the Government were to pass an addition to the Publican's Act something like the following, even that evil, great though it be, might be considerably modified, if not altogether removed:—A publican, on conviction of having supplied an aborigine with spirituous liquors, to lose his license, and to be incapacitated ever after to hold a publican's license in Victoria. Any person, not being a publican, convicted of supplying an aborigine with spirituous liquors, to be liable to not less than six months' hard labor on the roads of the colony. Neither of these clauses to be applicable to an employer of aboriginal labor, as it frequently happens, from the nature of the work performed on a squatting station, that a stimulant is really necessary at times to recuperate an exhausted hand. That or some similarly stringent law, properly advertised through the agency of the police and by well distributed posters, would go a long way towards making the aborigines a sober people.

For many years the subscriber was an honorary correspondent to the Central Board for the Protection of the Aborigines, and during that time he was the means, in a good number of instances, of having people who had supplied the aborigines with spirits successfully prosecuted. In those days the magistrates presiding at up-country petty sessions were right well able to distinguish between the false, though sworn, testimony of an interested delinquent or that of his witnesses, and the unsworn, though truthful, assertions of aboriginal witnesses, so that it was not a difficult matter to sheet an offence of the kind home to the offender. The great benefit of these prosecutions soon became patently apparent, and if the New South Wales authorities had only been alike stringent in their measures, where the aborigines were concerned, our northern frontier natives would perforce have become a sober people.

The writer, on one or two occasions whilst correspondent, brought the fact of the lax laws of New South Wales as regards the aborigines under the notice of the Central Board; unfortunately, however, nothing came of it; therefore a native had only to cross the Murray, if he had money and felt an inclination for a *spree*, to gratify his longing to the extent of his cheque at the first public-house he met with.

Doubtless the same rule still holds good in that colony; if so, all endeavors to benefit the Murray aborigines (and the greater portion of our remaining native tribes are to be found on or about that river) will be hopelessly futile.

PETER BEVERIDGE.

The Green Hill, French Island, 12th April 1877.

No. 42.

SIR,

The Treasury, Melbourne, 6th June 1877.

The Royal Commissioners appointed to inquire into the condition of the Aborigines, &c., have had under their notice the very high percentage of marks obtained by the children of the State school at the Ramahyuck Aboriginal station, Lake Wellington.

Mr. Inspector Topp, in his report of 3rd April 1873, says—"This is the first case, since the present result system has been in force, that 100 per cent. of marks has been gained by any school in the colony." Mr. Baldwin, in his report of 26th May 1874, reports—"Inspector's percentage, 100 per cent." And Mr. Elkington, on 25th May 1875, reports—"Percentage, 95."

With reference to this subject, I am directed by the Commissioners to request that you will be good enough to supply them with a statement of the average percentage of marks obtained by children at State schools other than those located on aboriginal stations.

The following is a list of the aboriginal stations of the colony:—

"Ramahyuck," Lake Wellington, Gippsland.	Lake Condah, Western district.
Lake Tyers, Gippsland.	Framlingham, near Warrnambool.
"Ebenezer," Lake Hindmarsh.	Coranderrk, near Healesville.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,

E. J. THOMAS,
Secretary to the Commissioners.

H. Venables, Esq., Secretary, Education Department.

No. 43.

Gov.—No. 77/10119.

Education Department, Melbourne, 15th June 1877.

In reply to your letter of 6th instant, I have the honor to furnish you with the following statement of the average percentages obtained in State schools since the coming into force of the present Education Act:—

In 1873 58·7	In 1875 70·04
1874 63·6	1876 74·6

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,

HENRY VENABLES,
Secretary.

E. J. Thomas, Esq., the Treasury, Melbourne.

PART II.

SYNOPSIS OF ANSWERS TO PRINTED QUESTIONS ENCLOSED IN CIRCULARS OF
14TH APRIL 1877.

Question 1.—What is your opinion of Coranderrk as a place for an Aboriginal station ?

Sub-question 1.—As a sanitary station ?

- H. H. Halliday (Superintendent, Coranderrk):—In summer time, faultless. Not suited to Aborigines newly arrived from warmer places; those now there, however, have become acclimatized, and are not so subject to chest complaints as they were. By avoidance of exposure and the wearing of warm clothing, nearly all sickness might be avoided.
- The Rev. A. Mackie (Lillydale):—With better drainage and dwellings, would be suitable for Aborigines born on *coast* side of Dividing Range.
- Dr. Gibson (Flemington):—Very good.
- Dr. Elmes (Lillydale):—Healthy; but improvement required in the dwellings, drainage, &c.
- J. Green (formerly Superintendent, Coranderrk):—One of the most healthy positions that could be found, notwithstanding opinions to the contrary. During first fourteen years of the station's existence there were only about fifty-one deaths; in these cases, many of the persons came to the station already suffering from a complication of diseases, and eleven were children born while their mothers were suffering from the effects of syphilis; the other deaths were principally from low-fever. As further proving the healthiness of the station, mentions that there are now there twenty Aborigines brought from the Murray; they have been on the station from six to ten years; only one has died, and by natural increase they now number twenty-nine or thirty.

Sub-question 2.—As to its situation, and the temptations to which the inmates are exposed by reason of its proximity to population ?

- H. H. Halliday:—Too near a township, tempting them to drink and live beyond their means in the way of dress, &c.
- The Rev. A. Mackie:—Unsuitable.
- Dr. Gibson:—Could scarcely be improved; three miles from Healesville, and no public road intersects the station.
- Dr. Elmes:—Healesville, three miles distant, presents the only temptation; population around not large.
- J. Green:—Knows it could not be improved by being removed farther from white population; and at Kulkyne, whither it has been proposed to remove the Coranderrk blacks, drunkenness and prostitution prevail. All that is required to avoid these evils is care and watchfulness and Christian persuasion. During the fourteen years he was at Coranderrk, there were few cases of drunkenness after the first two years, and for several none; and only one case of prostitution.

Question 2.—Can you make any suggestions for improvement of its management, or as to maintenance of discipline at Aboriginal stations ?

- H. H. Halliday:—Considers every manager of a station should be a justice of the peace appointed specially to deal with Aborigines; and every station should be a place where petty sessions may be holden.
- The Rev. A. Mackie:—Discipline should be maintained chiefly by a judicious system of rewards; punishment to be the absence of reward.
- Dr. Gibson:—Not any. It is entirely a matter of judicious management.
- Dr. Elmes:—The discipline has varied with the various managers. It might be more strict; but the managers have had much to contend with.
- J. Green:—1st. That the station be handed over to one of the churches able and willing to supply men to manage it, not so much for the sake of salary, as from their love of the blacks' welfare: such men are to be found. 2nd.—There should be no white labour employed on the station but that required for management; and all should be married men, of known Christian principles. The manager, if a man of tact, can, with his advice, easily get the Aborigines to make rules for the maintenance of discipline; and once made, they will be kept. Gives from his journals instances of his practice in this respect. If the Aborigines are treated as free and independent men and women, at the same time remembering that they are but children in knowledge, any one with fair tact may lead them. Example must accompany precept in trying to get them to abstain from drink.

Question 1.—What is your opinion of Framlingham as a place for an Aboriginal station ?

- F. Tozer (Local Guardian, Wangoom):—That it is very good.
- James Dawson (Local Guardian, Camperdown):—The very worst that could have been selected.
- A. Dennis (Local Guardian, Tarndwarncourt):—Never been there, and can give no opinion.
- The Rev. U. Coombs (Warrnambool):—Favourable. A good hunting ground; at some seasons there are fish (in the Hopkins). Part of the land is good for cultivation; other parts, with moderate exertion, could be rendered profitable for cattle or sheep. Some of the natives are attached to the locality.
- Dr. T. Embling:—Admirably suited; is elevated above the river; soil capable of being productive; abundance of land for pasturage or hunting.

Sub-question 1.—As a sanitary station ?

- F. Tozer:—Good.
- James Dawson:—With the exception of the river bank, cold and unhealthy.
- The Rev. U. Coombs:—The climate is good. Drainage would improve the reserve sanitarly, as well as fertilize.
- Dr. T. Embling:—Thinks very highly of it.

Sub-question 2.—As to its situation, and the temptations to which the inmates are exposed by reason of its proximity to population ?

- F. Tozer:—The best to be had in the district.
- James Dawson:—The situation is favourable, which is its only recommendation.
- The Rev. U. Coombs:—Favourable. Near enough to settlement for natives to obtain employment, and to call forth the efforts of those who sympathize with their moral elevation, yet three miles from nearest public-house.
- Dr. T. Embling:—Favourable.

Question 2.—Can you make any suggestions for improvement of its management, or as to maintenance of discipline at Aboriginal stations ?

- F. Tozer:—No.
- James Dawson:—Believes it to be well-conducted. Disapproves of daily religious exercises for the blacks. Drunkenness can only be prevented by the determination of the managers; extreme measures would drive the offenders away altogether.
- The Rev. U. Coombs:—Suggests frequent inspection by the Board's inspector; appointment of a local committee; and establishment of concise practical rules, with loss of privileges on their infraction.
- Dr. T. Embling:—Suggests (1.) Supervision of Framlingham by a local committee of three gentlemen, in lieu of the local guardian, as at present the gentleman who is local guardian is also police magistrate, and his duties do not admit of active supervision. (2.) The erection of a building in which the natives could assemble in the evenings, and in which there should be a library; there are moneys already available towards a library.

Question 1.—What is your opinion of Lake Condah as a place for an Aboriginal station ?

- Charles Gray (Local Guardian, Nareeb Nareeb):—Never visited it, but believe it to be wet.
 Hugh L. McLeod (Local Guardian, Apsley):—Good. Half of the Aborigines were born there, which endears it to them. Fish and kangaroo abound there.
 J. N. McLeod (Local Guardian, Castlemaddie):—Very good, and would be much improved by the draining of the fine flat on it. Could not well procure a situation with fewer people near, or public-houses farther away.
 J. Ralston (Local Guardian, Casterton):—It is very wet.
 W. E. Morris (Honorary Secretary, Church of England Mission):—Excellent.

Sub-question 1.—As a sanitary station ?

- Charles Gray:—Too wet.
 Hugh L. McLeod:—Very good.
 J. Ralston:—“From all I can hear, it is much less unhealthy than Coranderrk.”
 P. Learmonth (Local Guardian, Hamilton):—“That it is good; standing on high ground, with a running stream constantly flowing past it, and capable of perfect drainage.”
 W. E. Morris (Honorary Secretary, Church of England Mission):—Excellent.

Sub-question 2.—As to its situation, and the temptations to which the inmates are exposed by reason of its proximity to population ?

- Charles Gray:—The vicinity must be thinly populated, and the blacks cannot be subjected to much temptation.
 Hugh L. McLeod:—“The exposure is more for good than evil.”
 J. Ralston:—Well situated; the nearest public-house being four miles distant.
 P. Learmonth:—Not free from temptations, but fairly so.
 W. E. Morris (Honorary Secretary, Church of England Mission):—Could hardly be better situated.

Question 2.—Can you make any suggestions for improvement of its management, or as to maintenance of discipline at Aboriginal stations ?

- Charles Gray:—No.
 Hugh L. McLeod:—At each station there should be superintendent, teacher, and working overseer; the latter to have charge of all working parties, and to report bad conduct to the manager, for which fines should be inflicted.
 J. Ralston:—No.
 J. N. McLeod:—The manager should have the same power as a master over servants.
 W. E. Morris (Church of England Mission):—That there should be a careful avoidance by the Board and its agents of any manifestation before the Aborigines of the powers of control they possess and ought to exercise. It is destructive of discipline for the Aborigines to be encouraged to appeal from the decisions of the managers. A manager should be empowered to stop the supplies of persons able but unwilling to work.

Question 1.—What is your opinion of Ramahyuck as a place for an Aboriginal station ?**Sub-question 1.**—As a sanitary station ?**Sub-question 2.**—As to its situation, and the temptations to which the inmates are exposed by reason of its proximity to population ?

- The Rev. M. Macdonald (Presbyterian Mission Committee):—In every respect suitable; no special temptation from proximity to population.

Question 2.—Can you make any suggestions for improvement of its management, or as to maintenance of discipline at Aboriginal stations ?

- The Rev. M. Macdonald (Presbyterian Mission Committee):—Considers the management excellent. Best method of securing order on the stations is to place them under the superintendence of Christian men, who make the spiritual welfare of the people their chief aim, while also training them to industry, thrift, and self-reliance. Discipline should be maintained as far as possible by a judicious system of rewards.

Question 1.—What is your opinion of Lake Hindmarsh (Ebenezer) Aboriginal station as a place for an Aboriginal station ?

- James Finley (Local Guardian, Towaninnie):—At one time thought it a good place, but for some time past the Aborigines have not improved by being there.
 W. H. Lloyd (ditto, Dimboola):—Very suitable.
 Jos. C. Watson (ditto, West Charlton):—Never been there.
 H. H. Wettenhall (ditto, Carr's Plains):—Ditto.
 Sergt. Fawssett (ditto, Swan Hill):—Ditto.
 C. M. Officer (ditto):—Ditto; but believes it to be all that could be desired in a sanitary point of view.
 J. Miller (ditto, Kulkyne):—Never been there.

Sub-question 1.—As a sanitary station ?

- James Finley:—Not suitable; a great many deaths take place there.
 W. H. Lloyd:—Good. (Water-closets required.)
 Jos. C. Watson:—Can't say.
 H. H. Wettenhall:—Ditto.
 L. Fawssett:—Ditto.
 C. M. Officer:—See above.
 J. Miller:—Never been there.

Sub-question 2.—As to its situation, and the temptations the inmates are exposed to by reason of its proximity to population ?

- James Finley:—Cannot say.
 W. H. Lloyd:—Very little temptation, if any.
 Jos. C. Watson:—Don't know.
 H. H. Wettenhall:—Can't say.
 L. Fawssett:—Ditto.
 C. M. Officer:—As little temptation as in any other place that could be chosen, and owing to the sterility of the surrounding country, settlement is not likely.
 J. Miller:—Never been there.

Question 2.—Can you make any suggestions for improvement of its management, or as to maintenance of discipline at Aboriginal stations ?

- J. Finley :—Impossible for me to do so.
 W. H. Lloyd :—Require more animal food and milk, also potatoes.
 Jos. C. Watson :—No.
 H. H. Wettenhall :—Can't say.
 L. Fawcett :—Never saw it.
 J. Miller :—Have none to offer.

Question 3.—Do you think it desirable to pay for the labour of the Aborigines ?

- F. Tozer :—Yes.
 James Dawson :—Certainly ; as they are very well aware of the market value of their labour.
 A. Dennis :—Yes ; to encourage them to work.
 Chas. Gray :—They object to work unless paid.
 Hugh L. McLeod :—Yes.
 P. Learmonth :—Yes.
 J. N. McLeod :—It would be well to pay them in food and clothing, any money over to be given at the manager's discretion, or kept and invested for them ; they would have to enter into an agreement. Women, without children, should be made to work, if in only keeping a garden for themselves.
 Jas. Finley :—Not on mission stations.
 W. H. Lloyd :—They are begging ; to teach them the value of money, they should receive some remuneration for their labour.
 Jos. C. Watson :—They will not work unless paid.
 H. H. Wettenhall :—Ditto.
 L. Fawcett :—Can give no opinion.
 C. M. Officer :—Yes, as a stimulus to industry ; they will not work unless paid.
 J. Miller :—Not desirable to pay for such labour, but do not see how it is to be avoided.
 H. H. Halliday :—Yes ; it teaches them the value of their labour and to rely on their own exertions.
 The Rev. M. Macdonald (Presbyterian Mission Committee) :—They should know that all are under obligation to assist in the general work of the station ; but, to encourage industry, they should be paid on a moderate scale for special work.
 The Rev. A. Mackie :—Yes.
 The Rev. U. Coombs :—Has fullest confidence that benefit would result from so doing. It would develop intellect, manliness, and self-reliance, as well as being the natural stimulus to industry.
 B. Mogg (Wirimbirchip) :—Yes, of those that can work.
 J. Mackenzie (Wyuna) :—Cash does them more harm than good ; spirits cannot be kept from them when they have money.
 P. Beveridge (Phillip Island) :—The elderly will not work for a distant prospect of reward, but must be sure of their daily rations as the sun goes down ; the young and capable require money payment.
 Dr. Gibson :—Yes.
 Dr. Elmes :—Yes.
 J. Green :—The Aborigines are well able to keep themselves, independently of Government supplies, and therefore should receive wages according to their worth.
 W. E. Morris (Honorary Secretary, Church of England Mission) :—Yes.
 Dr. T. Embling :—Considers that the Aborigines should not be employed by the manager of the station, but that his house and work should be carried on wholly by whites. The Aborigines expect payment. Framlingham would long ago have been self-supporting had proper means been taken.

Question 4.—If so, in what manner ; whether by money alone, or by money and rations and goods, and at what rates or prices ?

- F. Tozer :—By rations and goods at usual rates.
 James Dawson :—By money alone, and not by cheque ; should a publican get hold of the latter, the whole amount will go in drink.
 Alexr. Dennis :—In money and rations and clothes ; if paid solely in money, they would spend a large portion in drink, and then beg for old clothes instead of buying new ones.
 Charles Gray :—“ I have, if possible, paid the larger proportion in rations and goods ; but the Aborigines like to get money, which is too often spent in spirits.”
 Hugh L. McLeod :—By the Government, through the manager ; in cash, on a sliding-scale, according to the value of the labour ; the Government to supply rations, as at present.
 P. Learmonth :—By counters, representing money, for which the Aborigines alone could purchase goods at the store on the station, or put into a savings bank.
 J. N. McLeod :—Goods should be given at cost price ; the old people, the children, and helpless, not to be charged.
 J. Ralston :—By money, rations, and goods, at the lowest rates that can be afforded.
 James Finley :—“ If paid anything, I should say goods.”
 W. H. Lloyd :—In money, extra rations, and clothing.
 Jos. C. Watson :—Give them clothes and rations ; as little money as possible.
 H. H. Wettenhall :—If at regular and constant work, best to pay them in money ; if only occasionally at work, clothes and food.
 L. Fawcett :—Can give no opinion.
 C. M. Officer :—At so much per week, rations being found them ; the rate should bear some fair proportion to that paid to white men in the district ; if the latter 15s., the Aborigine would expect 10s.
 J. Miller :—As much as possible in goods ; money payments are bad.
 Hugh H. Halliday :—In money alone, leaving it optional with them to purchase out of the station store ; otherwise they would think they were imposed upon. With less civilized blacks than those at Coranderrk, would advise differently. Would allow them to draw goods against the amount of wages coming to them at the end of the quarter.
 The Rev. M. Macdonald (Presbyterian Mission Committee) :—There might be an advantage in giving them their option to be paid wholly in money, or partly by rations and goods.
 The Rev. A. Mackie :—By money, or partly by rations and goods, at the choice of the individual, and at cost price.
 The Rev. U. Coombs :—In rations and money. In addition to an allowance of tea, sugar, flour, meat, soap, calico, flannel, serge, moleskin, and tobacco, would place it within the power of every industrious person to earn from 5s. to 20s. per week ; this could be so conducted as to be reproductive ; rates should be those ruling in the locality.
 B. Mogg :—Ten shillings per week ; rations and goods.
 J. Mackenzie :—By clothing and rations, or the money paid in to the station manager.
 Dr. Gibson :—By money and goods ; would classify the labourers, say 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, at 2s., 1s. 6d., and 1s., per diem, with rations.
 Dr. Elmes :—Both. Part of the rations now issued might be made dependent on their labour ; there is no great danger in allowing them the possession of money to a certain extent. It is principally among the older hands (whose case is hopeless) that drunkenness is to be feared.
 J. Green :—This should be left to those in charge of the station. Some of the Aborigines would make good use of any money they might get ; others would squander it ; they may be easily advised as to laying out their money. To be banker to a community of Aborigines entails an amount of labour that very few are willing to perform.
 W. E. Morris (Honorary Secretary, Church of England Mission) :—By money and rations. The rates and quantities to be at the discretion of managers, within reasonable limits prescribed by the Board.
 Dr. T. Embling :—By money and rations and clothing, as might be determined by a local committee.

Question 5.—Do you think it advisable that rations and goods should be purchased on the station, and a store kept for that purpose; and if goods, of what kinds should a supply be kept?

- F. Tozer** :—Yes; kinds most required by the Aborigines.
James Dawson :—Yes; would tend very much to the saving of wages, &c. Everything required by the natives, except intoxicating drinks, should be retailed at wholesale prices, and in exchange for skins, rugs, baskets, &c.
Alex. Dennis :—Yes, where there are many blacks. Rations and other goods should be kept—blankets, woollen and twill shirts, trousers, boots, women's clothing, tobacco, rice, and oatmeal.
Charles Gray :—“Many of the Aborigines like to lay out at a store the money they have earned in the purchase of tobacco, caps, gaudily-colored handkerchiefs, &c.”
Hugh L. McLeod :—No; it would act injuriously for the well-being of the Aborigines.”
P. Learmonth :—Yes; the description of goods they would be likely to purchase in any general store.
J. N. McLeod :—Yes; comforts as well as necessaries, such as jams, raisins, and dry fruit, should be kept for sale.
J. Ralston :—Yes; the necessary articles of food; good, substantial, warm clothing, and blankets.
James Finley :—No.
W. H. Lloyd :—Yes.
Joseph C. Watson :—Yes, on large stations; tea, sugar, flour, rice, tobacco, soap, blankets, and clothing.
H. H. Wettenhall :—“I think the stores, *i.e.* rations, should be, but the clothes not.”
L. Fawssett :—Cannot give an opinion.
C. M. Officer :—Yes; for supply of such necessaries as tea, sugar, flour, rice, soap, tobacco, and the ordinary articles of male and female clothing.
J. Miller :—Yes; clothing and such other goods as the people require.
H. Halliday :—Rations (excepting meat) should be issued free, as at present; but a store should be kept for the sale of goods, so as to prevent the frequenting of public-house stores. The following goods should be kept :—Dress pieces for women, ribbons, women's hats, shawls, handkerchiefs, men's white shirts, tweed trousers, cloth coats, elastic-side boots, felt hats, and the like; looking-glasses, pictures, combs and brushes, powder and shot, double-barrelled guns, saddles and bridles.
The Rev. A. Mackie :—Yes; goods and clothing required in a family.
The Rev. U. Coombs :—“I think an attempt at a store would be but a partial success, with considerable liability to expense, loss, and abuse.”
B. Mogg :—“I think that rations and goods should be sent from the department, and then a correct account could be kept.”
J. Mackenzie :—No.
P. Beveridge :—Yes; containing all necessary supplies.
The Rev. M. Macdonald (Presbyterian Mission Committee) :—Yes; the store should contain clothing and such other articles as are required in a family, and they should be sold as nearly as possible at cost price, so as to leave no inducement to hawkers to frequent the settlement. The store might be managed by an intelligent native under the control of the superintendent.
Dr. Gibson :—Yes, strongly advise this. The store should contain all kinds of wearing apparel, domestic ironmongery, and crockery.
Dr. Elmes :—Yes, and the goods sold more cheaply than by the ordinary storekeepers. Clothes, blankets, tea, flour, &c., should be kept.
J. Green :—A good supply of all necessary rations and clothes should be kept, of which each should get a fair supply—good workers should get something extra. White sugar should be kept for sale. They would not buy clothes from a store on the station; they would prefer buying from hawkers.
W. E. Morris (Honorary Secretary, Church of England Mission) :—Yes; principally grocers' and drapers' goods.
Dr. T. Embling :—See answer to question 4.

Question 6.—Would it be practicable to pay to the managers of the stations the wages earned by Aborigines, instead of to the Aborigines themselves, and thus encourage a resort to the stations for what they want, instead of squandering their money elsewhere?

- F. Tozer** :—They would not work unless they received the wages themselves.
James Dawson :—Does not think they would consent to this.
A. Dennis :—It would be advisable to pay the managers of stations, and let the manager pay the Aborigines in money, and supply clothing, just as the manager of a sheep station would to shepherds and other workmen.
Charles Gray :—The Aborigines would not consent to it, and it would not work.
Hugh L. McLeod :—No; for two reasons—“1. The freedom of the subject is cut off. 2. The black would never engage himself on such terms.”
P. Learmonth :—Thinks it impracticable.
J. N. McLeod :—“The manager must have the money and goods to pay them with.”
J. Ralston :—It would be very advisable that the managers of stations, or the protector in a district, should be paid the wages earned by the Aborigines, as they are so easily cheated. The plan would, however, be difficult to carry out. It would be necessary to appoint some person to look after their interest.
J. Finley :—Not practicable.
W. H. Lloyd :—Yes.
Jos. C. Watson :—It would be the best way, but they would not be satisfied unless they got a little money to spend.
H. H. Wettenhall :—They would not submit to it.
L. Fawssett :—Cannot give an opinion.
C. M. Officer :—Certainly practicable; but the effect on the native mind would be bad; it would beget distrust of the way in which they were dealt with. Only moral means should be used to dissuade them from spending their money improperly, and to encourage them to resort to the stations for what they want.
J. Miller :—Most desirable, but difficult to carry out. It would be necessary to make it penal to employ an Aborigine without the written consent of the superintendent of the station. The employer should be bound to deliver a written statement of account to that officer and pay amount due. It would be impracticable near the Murray, as the natives would evade the system by crossing into New South Wales.
H. H. Halliday :—It would be impracticable, so many devices would be resorted to to defeat the end in view. Feels certain that if a well-assorted stock of goods were kept at the stations, nearly all the earnings of the Aborigines would be spent there.
The Rev. A. Mackie :—Not practicable; but the managers of stations should issue licenses to those they think proper to go out for work, and should let them understand that what goods they want would be sold to them at cost price at the station.
The Rev. U. Coombs :—Thinks it desirable that the manager should be invested with some authority and influence; that all payments should be made by him, he keeping proper accounts, &c.
B. Mogg :—The Aborigines should not have money, as it only encourages them to drink.
J. Mackenzie :—Yes, and proper accounts kept.
P. Beveridge :—The idea would be scouted; the mere handling of their earnings counts for much with them. Under-selling the neighbouring stores would be the surest way of inducing a resort to the stations to invest their wages.
The Rev. M. Macdonald (Presbyterian Mission Committee) :—As a general rule, wages ought to be paid through the manager of the station.
Dr. Gibson :—It would not be practicable; but the Aborigines should be encouraged to place their money in the hands of the manager of the station as a savings bank.
Dr. Elmes :—No; it would cause grumbling and dissatisfaction.
J. Green :—It would not do to make it a rule unless with the blacks' consent; but states he actually had this plan in operation at Coranderk; obtained the men's consent, and then arranged with employers to send cheques to him; those who objected at first afterwards fell in, when they saw how much longer the money, by this means, lasted.

W. E. Morris (Honorary Secretary, Church of England Mission):—Managers of stations should have funds placed at their disposal, in order to pay for work done on stations. This would, to a great extent, prevent Aborigines working away from the stations, which is not desirable. Managers might be empowered to make contracts with employers, a condition of contract being that payment be made to the manager. At the same time Aborigines should be at perfect liberty to make contracts and receive payment themselves.

Question 7.—Do you think it advisable to board-out orphan children?

- F. Tozer :—No.
 James Dawson :—Yes, to respectable persons for a period of years. Mentions a person who has obtained possession of a pure Aboriginal girl five or six years of age, whom she intends to maintain and educate; thinks such acts should be encouraged by an allowance of clothing.
 A. Dennis :—The best way would be to send orphan children to a station.
 Chas. Gray :—Orphan children are always taken care of by the women of the tribe.
 Hugh L. McLeod :—No.
 P. Learmonth :—Advisable, but beset with grave difficulties.
 J. N. McLeod :—No.
 J. Ralston :—Not at all desirable.
 Jas. Finley :—No.
 W. H. Lloyd :—No.
 Jos. C. Watson :—No.
 H. H. Wettenhall :—No.
 L. Fawcett :—Yes.
 C. M. Officer :—No. Dark-colored children would stand at a great disadvantage in a private family, and there could be no guarantee that they would be treated properly.
 J. Miller :—Has had no experience to justify replying.
 H. Halliday :—Would board-out orphan children who are half-caste males, or three-quarter white of both sexes, who are above the age of 14; the station being always open to them, and supervision kept over them.
 The Rev. A. Mackie :—In some cases; but no real Aborigines should be boarded-out. In any case, great care would be required in the choice of those who got charge of them.
 The Rev. U. Coombs :—They could be boarded-out amongst the families on the station; allowing such families additional rations, &c.
 B. Mogg :—None in his district.
 J. Mackenzie :—Yes.
 P. Beveridge :—There are always relatives of a greater or less degree of affinity who deem it their duty to look after such waifs; and to take even one of these away (no matter for what purpose), would cause an outcry that would be painful; besides it would weaken the influence of the manager, and that would be ruin, as the success or failure of each station depends entirely on the esteem in which he is held.
 The Rev. M. Macdonald (Presbyterian Mission Committee) :—Unwise, in view of the weakness of moral purpose still characteristic of the Aboriginal race. It would be extremely difficult to find persons who would take an interest in their spiritual and moral well-being; there would be danger of the girls going astray, and the boys would grow up with the feeling that they were regarded as aliens, and thus be tempted to contract bad habits. The safest and in every respect the best course is the present one of bringing them in a boarding-house under the superintendence of the missionary and his wife.
 Dr. Gibson :—Decidedly not.
 Dr. Elmes :—No; the difference of race would be a serious objection, and they are fairly cared for at present.
 J. Green :—It would prove ruinous, except in the case of quadroons—many of whom are so white that their relationship to the Aborigines would never be suspected. Points out that the difficulty of the system arises from the white family always regarding any alliance with the blacks as degrading; hence, when the black protégé arrives at a certain age, a change takes place in his treatment; he feels the withdrawal of sympathy, and seeks refuge with his own people.
 W. E. Morris (Honorary Secretary, Church of England Mission) :—No.
 Dr. T. Embling :—No; there are sufficient earnest Christian women in the colony to take in and train up the few little ones needing homes.

Question 8.—Do you think it desirable to encourage the Aborigines to hire their labour out to employers in the country, either for long or short terms?

- F. Tozer :—It should be left to the discretion of the manager.
 James Dawson :—Yes; has employed them for lengthened periods as shepherds and flock-keepers, also to cut thistles, ring trees, work among sheep; in many instances under written agreements, signed and exchanged at their own request, and generally faithfully observed.
 A. Dennis :—Yes, for short terms; they would get tired if hired for long terms. Mentions two who have worked on stations and supported themselves quite well; one, "Billy," a black, occasionally comes into Colac "on a spree," spending his wages; the other, Richard Sharp, a half-caste, he has never seen intoxicated. Sharp married a white woman about two years ago. He now rents a 40-acre paddock, which the Commissioner of Lands gave Mr. Dennis permission to have fenced for the Aborigines; the Colac shire council granted funds for the fencing. The Aborigines desired the land to be applied for that they might have a place of their own. Two houses have been built for them, but Mr. Dennis cannot get them to cultivate the land, or stay there long at a time. Richard Sharp has rented one of the cottages since 1st October 1876, and paid one quarter's rent.
 Charles Gray :—Would encourage them to work for long periods, if possible, but it is difficult: they do not like to remain long in one place.
 Hugh L. McLeod :—"Yes; no better plan can be adopted for their good, it gives them a standing, and helps materially to civilize them. Where practicable, the manager should see that their employers pay them."
 P. Learmonth :—Yes, very desirable.
 J. N. McLeod :—"Those without families who can procure employment, and grown-up single men, should be compelled to leave the station and earn their own living. Getting their clothes and food, as it were, for nothing, has a very bad effect on them, as they will never save money, or think of making a home for themselves. All these could, if they like, do as one has done near here, taken a selection of 320 acres, and he is living on it."
 J. Ralston :—"For short terms; their roaming nature would induce them to break long engagements."
 Jas. Finley :—"Aborigines are only inclined to stop their own time."
 W. H. Lloyd :—"Yes, for short terms."
 Jos. C. Watson :—"Ditto; they will not stay long in one place."
 The Rev. M. Macdonald (Presbyterian Mission Committee) :—"The superintendents of stations might be empowered to issue licenses to men in whom they have confidence to hire their labour to persons of approved character, who would engage to look after them while in their employment; but that these licenses should not run for a longer period than three months, though they might be renewed. Girls should not be permitted to hire their labour save where exceptionally good guarantees can be given.
 Dr. Gibson :—Yes.
 Dr. Elmes :—Yes. The neighbouring farmers would give them employment readily, and they would accept it.
 J. Green :—In but few cases would it be beneficial, and should not be made a rule; it should be permitted sometimes, but only to persons who would watch over them with care.

- W. E. Morris** (Honorary Secretary, Church of England Mission) :—No.
H. H. Wettenhall :—Not practicable ; they cannot be depended upon for any term.
L. Fawssett :—Yes.
C. M. Officer :—Yes, for short terms, if remunerative labour cannot be found for them on the stations.
John Miller :—“ If it is desired to bring them under moral and religious training—No.”
H. H. Halliday :—Only such as are sober and reliable ; then for short periods, and the males only ; females, whether black or half-castes, only descend in the social scale by contact with the whites.
The Rev. A. Mackie :—Yes.
The Rev. U. Coombs :—The capabilities of the station lands for affording employment should be the first consideration. Liberty should be given for such employment in the locality as is compatible with the station being their home. Roaming, under any pretence, should be discouraged.
B. Mogg :—“ I am in favour of long terms.”
J. Mackenzie :—“ Yes, for short terms.”
P. Beveridge :—No objection should be made to their engaging with persons off the station if they so desire ; if the manager have endeared himself to them (and that should always be the case), they would ask and follow his advice as to accepting a particular service.
Dr. T. Embling :—Would leave it to a local board.

Question 9.—Having regard to the disposition and habits of the Aborigines, do you think it desirable that the youths should be apprenticed to learn trades or occupations ?

- F. Tozer** :—Not in their own district, as they would not stay away from the station.
Jas. Dawson :—Not possible ; the chief of the tribe might demand their presence, and, as he must be obeyed, the indentures would be broken.
A. Dennis :—Not compatible with their dispositions to apply themselves to any sort of mechanics.
Charles Gray :—The boys should be taught trades, and the girls trained as nurses and servants.
Hugh L. McLeod :—Very desirable for those who have been educated.
P. Learmonth :—No, unless they desired it.
J. N. McLeod :—Decidedly ; the girls also to be trained and sent out to service.
J. Ralston :—It would not answer ; their roaming nature would cause the breaking of their engagements.
W. H. Lloyd :—Very necessary that they should be taught a trade.
Jos. C. Watson :—No ; they would not stay long enough to learn a trade.
H. H. Wettenhall :—Yes, if they voluntarily submit to it themselves.
L. Fawssett :—They would not continue at any sedentary occupation.
C. M. Officer :—“ No. I approve of the youths being taught trades or occupations, but think there are many objections to their being apprenticed.”
J. Miller :—Not desirable.
H. H. Halliday :—The half-caste youths might be apprenticed, but the pure blacks would be certain to run away.
The Rev. A. Mackie :—Yes.
The Rev. U. Coombs :—It would be of very doubtful benefit.
J. Mackenzie :—Yes ; very quick in learning station work.
P. Beveridge :—The innate savage love of freedom, together with their distaste for anything approaching sedentary occupation, will always militate against apprenticing the youths to any kind of trade.
Dr. Gibson :—Very undesirable.
Dr. Elmes :—The youths, many of whom are half-castes or three-quarter whites, ought to be taught trades.
The Rev. M. Macdonald (Presbyterian Mission Committee) :—See answer to question No. 10.
Dr. T. Embling :—Only here and there would a youth be willing to be apprenticed ; the matter could be left to a local board.
J. Green :—It would prove the ruin of nine out of every ten ; the objections against it are the same as against boarding-out.
W. E. Morris (Honorary Secretary, Church of England Mission) :—No.

Question 10.—Do you think it desirable to encourage handicrafts at the stations, and of what kinds ?

- F. Tozer** :—No.
James Dawson :—Yes ; rough bush work, such as splitting, fencing, and erecting huts ; doubt if they would settle down to a trade ; the half-castes are more manageable, and might perhaps.
A. Dennis :—They would not apply themselves.
Charles Gray :—Employment as stock-keepers, shepherds, &c., suits them best ; in-door trades they would not work at, such as shoemaking, tailoring, &c.
Hugh L. McLeod :—Yes ; shoemaking, tinsmiths, saddlers, and tailors.
P. Learmonth :—No ; unless basket-making, working in skins, and occupations of a like nature.
J. N. McLeod :—“ The work on the station would teach this.”
J. Ralston :—“ Most desirable ; they would be apt to learn.”
James Finley :—No.
W. H. Lloyd :—Blacksmiths, carpenters, shoemakers, saddlers, stonemasons.
Jos. C. Watson :—Farming.
H. H. Wettenhall :—It would be difficult ; they so soon tire of any continuous work.
C. M. Officer :—Desirable that those showing aptitude should be taught (provided that can be done on the stations) such trades as that of tailor, dressmaker, shoemaker, carpenter, blacksmith, tinker ; they would be useful in the community.
John Miller :—Yes, if they show a fitness for it.
H. H. Halliday :—They have every opportunity at present of learning everything requisite for an employé on a station, a farm, or a hop-plantation ; considers this all that is necessary ; the school girls are taught to sew and make clothes, and one of the girls (a full black) acts as pupil-teacher.
The Rev. A. Mackie :—Yes ; such as joiner-work, turning, tailoring, shoemaking, &c.
The Rev. U. Coombs :—There are several young men who already show aptitude in using carpenters' tools, or acting as masons ; some expense in imparting instruction in such cases would be judicious.
B. Mogg :—Don't know ; they do not like hard work.
J. Mackenzie :—No.
P. Beveridge :—Matters of a rural nature are alone fitted for a people of their peculiar characteristics.
Dr. Gibson :—Yes ; such as carpentry, wheelwrights' and blacksmiths' work.
Dr. Elmes :—Yes ; carpentering, shoemaking, &c.
The Rev. M. Macdonald (Presbyterian Mission Committee) :—As Aboriginal youths have considerable aptitude for light mechanical work, it would be well to teach them such handicrafts as joiner-work, lathe-turning, basket-making, the manufacture of wooden toys, &c. ; but they should not be apprenticed out, except in very special cases. Persons qualified to give instruction in the trades specified might be engaged to reside for a time on the stations ; or, better still, the superintendents and their assistants should acquire these arts as part of their qualification for the work. While all encouragement ought to be given to lads who evince a capacity for such occupations, the work required on a dairy farm, and in the cultivation of hops, arrowroot, &c., would be more congenial to the tastes and better adapted to the dispositions of the majority of the black people.
J. Green :—Would encourage all handicrafts that would be of service to them on the station, such as the building of their houses, making their clothes, &c.

W. E. Morris (Honorary Secretary, Church of England Mission):—To a limited extent; chiefly carpentering and basket-making. The physique and inclination of the Aborigines indicate pastoral and light agricultural pursuits as more suitable.

Dr. T. Embling:—Yes.

Question 11.—Should the main object of a station be to train the Aborigines to earn their living abroad, or to form self-supporting communities on each station?

F. Tozer:—Should be left to the discretion of the manager.

James Dawson:—They should be encouraged to seek employment abroad. Many refuse to go to the station at Framlingham because they are expected to work for nothing. Nearly all the able-bodied would leave Framlingham but for the society of their friends. They never will form a self-supporting community at Framlingham, in consequence of the very miserable nature of the soil.

Alex. Dennis:—If they could be persuaded to, it would be well to form self-supporting communities on each station.

Charles Gray:—If they could be got to remain on the stations, they would be kept from much temptation.

Hugh L. McLeod:—The experience of the last ten years would help the belief that the stations never will be self-supporting.

P. Learmonth:—Better to keep them in a community by themselves, yet they should be allowed to hire themselves out; but the station should be made as attractive as possible to them, and their return secured by remembrance of former kindness received.

J. N. McLeod:—They should be taught to earn their own livelihood

J. Ralston:—To form self-supporting communities; as, from their naturally indolent dispositions, they cannot compete with white labour, and would always be at a disadvantage in employment abroad.

W. H. Lloyd:—To form self-supporting communities on every station.

Jos. C. Watson:—To earn their living abroad.

H. H. Wettenhall:—“It were better if the stations were self-supporting.”

L. Fawssett:—To form self-supporting communities on the stations.

C. M. Officer:—“The main object should certainly be to train the Aborigines to form self-supporting communities on each station. To send them to earn their living abroad is to ensure their speedy extermination.”

J. Miller:—To form self-supporting communities on each station; else, if they are again allowed to scatter among the population, they will be in a few years as bad as they are now.

(*Remark.*—Mr. Miller, who writes from Kulkyne, alludes perhaps, in the words “*as bad as they are now*,” to the ungathered blacks along the River Murray, who, by all accounts, are in a very degraded state.—E.T., Secretary.)

H. H. Halliday:—Would form self-supporting communities of both blacks and half-castes; is certain that both would die out in a very short time if the stations were broken up. If the black and half-caste women were allowed to roam about the country in search of employment, it would lead to their total degradation. Would settle those Aborigines who have a knowledge of farming on blocks of land on their reserves, leased to them for long periods at a nominal rent.

The Rev. A. Mackie:—In the case of Aborigines, would form a self-supporting community on each station; those who are half-caste or less should be trained to earn their living abroad.

The Rev. U. Coombs:—Circumstances clearly indicate that the aim should be to form self-supporting communities. The half-castes, for example, generally gravitate towards the station-life; they are attached to their own people, and exhibit generally a soft feebleness of character. There is an absence of force and vigour of any kind, and they are consequently much the better for a kind of paternal supervision.

P. Beveridge:—The advantages derivable from the Aboriginal stations are as follows:—The old, the sick, the women and children, would be thoroughly cared for, and such of them as could work would have congenial employment found them. The children would be educated and trained to habits of industry, whilst an eye of supervision would be kept on the young men and their neighbour employers; ultimately, the stations might become self-supporting as well as happy communities.

Dr. Gibson:—The main object should be to form self-supporting communities on the stations.

Dr. Elmes:—A combination of both. Impossible to make the stations altogether self-supporting. Some of the youths, male and female, might be sent out as servants.

The Rev. M. Macdonald (Presbyterian Mission Committee):—Would deprecate any proposal to turn the Aborigines adrift on the white population. They have not as yet the energy and *moral backbone* which would enable them to hold their own in the battle of life. Even under the most careful training, it will require two or three generations to develop these qualities to the degree that would justify their protectors in leaving them to themselves. The policy of the Board should be to form self-supporting communities on the stations.

J. Green:—The object of the stations should be to train the Aborigines to form self-supporting communities. This is not so difficult of attainment as might be thought. A man who can lead the Aborigines can get from them about as much labour as from white men. Coranderk was self-supporting three years ago.

W. E. Morris (Honorary Secretary, Church of England Mission):—To form self-supporting communities on each station.

Dr. T. Embling:—In view of their probably soon dying out, would induce them, as much as possible, to remain on the stations, but would not compel them. Would make them freeholders of their plots of land, but without right of sale, mortgage, or transfer. “White people little know how the black loves a bit of land—the independent step with which he walks over his reserve so long as he thinks he is secure in the possession of it, and the distress of mind he feels if a rumour be spread that Government is going to take it away.”

Question 12.—Have you any suggestions to make as to the treatment of the Aborigines?

F. Tozer:—Suggests that the half-caste children be sent to the Industrial Schools.

James Dawson:—Would not do away with the present stations, because the natives have been ruthlessly driven from their hunting grounds, and have the strongest and most undeniable claims on the people of this colony for support and protection without labour of any kind in return; and while residing on these stations they should have every “creature-comfort,” and be allowed to go and come at will.

Alex. Dennis:—They do not (in general) like to work long in one place, but they should be, and are by some settlers, encouraged to do light work, such as cutting thistles, helping at sheep-shearing, boundary-riding, &c.

Charles Gray:—Would recommend that the few still left should be well fed and clothed; doubtless in a few years the race will be extinct.

Hugh L. McLeod:—They ought to be treated with more liberality, freedom, and means of comfort by the Government. If the Aborigines are kept to labour on the station, they should be paid monthly, and allowed to go to the nearest township to make purchases, but under the care of teacher, overseer, or manager. They ought to be afforded the means of *Grace daily*, say prayers morning and evening for all on the stations.

J. N. McLeod:—The manager should have the same power as the master of a hired servant.

J. Ralston:—None; except that they should be treated kindly, made to work when able, educated if possible, and kept from drink.

C. M. Officer:—Only that they should be encouraged, by every means, to take up their residence at the stations, where they should be made more comfortable and more happy than they could be in the outer world.

They should be instructed in the principles of the Christian religion, but not “*ad nauseum*.”

There should be regular holidays, and periods of relaxation, as well as of amusement, both in-door and out-door; for the native, though willing to work, is full of fun, and keenly susceptible of enjoyment derived from games of all sorts.

- From the light of experience taught by history, judges that it is the inevitable fate of the Aborigines to disappear before a superior race; and considers it the duty of the latter to make the last remnants of the vanishing people as happy and comfortable as is consistent with their position and habits of life.
- The Rev. A. Mackie** :—The real Aborigines of this land should be well cared for, without any reference to their own work or earnings. Their spiritual welfare should have a chief place in their treatment; medical aid should be provided. The half-castes should be taught trades and habits of prudence and self-respect.
- The Rev. U. Coombs** :—The judicious payment of labour is of the first importance. More attention should be given to elementary education, both as to children and young men and women. The frequent appearance of scrofulous affections indicates the necessity for more attention to the growth of vegetables and fruit, which has hitherto been neglected. The grazing capabilities of Framlingham are in excess of any use to which it has been applied.
- B. Mogg** :—Treat them kindly.
- J. Mackenzie** :—Keep them well clothed in winter.
- P. Beveridge** :—The only obstacle to the success of the stations would be the Aborigines procuring drink. Suggests an addition to the Publican's Act, under which a publican should, on conviction of having supplied an Aborigine with intoxicating drink, lose his license, and be incapacitated ever after to hold a license; any person, not being a publican, similarly convicted, to be liable to six months' hard labour. Neither of these penalties to be applicable to employers of Aboriginal labour, as such sometimes have to administer a stimulant to an exhausted labourer. Has been in times past the means of successfully prosecuting persons for supplying drink to Aborigines. If the laws of New South Wales were only equally stringent to ours, the northern frontier blacks would have become a sober people; but as it is, they only have to cross the Murray into New South Wales in order to escape from all restrictions.
- H. H. Halliday** :—The half-castes require to be treated with firmness; the blacks, to some extent, humoured. Considers the Aborigines of Coranderrk too independent of work; to bring them more under subjection, would stop the meat ration, increasing the pay for labor 1d. per hour as an equivalent. When the hop-plantation is extended to forty acres, expects the station to be self-supporting; eight acres more will be put in this year, making twenty-eight acres under crop.
- Dr. Gibson** :—Would keep them as much apart from the white population as possible, and in communities of their own.
- Dr. Elmes** :—The older cannot be effectively interfered with; they must get their rations, and liberty to live their own life. All hope of improvement must rest among the younger. They require firmness mixed with kindness, and persons over them whom they can respect.
- The Rev. M. Macdonald** (Presbyterian Mission Committee) :—Let each station be placed under the superintendence of a Christian man of missionary zeal, tact, and business capacity, whose duty it shall be to impart religious instruction to the people, watch over them with a paternal eye, and administer the general affairs of the station for the Board of Protectors. Taking it for granted that the Government will not assume the function of religious teaching, while it will loyally endeavour to give effect to the Royal instructions (Osborne House, March 1861) "to take such measures as may appear to be necessary to further their (the Aborigines') conversion to the Christian faith and their advancement in civilization," the committee would suggest that the Board concert with the religious bodies at present engaged in missionary work among the Aborigines to secure as managers of stations men accredited as missionaries by these bodies, and, if possible, practically equipped for the peculiar work required by special training. The missionary with his Bible, and the influence for good which a Christian family dwelling in the midst of them must exercise over the natives, are essential, in the committee's judgment, for the success of any scheme that may be devised for the management of the Aborigines. The Gospel is the true civilizer, and only as the higher ends for which the Gospel is preached are kept in view will it take effect in the reformation of life and manners. A responsibility divided between two heads—one acting for the church and the other for the Government—might lead to collision and work much harm. The committee would, therefore, submit that the system which obtains at present at Ramahyuck, Lake Tyers, &c., by which the missionary acts as superintendent for the Board of Protectors, should be continued, and extended to the other stations, as the most favourable to discipline and the general success of these institutions. Under such an arrangement, it would be but equitable that, while the religious body appointing him should salary the missionary for his religious work, the Government Board should pay him for his duties as superintendent. To secure competent men for this twofold office, the committee would suggest that Mr. Hagenauer—and they mention him because they know that he has proved himself a successful missionary—be empowered to look out for suitable young men, whom he should train, say for two years, in the peculiar duties devolving on the manager of a mission station. The Government Board would have no difficulty, it is presumed, in arranging with the churches by whom Mr. Hagenauer is employed for the support and management of such a training institute. Eligible candidates could be found, it is hoped, in Victoria; but if not, application might be made to the Moravian Board of Missions.
- While a portion of the area of the station should be reserved for the good of the settlement as a whole, and farmed so that its produce should supply rations for the orphan children and the infirm, and yield money for the payment of wages and general expenses, a part should be divided into small farms, and an allotment assigned to each family, which they would be expected to till for their own support, with or without the help of their neighbours, as the case might require. There should also be a grazing outfield, on which the cottagers should have a few head of cattle as their private property, along with the herd and flock of the station. A system such as this—for which the people might be prepared by the gradual enlargement of their garden-plots—would be found, the committee believe, of great benefit in fostering that self-helpfulness and independence of character which it is so necessary to encourage among the Aborigines.
- The committee would farther suggest, as calculated to promote the same object, that the heads of families should elect annually one or two of their number to act as overseers in the management of the station, and as factors for the village community in the purchase and sale of stock and produce—all under the oversight of the superintendent. They would give the superintendent all the power he has at present, but would make it a special instruction to him to encourage the people, as far as possible, to manage their affairs for themselves.
- Such a plan as this, involving as it does no violent change on the system already in operation, is feasible, and, in the judgment of the committee, fitted to yield good results.
- With regard to the station in which the Presbyterian Church is more immediately interested, the committee would respectfully submit for the consideration of the Commission :—
1. Whether the section of land adjoining the mission station of Ramahyuck, purchased by Mr. Hagenauer to protect the station from the influence of undesirable neighbours, should not be taken off his hands and incorporated with the mission reserve?
 2. Whether a more liberal allowance for buildings, *e.g.*, for the erection of the boarding-house now in course of construction, and for the equipment of the station with such machinery as may be necessary for the development of profitable industries—*e.g.*, an engine to pump water from the Avon for the irrigation of the hop-plantation—might not be made to Ramahyuck from the annual vote?
 3. Whether the suggestion made above, as to the Government Board remunerating the missionary for his secular work, should not be forthwith carried into effect in Mr. Hagenauer's case on the ground of equity? The church would welcome an arrangement of this kind as calculated to enable her to extend her missionary operations among the Aborigines.
- J. Green** :—1st. Place all the stations in the hands of the Christian churches, from whom exact nothing but quarterly returns of Government supplies entrusted to them. 2ndly. The churches should be authorized to collect the wandering Aborigines; the Government, however, to pay the expense. If this be done, the Aborigines will, in the course of three years, be self-supporting communities. Coranderrk could, in less time, be made to support 400 or 500, or one-half of the whole Aboriginal population.
- W. E. Morris** (Honorary Secretary, Church of England Mission) :—They should be treated as at present on the mission stations—kindly, but firmly—be encouraged to industry and cleanliness, and be stimulated to rise above a mere animal existence by Christian precept and example.
- Dr. T. Embling** :—White people should cease to regard or speak to the blackfellow as though he were an inferior being; it greatly hinders any moral influence over them; they are as sensitive as we are, and know that they are almost helpless at our feet. Would place the suggested library at Framlingham wholly in the custody of the natives.

Question 13.—Can you give any information as to the Aborigines who are not at the stations; the number in your district, their condition and mode of obtaining a livelihood; and can you make any suggestions for the amelioration of their condition?

- F. Tozer** :—There are five or six, who obtain a livelihood by working on farms occasionally; and sometimes staying at the station.
- James Dawson** :—Only two Aboriginal old men now belonging to this district, and they are all well fed by kind friends.
- Alex. Dennis** :—There are about a dozen Aborigines in the locality, including two children. Most of them are given to drink; one, however, a half-caste, is married to a white woman, is a very well-behaved man, and supports himself independently of the Government. Another has saved money enough to buy an old horse and cart, with which he drives his lubra and children about from place to place.
- Charles Gray** :—Of the forty or fifty formerly supplied with rations here, there are only about eight left; a few have gone to Framlingham.
- Hugh L. McLeod** :—Cannot state their number. They are fed and clothed by the squatters. They will seldom work for the selectors, as they rarely get paid for their labour. They consider they have a right to be kept by the squatters, as they made their homes on the stations in the early days, before the time of the Central Board or the mission stations.
- P. Learmonth** :—Do not know of a single Aborigine in all the district, taking a radius of thirty miles.
- J. N. McLeod** :—There are two married couples without families, who have been banished from the station for a time for bad conduct; they are quite able to procure their own living, if they would only settle down to the light work they are capable of; they are troublesome on the station, and are better kept away.
- J. Ralston** :—There are at present in the locality ten men, three women, and three children; occasionally they collect in good numbers, this being an old haunt; they scatter to the neighbouring stations, where they get casual employment; some of them are good workmen, and keep others in rations by their earnings. Suggests a room being provided for the Aborigines in all towns having a medical man. At present, when ill, they go from bad to worse, without treatment; also, when visiting the towns, having no place to go to, they fall under the temptations of the public-houses. Also suggests the police being instructed to keep a sharp watch against the supply of liquor to Aborigines by publicans.
- James Finley** :—They mostly live on the rations supplied by the Government; a few of them work on the neighbouring stations; others hunt kangaroo and emu, and for any wild dogs they may kill they receive £1 each. As the country is being taken up by farmers, thinks it would be advisable to do away with the supply of rations through local guardians, and form a station for them on the Murray. Objects to the religion taught on the stations.
- Jos. C. Watson** :—The number is about twelve; most are old, and not fit for work, and have to be fed and clothed. Those who are fit for work do so for a few months in the year, and expect to be fed and clothed the remainder of the year. Doesn't think it advisable to alter their condition.
- H. H. Wettenhall** :—There are in the locality two men, two women, and four children; they are employed, and receive weekly wages and rations, and have comfortable cottages at the home station.
- L. Fawcett** :—There is a large number scattered along the Murray, probably two hundred or three hundred. They shear in the season, and live by fishing, &c., the rest of the year.
- C. M. Officer** :—There are not more than half a dozen of the Aborigines of the Wimmera (proper, not the electoral district which extends to Swan Hill) who are not at the Ebenezer station. They live on the charity of the settlers; has never known them to lack food or clothing.
- J. Miller** :—The number between Swan Hill and Wentworth is about one hundred, but of these, perhaps, half are natives of New South Wales. They earn their subsistence easily enough among the white population, but are rapidly dying out, through intemperance and its attendant evils.
- H. H. Halliday** :—Only two Aborigines in the district not on the station, both half-castes—a man who works with a farmer at twelve shillings a week, and a female who is a servant to a clergyman; both bear exemplary characters.
- The Rev. A. Mackie** :—There is an Aborigine (pure) working with a farmer near Lillydale, and children (of mixed extraction) living with a person at Healesville. The real natives require different treatment from the others.
- The Rev. U. Coombs** :—There are six natives in the neighbourhood who refuse to reside at the station; their habits and moral condition are degraded to the last degree. The improved condition of the station, and an improved public sentiment, would operate favourably upon these vagrant ones.
- B. Mogg** :—“I have ten old blacks on the station, and no rations for them.”
- Dr. Elmes** :—At every station wandering Aborigines should be able to obtain supplies of food, clothing, medicine, &c., gratis.
- J. Green** :—There are five hundred or six hundred wandering Aborigines, some sixty or seventy being children under fourteen years; they are principally on the Murray River. Most of them could easily be induced to join the stations; the unmarried men would be induced by the prospect of getting wives. The young men amongst these are generally employed on stations, and get good wages, but they spend nearly all in drink.
- W. E. Morris** (Honorary Secretary, Church of England Mission) :—If the numbers be sufficient in any locality to justify the formation of another station, one should be formed after the pattern of those at Lakes Wellington, Condah, Tyers, and Hindmarsh. In districts where the numbers are few, they should be removed to the stations, &c.

APPENDIX D.

REPORTS OF INSPECTORS OF SCHOOLS ON THE STATE SCHOOL AT THE
RAMAHYUCK ABORIGINAL STATION.

24th November 1870.

Inspected the school, and found present 23 children, all diligently occupied with the prescribed time-table. I should be glad to see a new structure put up in accordance with the Board's plans, and suitably furnished. So carefully taught a school is deserving of proper and convenient premises.

The drill and discipline are very good indeed ; and with respect to the results of the teaching, I note the following details :—

Class I.—Well taught generally.

„ II.—Very well taught, equal to a good Third Class.

I ought to add an expression of the great pleasure it gave me to hear the children, with good taste and excellent execution, giving several part songs, harmonized for two and three parts.

Great credit is due to the Rev. C. Kramer for the zeal and ability which he has shown in making such progress with pupils whose whole school term has not exceeded 21 months.

(Signed)

E. BRODRIBB, Inspector of Schools.

31st May 1871.

The very high opinion which I have previously expressed to the Board is not in any way lessened by the results of this inspection. In respect to tone, organization, and discipline, this school is really excellent. I find it a pleasure to inspect a school which, under peculiar disadvantages, is yet such a credit to my district.

E. BRODRIBB, Inspector.

14th November 1871.

The best methods of instruction are employed, and the children show most satisfactory attainments in all subjects. This is the only examination I have held at which no failures are recorded.

The writing merits special mention for its excellence ; and I am pleased to observe that the children not merely read accurately, but also understand and think about passages they read. The discipline is excellent.

CHARLES A. TOPP, Inspector.

10th June 1872.

The instruction is maintained at the high standard which has been noted at previous inspections. I have this morning put the children through a searching examination in reading, writing, and arithmetic, and find that a most satisfactory progress has been made, and that the attainments of the classes are rather beyond the requirements of the Board's programme. Discipline excellent.

CH. TOPP, Inspector.

25th October 1872.

The school has again passed an excellent examination. This is the first case, since the present result system has been in force, that 100 per cent. of marks has been gained by any school in the colony. The children show not only accuracy in their work, but also exhibit much intelligence. Excellent progress is shown. The discipline is very good.

CH. TOPP, Inspector.

3rd April 1873.

The instruction is excellent. Since my last visit a fifth class has been formed, and most of the children have advanced a class. Harry Flower (aged 15 years 2 months), Albert Darly (aged 11 years 1 month), Emily Wood (aged 13 years 1 month), have passed the standard of education. Discipline excellent.

CH. TOPP, Inspector.

2nd February 1874.

Class I, is well taught. Classes II., III., IV., V., are fully equal to programme. There is an excellent time-table, and the programme is observed. The instruction in all classes is good and thorough. The written exercises of the children are admirably performed, and the copy books are all that can be wished. Good order and discipline are maintained, and the care and earnestness of the teacher are well repaid by the progress of the pupils and the high tone of the school. Inspector's percentage 100 per cent.

JOSEPH BALDWIN, Inspector.

26th May 1874.

Visited the school incidentally. I beg to add my testimony to the thorough-going effectiveness shown in the management of this school.

J. S. ELKINGTON, Inspector of Schools.

School inspected and found excellent order ; percentage 95.

26th October 1874.

J. S. ELKINGTON, Inspector.

Classification good. This school is in first-rate order ; progress creditable.

25th May 1875.

J. S. ELKINGTON, Inspector.

Inspected school. As usual, in creditable order.

22nd October 1875.

J. S. ELKINGTON, Inspector.

APPENDIX E.

“Twenty years ago a *hapu*, in number just forty persons, removed their *kainga* from a dry healthy position to the edge of a *raupo* (swamp). I happened to be at the place a short time after the removal, and with me there was a medical gentleman who was travelling through the country. In creeping into one of the houses (the chief's) through the low door, I was obliged to put both my hands to the ground ; they both sank into the swampy soil, making holes which immediately filled with water. The chief and his family were lying on the ground on rushes, and a fire was burning, which made the little den, not in the highest place more than five feet high, feel like an oven. I called the attention of my friend to the state of this place called a ‘house.’ He merely said, ‘Men cannot live here.’ Eight years from that day the whole *hapu* were extinct.”—(“Old New Zealand.” London. Smith, Elder, and Co. 1863.)

APPENDIX F.

1876.

BOARD FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE ABORIGINES.

The Honorable the Chief Secretary, Chairman.
F. R. Godfrey, Esq., M.P., Vice-Chairman.

James MacBain, Esq., M.P.
The Honorable Theo. J. Sumner, J.P., M.L.C.
John Mackenzie, Esq., J.P.
Henry Jennings, Esq.
E. M. Curr, Esq.
W. Macredie, Esq., J.P.

John R. Hopkins, Esq., M.P.
David Thomas, Esq., M.P.
A. A. C. Le Souef, Esq., J.P.
Sherbourne Sheppard, Esq., J.P.
R. Brough Smyth, Esq. F.G.S., Lon.

LOCAL GUARDIANS OF ABORIGINES.

Argyle, S., Esq., Mount Hope
Andrews, Henry, Esq., Geelong
Baker, W. R. Cole, Esq., Wurrumbirchip
Campbell, Duncan, Esq., Lake Lalbert
Carr, Charles W., Esq., P.M., Avoca
Cooke, Cecil P., Esq., Lake Condah
Crespigny, P. C., Esq., P.M.
Dawson, James, Esq., Wuorong, Camperdown
Dennis, A., Esq., Birregurra
Fawsett, Sergt., Swan Hill
Garratt, J. M., Esq., M.P., Geelong
Gray, Charles, Esq., Nareeb Nareeb, Wycliffe
Hedley, G. D., Esq., M.D., Sale
Howitt, A. W., Esq., P.M., Bairnsdale
Jackson, J. H., Esq., Sandford
Jamieson, Hugh, Esq., Mildura. (Absent)
Ker, W. L., Esq., Killingworth, Yea
Lane, H. B., Esq., P.M., Belfast
Learmonth, Peter, Esq., Hamilton
Lloyd, W. H., Esq., Dimboola
Mackin, C. T., M.D., Esq., Geelong
Molloy, W. T., Esq., M.D., Hawthorn
Miller, Jno., Esq., Kulkynne
McLachlan, Ronald, Esq., River Avon. (Resides in Geelong)

McLeod, Jno., Esq., Lucknow, Gippsland
McLeod, Hugh L., Esq., Benyeo, Apsley
McLeod, J. N., Esq., Castlemaddie, Portland
McLeod, A. W., Esq., Bairnsdale, Gippsland
Mitchell, T., Esq.
Officer, C. M., Esq., Mount Talbot
Officer, S. H., Esq., Murray Downs
Randell, J., Esq., Mordialloc
Reed, David, Esq., The Hermitage, Belvoir
Ritchie, Jno., Esq., Boodcarra, Belfast
Rutherford, James, Esq., Ulupna, River Murray
Saunders, Jno., Esq., Bacchus Marsh
Scott, R. D., Esq., Camperdown
Scott, T. P., Esq., Lake Condah
Simmons, J. W., Esq., Swan Reach
Stanbridge, W. E., Esq., Wombat, Daylesford
Strutt, C. E., Esq., P.M., Heidelberg
Synnot, M., Esq., Terrick Terrick Station, Mount Hope District. (Resides in Melbourne)
Tozer, F., Esq., Wangoom, near Warrnambool
Wettenhall, H. H., Esq., Carr's Plains
Wilson, Alex., Esq., Vectis
Watson, J. C., Esq., West Charlton

HONORARY CORRESPONDENTS.

McEdwards, A., Esq., Mildura
Tone, Alex., Esq., Wangaratta
Finley, J., Esq., Towanninie
Mogg, B., Esq., Wurrumbirchip
Willis, E., Esq., Nareen

McKenzie, J., Esq., Wyuna
Purbrick, W. J., Esq., Mount Talbot
Carter, S., Esq., Glenisla
Ralston, J., Esq., Prospect, Casterton

RETURN showing the Number of Members of the Board for the Protection of the Aborigines and the Number of Members who attended each Meeting of the Board for the Years 1871 to 1876, both inclusive.

Date of Meeting.	No. of Members who Attended.	No. of Members of the Board.	Date of Meeting.	No. of Members who Attended.	No. of Members of the Board.	Date of Meeting.	No. of Members who Attended.	No. of Members of the Board.	Date of Meeting.	No. of Members who Attended.	No. of Members of the Board.
1871.			1872.			1874.			1875.		
27th January ...	4	11	5th November ...	..	10	7th August ...	4	10	10th November...	3	18*
7th March ...	3		6th December ...	3		14th August ...	5		1st December ...	5	
21st March ...	2		22nd December...	4		21st August ...	9		14th December ...	5	
4th April ...	1					4th September ...	1		21st December ...	4	
5th April ...	2		1873.			11th September	6				
3rd May ...	3		3rd January ...	..	10	18th September	5		1876.		
6th June ...	4		6th February ...	3		21st September	4		5th January ...	7	19†
13th June ...	4		7th March ...	4		25th September	4		12th January ...	5	
27th June ...	4		3rd April ...	2		2nd October ...	8		31st January ...	3	
24th July ...	3		6th May ...	4		23rd October ...	4		3rd February ...	6	
4th August ...	4		19th May ...	3		27th October ...	3		16th February ...	7	
18th August ...	4		3rd June ...	5		4th December ...	3		17th February ...	6	
6th September ...	4		4th July ...	3					18th February ...	7	
15th September ...	4		7th August ...	3		1875.			21st February ...	5	
6th October ...	4		4th September ...	3		8th January ...	4	13*	1st March ...	4	
3rd November ...	5		7th October ...	3		5th February ...	1		22nd March ...	5	
6th December ...	5		7th November ...	..		5th March ...	..		5th April ...	4	
			5th December ...	..		9th April ...	3		25th April ...	5	
1872.			9th December ...	4		7th May ...	3		3rd May ...	4	
4th January ...	4	10				4th June ...	2		17th May ...	4	
19th January ...	4		1874.			18th June ...	4		7th June ...	2	
2nd February ...	5		7th January ...	2	10	14th July ...	6		3rd July ...	5	
22nd February ...	6		16th January ...	..		4th August ...	4		31st July ...	5	
6th March ...	2		6th February ...	..		18th August ...	5		2nd August ...	4	
5th April ...	5		26th February ...	..		25th August ...	6		16th August ...	5	
6th May ...	4		6th February ...	..		1st September ...	..		6th September ...	6	
6th June ...	6		18th March ...	4		7th September ...	7		8th September ...	6	
2nd July ...	3		29th May ...	2		14th September...	4		4th October ...	4	
1st August ...	3		5th June ...	3		21st September...	6		1st November ...	4	
19th August ...	5		12th June ...	5		29th September...	4		6th December ...	..
6th September ...	3		3rd July ...	6		6th October ...	5		7th December ...	4	
3rd October ...	5		31st July ...	4		3rd November ...	2		12th December ...	5	

* One to 13th September only; three from 21st June only.

† One to 10th July 1876 only; one from 10th January 1877 only.

APPENDIX G.

VICTORIA. ANNO TRICESIMO TERTIO VICTORIÆ REGINÆ.
No. CCCXLIX.

An Act to provide for the Protection and Management of the Aboriginal Natives of Victoria.

[11th November 1869.]

BE it enacted by the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly of Victoria in this present Parliament assembled and by the authority of the same as follows (that is to say):—

1. Save where there is something in the context repugnant thereto or inconsistent therewith the following words shall have the respective meanings hereby assigned to them (that is to say):—

The word "Governor" shall mean the person administering the Government acting by and with the advice of the Executive Council.

The word "Minister" shall mean the responsible Minister of the Crown administering this Act.

The word "Board" shall mean the board for the protection of the Aborigines.

2. It shall be lawful for the Governor from time to time to make regulations and orders for any of the purposes hereinafter mentioned, and at any time to rescind or alter such regulations (that is to say):—

(i.) For prescribing the place where any Aboriginal or any tribe of Aborigines shall reside.

(ii.) For prescribing the terms on which contracts for and on behalf of Aborigines may be made with Europeans, and upon which certificates may be granted to Aborigines who may be able and willing to earn a living by their own exertions.

(iii.) For apportioning amongst Aborigines the earnings of Aborigines under any contract, or where Aborigines are located on a reserve, the net produce of the labor of such Aborigines.

(iv.) For the distribution and expenditure of moneys granted by Parliament for the benefit of Aborigines.

(v.) For the care custody and education of the children of Aborigines.

(vi.) For prescribing the mode of transacting the business of and the duties generally of the board or any local committee hereinafter mentioned and of the officers appointed hereunder.

And every such regulation or order shall be published in the *Government Gazette*, and any publication purporting to be a copy of the *Government Gazette* and containing any such regulation or order signed by the Minister shall be received in all courts of justice as evidence thereof.

3. There shall be in and for Victoria a board to be styled the "Board for the Protection of Aborigines," consisting of the Minister and such and so many persons as the Governor shall from time to time appoint to be members thereof, and the persons who at the passing of this Act shall be the members of the board for the protection of the Aborigines are together with the Minister hereby appointed the first members of such board. The Governor may from time to time appoint other persons either as additional members of or to supply any vacancies in the said board, and may remove any member whether by this Act appointed or hereafter to be appointed; Provided that in the absence of the Minister such member as shall be annually elected by the board as vice-chairman shall preside at the meetings of the board.

4. The Governor may from time to time appoint a local committee consisting of three persons to act in conjunction with the said board, and also officers to be called local guardians of Aborigines, and may also at any time abolish such local committee or remove any such member of a local committee or a local guardian; and such local committee or guardians shall perform the duties assigned to them respectively by this Act or any of the regulations to be made thereunder.

5. All bedding clothing and other articles issued or distributed to the Aborigines by or by the direction of the said board shall be considered on loan only and shall remain the property of Her Majesty, and it shall not be lawful for the Aborigines receiving such bedding clothing and other articles to sell or otherwise dispose of the same without the sanction of the Minister or such other person as the said regulations may direct.

6. If any person shall without the authority of a local guardian take whether by purchase or otherwise any goods or chattels issued or distributed to any Aboriginal by or by the direction of the said board (except such goods as such Aboriginal may be licensed to sell), or shall sell or give to any Aboriginal any intoxicating liquor except such as shall be *bonâ fide* administered as a medicine, or shall harbor any Aboriginal unless such Aboriginal shall have a certificate or unless a contract of service as aforesaid shall have been made on his behalf and be then in force, or unless such Aboriginal shall from illness or from the result of any accident or other cause be in urgent need of succour and such cause be reported in writing to the board or a local committee or local guardian or to a magistrate within one week after the need shall have arisen, or shall remove or attempt to remove or instigate any other person to remove any Aboriginal from Victoria without the written consent in that behalf of the Minister, every such person shall on conviction be liable to a penalty not exceeding Twenty pounds or in default to be imprisoned for any term not less than one month nor more than three months.

7. If any person shall violate the provisions of any regulation made under or in pursuance of this Act, or shall obstruct the board or local committee or any local guardian of Aborigines or other officer in the execution of his duty under this Act or the said regulations, every such person shall on conviction forfeit and pay any sum not exceeding Twenty pounds.

8. Every Aboriginal native of Australia and every Aboriginal half-caste or child of a half-caste, such half-caste or child habitually associating and living with Aborigines, shall be deemed to be an Aboriginal within the meaning of this Act; and at the hearing of any case the justice adjudicating may, in the absence of other sufficient evidence, decide on his own view and judgment whether any person with reference to whom any proceedings shall have been taken under this Act is or is not an Aboriginal.

9. All penalties under this Act may be enforced by summary proceeding before any justice.

REGULATIONS AND ORDERS MADE UNDER THE ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE ABORIGINAL NATIVES OF VICTORIA.

At the Executive Council held at Melbourne the 13th day of February 1871.

PRESENT :

Sir J. McCulloch | His Excellency the Governor
Mr. Wrixon.

WHEREAS by the 2nd section of the Act of the Parliament of Victoria numbered 349, intituled *An Act to provide for the Protection and Management of the Aboriginal Natives of Victoria*, it is amongst other things enacted that it shall be lawful for the Governor from time to time to make regulations and orders for any of the purposes hereinafter mentioned, and at any time to rescind or alter such regulations, that is to say—

I. For prescribing the place where any aboriginal or any tribe of aborigines shall reside.

II. For prescribing the terms on which contracts for and on behalf of aborigines may be made with Europeans, and upon which certificates may be granted to aborigines who may be able and willing to earn a living by their own exertions.

- III. For apportioning amongst aboriginals the earnings of aboriginals under any contract, or where aboriginals are located on a reserve the net produce of the labor of such aboriginals.
 IV. For the distribution and expenditure of moneys granted by Parliament for the benefit of aborigines.
 V. For the care, custody, and education of the children of aborigines.
 VI. For prescribing the mode of transacting the business of, and the duties generally of the Board, or any local committee hereinafter mentioned, and of the officers appointed hereunder.

Now therefore His Excellency the Governor, by and with the advice of the Executive Council, doth make the following Regulations and Orders, in which the words "Governor" and "Board" are intended to have the meaning attached to them by the Act :—

(I.) PLACES OF RESIDENCE.

1. Provision will be made by the Board for the residence of aboriginals and tribes of aboriginals at the following places :—

Coranderrk.
 Lake Wellington,
 Lake Tyers,
 Lake Condah,
 Framlingham,
 Lake Hindmarsh.

(II.)—CONTRACTS AND CERTIFICATES.

2. No contract with any aboriginal for any service or employment for a longer period than three months shall be of any validity as against such aboriginal, or as an exemption from the penalty imposed by section 6 of the Act, unless such contract shall have been approved by the Board, or the aboriginal shall at the making and during the continuance thereof, hold a subsisting certificate to be issued as hereinafter provided; but this regulation shall in no way affect the validity of any such contract as against the person entering into it with the aboriginal.

3. Any person desiring the approval of the Board to any such contract, shall apply therefore by transmitting to the local guardian or other authorized agent of the Board in or nearest to the district in which the applicant resides, an application signed by him in the subjoined form (hereinafter referred to as the contract) :—

Contract submitted for the approval of the Board for the Protection of the Aborigines.

Particulars of Contract.

Name, residence, and occupation of employer.
 Name of aboriginal.
 Nature of work or service to be performed.
 Date from which service under the contract is to commence or has commenced.
 Money payment as wages or otherwise, and the time or times when payable under the contract.
 Rations (if any) to be given in addition to money payment (if any), and quantity and quality of rations agreed to be supplied.
 Name and address to which the applicant desires communications in reference to this application to be posted.
 Date of application.

Signature of applicant.

4. The local guardian or other authorized agent of the Board, after making such enquiries as he or they may think necessary to enable him or them to judge of the propriety of approving the contract, shall forward the same with his or their opinion thereon to the Board.

5. The Board, if satisfied of the propriety of approval, will cause their approval, signed by the secretary, to be endorsed on the contract, and will return the same to the local guardian or committee, and post a copy thereof with such approval endorsed to the address mentioned in the contract.

6. The Board may modify any such contract at the time of approving the same by directing all or any part of the money payment payable to the aboriginal to be made to some local guardian or other person specified in that behalf instead of to the aboriginal himself, and shall in such case endorse such direction in manner hereinbefore provided with respect to their approval; and after the time at which the approved contract so modified would in course of post have reached the address given in the contract, the contractor shall not be entitled to credit under the contract for any payment so directed to be made unless made as directed.

7. Any money to be received in pursuance of any such direction shall be applied at the discretion of the receiver for the benefit of the aboriginal or of any member of his family, subject to any express direction given by the Board, and shall in every case be accounted for to the Board as hereinafter directed, or upon application by the secretary at any time.

8. The Board may, at their discretion, grant to any aboriginal able and willing to earn a living by his own exertions, a certificate in the subjoined form signed by the secretary, which certificate shall not remain in force for more than six months from its date, or the date of its last renewal; and any such unexpired certificate may be renewed for six months by the endorsement of the date of renewal, and signature of any member of the Board, local guardian, or member of a local committee who, in the exercise of his discretion, shall think fit to renew the same.

Certificate under the Aborigines Protection Act.

This certificate was issued on the _____ day of _____ 18____ to an aboriginal named _____ aged about _____, height about _____, and known or distinguishable by the following peculiarities [state if any], he having represented himself as able and willing to earn a living by his own exertions.

The effect of this certificate, while in force, is as follows :—

It authorizes him to enter into a binding contract of service for any time during which this certificate remains in force. It permits a European to harbor him without incurring any penalty.

It does not authorize any person to sell or give him any intoxicating drink or affect the penalty for so doing, or confer any other exemption from penalties under the said Act.

This certificate will not remain in force after the _____ day of _____ 18____, unless renewed in the meantime by the date of renewal, and signature of some member of the Board for the Protection of Aborigines, local guardian, or member of local committee being written thereon; and it will not remain in force after six months from the date of the last renewal.

Secretary to the Board for the Protection of Aborigines.

(III.)—APPORTIONMENT OF EARNINGS.

9. Where a number of aboriginals are located on a reserve, and where they cultivate fields and gardens, or raise and keep live stock, or otherwise, by their labors, produce marketable goods, the Board may, from time to time, order the sale of any produce or live stock or goods, and out of the net proceeds of sale pay to the aboriginals who have labored on the reserve such sums as the Board may deem right, having regard to the kind and amount of labor performed by each.

(IV.)—DISTRIBUTION AND EXPENDITURE OF MONEYS.

10. In the third month of every year, or so soon after as practicable, the Board shall submit for approval by the Governor a statement showing in detail the quantities of the rations, clothes, medicines, live stock, and other things which they propose to distribute amongst or employ for the benefit of aboriginals for the ensuing twelve months, and an estimate of the amount to be expended in the purchase and carriage thereof, and of the amount to be expended in salaries and wages, and travelling and other expenses for the like period.

11. Once in every year the Board shall submit to the Governor a statement for the past year, showing in detail the quantities of the several things distributed, and the quantity remaining on hand, and the amount of actual expenditure in salaries, wages, travelling and other expenses for the like period.

12. Every local committee, local guardian, or other person entrusted by the Board with the distribution of any stores or other things, or the application of any moneys received from the Board, or from the employer of any aboriginal, shall furnish the Board with a monthly statement in detail of all stores and other things received and distributed, and of all moneys received and disbursed, and showing the balances on hand of stores or other things, and of moneys unexpended up to, and inclusive of, the last day of each calendar month.

(V.)—CUSTODY OF CHILDREN.

13. The Governor may order the removal of any aboriginal child neglected by its parents, or left unprotected, to any of the places of residence specified in Regulation I. or to an industrial or reformatory school.*

(VI.)—SECRETARY.

14. The person who at the passing of these regulations shall be acting as secretary of the Board is hereby appointed the secretary.

(VII.)—MODE OF TRANSACTING BUSINESS

15. An ordinary meeting of the Board shall be held in the first week of every month, on a day to be named by the vice-chairman.

16. A special meeting may be convened at any time by the secretary.

17. Three members of the Board shall form a quorum.

18. The secretary, or one of the members acting as secretary, shall keep minutes of the proceedings at each meeting, which shall, if correct, be confirmed at the next meeting.

19. The directions of the Board to its officers shall be given through the secretary, or, in his absence, in such manner as the Board may think right, and the secretary, or acting secretary, shall conduct all correspondence and certify all accounts approved of by the Board.

And the Honorable Sir James McCulloch, Her Majesty's Chief Secretary for Victoria, shall give the necessary directions herein accordingly.

J. H. KAY,
Clerk of the Executive Council.

IN pursuance of the provisions of the Act intituled *An Act to provide for the Protection and Management of the Aboriginal Natives of Victoria* (No. 349, § 2), the Governor, with the advice of the Executive Council, has rescinded the 14th and 19th of the Regulations bearing date the 13th of February 1871, and published in the *Government Gazette* of the 24th of February 1871 (pages 338, 339.)

JOHN A. MACPHERSON,
Chief Secretary.

Chief Secretary's Office, Melbourne, 6th March 1876.

* By the Act 349 the following are deemed aboriginals:—“Every aboriginal native of Australia, and every aboriginal half-caste or child of a half-caste, and every half-caste or child habitually associating and living with aboriginals, shall be deemed to be an aboriginal within the meaning of this Act; and at the hearing of any case the justice adjudicating may, in the absence of other sufficient evidence, decide on his own view and judgment whether any person with reference to whom any proceedings shall have been taken under this Act is or is not an aboriginal.”