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1900.

QUEENSLAND.

REPORT OF THE NORTHERN PROTECTOR OF ABORIGINALS
FOR 1899.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command.

TO THE UNDER SECRETARY, HOME SECRETARY'S DEPARTMENT.

Office of the Northern Protector,
Cooktown, 1st July, 1900.

SIR,—Owing to the large amount of police action required in connection with the Northern blacks, my operations were originally carried on under the direction of the Commissioner of Police, but about last October, in view of his ever-increasing duties, Mr. W. E. Parry-Okeden found himself reluctantly compelled to relinquish his supervision. The administration of the Act in the Northern districts of the colony has accordingly devolved upon the Northern Protector of Aborigines, acting directly under the instructions of the Minister, and I now have the honour to hand you my annual report on the results of its operation as follows :—

According to the returns furnished me by the various officers in charge, the following permits were entered in the local registers during the twelve months ending 30th June, 1900 :—Normanton, 303 ; Townsville, 50 ; Cooktown, 239 ; Thursday Island (the number of discharges at the shipping office), 241 ; Charters Towers, 24 ; Mackay, 55 ; Coen, 112 ; Cairns, 92. Permits and agreements.

Sub-Inspector Garraway, in the Coen and surrounding districts, reports that there are many blacks who do not like being put under agreement, and many employers who also object to this being made compulsory. A great deal has been left to the tact and judgment of the local protectors in this respect, and with excellent results, especially in dealing with "casual" (*e.g.*, cutting a little firewood, &c.) as compared with "permanent" employment ; in the latter case agreements are insisted upon. The protectors do not wish to hamper the legitimate employment of aborigines, but rather to put down abuses, and with this object in view I trust that the powers already conferred on them, and which are never unnecessarily exercised, will not be abrogated in any future legislative measures. I am well aware that all the different tribes of aborigines in the Northern portions of the colony—from Cape York to Mackay, from the east coast to the Northern Territory border—cannot be ruled on one and the same hard-and-fast principle, and that a great deal must be left to the good sense and discretion of the individual officers in charge.

All blacks from the Northern Territory of South Australia, who for the time being are within Queensland territory, are considered to be "aborigines" within the meaning of our Act.

For many reasons I am strongly adverse to any Chinese and other coloured aliens employing aborigines, especially when the blacks can obtain equally good employment elsewhere. On the other hand, I cannot conscientiously, on the racial account only, refuse any such respectable and law-abiding citizens the right to work them. I have every confidence that in leaving this matter in the hands of the protectors, who, according to the regulations, are now acting as my assistants and deputies, there will be no necessity for the introduction of a clause to that effect in any future amending Act.

It has been realised in many cases that the binding down of an aboriginal to a twelve months' continuous service, especially where the labour necessitates prolonged physical exertion, is unsatisfactory. The cutting down of the articles to six months at the Thursday Island Shipping Office has resulted in a diminution of the number of desertions. So, again, in the employment of aborigines on the mainland, an agreement limiting the service to even nine months gives the boy an opportunity of going away for his annual "walk about," whence he returns content and refreshed for the following season's work. Length of service.

When the Act first came into force up here in the North great care was taken that no trouble or complaint should arise concerning the amount of wages to be paid by the employer. On behalf of the aboriginal, I looked rather to the comforts of a home, coupled with considerate treatment, than to pecuniary emoluments. Facts, however, have since prompted me to believe that the trust, implied by the execution of these intentions, has been abused by not a few of the employers who have obtained The question of wages.

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aboriginal labour without return of any money-payment whatsoever. The attractions of a store and the prospect of a little cash to spend in it prove no small source of encouragement to a black, and I certainly am of opinion that in this respect the Queensland native should be put on an equal level with the kanaka, and a minimum wage legally fixed. For boys signing articles at Thursday Island, a minimum wage of 10s. a month has been insisted on for some time past. At the shipping office here, the Hon. John Douglas has for long authorised that the boys' wages, when paid, should be handed over in their presence to the care of the police, with a view to seeing that they were spent to the best advantage.

No women, and no children under puberty, have been allowed to be carried on the boats, and on this point my instructions have been very emphatic.

Female
aboriginal
labour.

The grant of
food and other
relief.

In addition to the work carried on by the Mission and stations in the way of distributing rations to those aboriginals unable to provide for themselves, the Government have established various food-relieving centres in different parts of the Northern districts of the colony. These centres, with the amount of regular monthly expenditure authorised at each, may be tabulated as follows:—

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Atherton	5	0	0	Mareeba	6	10	0
Boggy Creek (Butcher's Hill)	4	0	0	Maytown	2	0	0
Bowen and Dent Island ...	4	10	0	Mein	5	0	0
Cardwell	2	10	0	Moreton	5	0	0
Coen	5	0	0	Musgrave and Laura ...	5	0	0
Daintree	3	0	0	Palmer	5	0	0
Irvinebank and Nigger Creek	5	0	0	Thornborough	5	8	0
Kuranda	8	6	8	Thursday Island	5	0	0
Macdonnell	3	0	0				

I have given instructions that these amounts are not to be exceeded without my knowledge and authority. All such aboriginal relief is now distributed under the personal supervision of the police, or, as at Macdonnell, Moreton, and Daintree, by the post and telegraph officials. Since the passing of the Act, and previous to this superintendence by Government officials, two cases have come to my knowledge where the trust imposed on private individuals in the distribution of rations to blacks was grossly perverted. The officials now responsible have been impressed with the importance of rendering assistance only to those aboriginals who, owing to extreme old age, or youth, infirmity, disease, and other good causes, are precluded from obtaining food for themselves. The supply of rations in cases of sickness is referred to elsewhere.

In a few cases relief in some form or another may be supplied for conciliatory and other purposes, thus: £1 per month has been allowed to the Cooktown Eight-mile Native Police and Bloomfield patrols for the purchase of beads and tobacco. So, again, during the past month the local police have been looking after the interests of the blacks in the neighbourhood of Cooktown—the same aboriginals who, for reasons stated elsewhere, it has been recently deemed advisable to permanently keep out of the township.

With regard to the distributions at one or two of the above-mentioned food-relieving centres, I may mention a few items of interest. At Moreton I found a very good system whereby, in the absence of dates, the savages up there manage to come in regularly on one and the same occasion: they are taught to put in an appearance when the moon is at the full. The telegraph officer in charge here, Mr. P. S. Lindeman, writes to me (7-5-00) as follows:—"Everything is progressing satisfactorily with the aboriginals. The monthly bullock in the wet season, and flour in the dry months, is a great treat, and also tends towards establishing friendly relations between the different tribes. Some of the blacks who meet each other here and spend a friendly evening together, eating, singing, and smoking most amicably, would have fought and eaten each other on sight a few years ago. Tomahawks and fishing-lines, supplied by Government, enable them to greatly increase their natural food supplies, and I think that the aboriginals about here are in a much better condition to-day than they were even three years ago." At Macdonnell, the next telegraph station, another sixty miles further north, there are about 150 blacks, who keep fairly well to themselves, although the natives from both west and east coasts find their way there, and sometimes cause trouble. The nature of the country around being all desert, no large game is procurable, and fish is not obtainable in the vicinity. It thus happened that these blacks were often starved, and owing to the tribal disturbances consequent on any breaches in the nature of trespass, &c., dared not go down to either coast. No wonder, then, that Mr. M. Haskett is now able to report on the "beneficial results" which have followed on the inauguration of a food-distributing centre here.

The advance of white settlement in the more outlying districts will gradually necessitate an increased expenditure for rations, a fact with the importance of which I am becoming more and more impressed. As each new block of country becomes taken up, the blacks are forcibly hunted from off their water supplies and hunting grounds both in it and in its immediate neighbourhood. According to their own laws of trespass they are prevented seeking fresh pastures, except at the cost of fighting; they have learnt by sad experience that the spearing of cattle is a risky matter; and they will thus, unless we allow them to starve, ultimately come to be a charge upon the State. Sub-Inspector Garraway, while warning the blacks about killing cattle on the Lower Palmer, &c., last year, was thus forced to promise them relief when they came in and asked for it.

According to regulations, I am regularly furnished with a monthly collective return of all these distributions of Government relief to aboriginals. I have recommended an alteration in the present method of payment of the corresponding vouchers.

Blanket
distribution

For the first time, all blankets have this year been distributed throughout the northern districts of the colony by the police only; the few exceptions were in the case of two or three of the Mission stations. In reply to a circular despatched at the end of last August, the various inspectors of police, as protectors, forwarded me returns of their blanket requirements for the present year; they were each asked to furnish the names of the different centres in their respective districts at which they proposed

making a distribution, the lowest estimate of blankets required at each such centre, and the approximate dates on which they proposed that such distributions should be made. The following list of requirements came to hand :—

Townsville (E) Police District.			Cairns (F) Police District.			Normanton (G) Police District.		
Where, When, and No. Required.			Where, When, and No. Required.			Where, When, and No. Required.		
Townsville	(1-5-00) ...	150	Cairns	(1-4-00) ...	900	Normanton	(1-5-00) ...	200
Ayr	(10-4-00) ...	80	Atherton	" ...	250	Burketown	" ...	100
Bowen	(1-5-00) ...	164	Cooktown	" ...	1,250	Camooweal	" ...	100
Cardwell	" ...	200	Herberton	" ...	350	Charleston	" ...	50
Charters Towers	" ...	105	Port Douglas	" ...	275	Cloncurry	" ...	100
Eton	" ...	25	Geraldton	" ...	250	Croydon	" ...	100
Halifax	" ...	50	Thornborough	" ...	120	Georgetown	" ...	100
Ingham	" ...	330	Thursday Is.	" ...	200	Golden Gate	" ...	50
Mackay	" ...	50				Gregory Downs	" ...	50
Mirani	" ...	25				Junction Creek	" ...	50
Nebo	" ...	70				Lawn Hills	" ...	100
Walkerston	" ...	12				Mackinlay	" ...	50
Proserpine	" ...	25				Percyville	" ...	50
Ravenswood	" ...	50				Turn-Off Lagoon	" ...	100
Total	...	1,336	Total	...	3,590	Total	...	1,200

These returns, making a grand total of 6,126 blankets required, were then sent on to the Home Secretary, and his instructions carried out by the Government Storekeeper. That this method of procedure proved practicable and satisfactory may be gauged from the fact that only one complaint reached me as to their non-arrival up to date.

It will be noted that the dates of distribution recommended by the protectors did not correspond: this was necessitated by varying conditions of climate and was antagonistic to the old idea of issuing them— independently of the local seasons—all on the same occasion, the Queen's Birthday. Personally, I might be allowed to take the opportunity of expressing the opinion that this annual gift of blankets to aboriginals is in many cases a misplaced charity, that its promiscuous grant should not be looked upon as a matter of right, but regarded rather in the light of a medical adjunct and comfort for the aged, the young, and the sick. I am accordingly impressing upon the local protectors of the more outlying districts the expediency of discouraging the able-bodied aboriginals not yet accustomed to them from applying "to the Government" for these articles. Of course, at the present time blankets are distributed only to such blacks as are not in regular employment; and I certainly would not recommend any stoppage of the supply to those who have thus become regularly used to them. I recognise, furthermore, that the promiscuous gift of blankets in past years has tended to the utter disuse of the native-made opossum-skin and bark-cloth rugs: during the past seven or eight years I have not come across a single specimen of the former, and but with only a few of the latter. Again, up in the Coen, &c., districts of the Peninsula, it is of interest to note the concurrence of view of Sub-Inspector Garraway, the local protector, with that of Sergeant Whiteford, who, in this matter of blankets, expresses himself as follows:—"The blacks up here would be nearly as well off without a blanket as with one; in fact, in most cases now, the blacks who do receive blankets either throw them away or get rid of them before they have had them a month."

I would recommend that for the future the Government Storekeeper be instructed to supply an aboriginal blanket which will be immediately distinguishable in colour from any others supplied to remaining Government departments, and easily recognisable from those in ordinary use among the general public: furthermore, the lettering of the Government brand, the "Q.G.," should be indelibly stamped thereon, and not woven or threaded in as at present.

At Cairns, two individuals were charged with being in illegal possession of blacks' blankets.

On the eastern coast of the Peninsula, from its northern extremity to a long way down—certainly as far as the Thursday Island recruiters would care to go—the aboriginals are, speaking only as a matter of comparison, able to take care of themselves. I do not imply that they are on as high a scale of civilisation as the Torres Strait islanders, but having been so long used to the presence of the boats, they know what drink is; they recognise and appreciate the monetary value of their women; they suffer markedly with venereal disease; they have picked up the vices of their visitors, with the result that they are rapidly diminishing in numbers; and, from a practical point of view, too much "protection" on my part, though checking abuses, will probably not prove of much permanent benefit to them.

On the western coast of the Peninsula I recognise three distinct recruiting areas, each requiring separate notice:—The 1st, from the Cape to Port Musgrave; the 2nd, from Port Musgrave to Albatross Bay (Duyphen Point); the 3rd, from Albatross Bay to beyond the mouth of the Archer River. The present consideration of the first may be dismissed for the reason that the same remarks as have already been referred to the aboriginals of the east coast apply with equal force to the blacks on this portion of coast line.

With regard to the third, I may mention that the natives here are mostly "myalls" not too safe to travel amongst, and that in the absence of contact with civilising influences they can neither understand nor speak English; consequently no recruits are obtainable here except by stratagem. It simply means that if unscrupulous people remove boys from here, the next to come will run greater chances of meeting with outrage. Being, therefore, only too anxious to take every precaution to prevent such occurrences, I have taken the safest means at my disposal to remove all those causes which I know from experience to be likely to give rise to reprisals. The recruiting in this particular area has accordingly been practically put a stop to.

The second and main recruiting area, especially in its relations to the two adjoining Mission Stations, Mapoon and Weipa, has occupied my grave anxiety and attention. From 24th September to 8th November of last year (1899), I spent my time in inspecting both this particular portion of coast line—*i.e.*, from Port Musgrave to Albatross Bay—as well as its hinterland, drawing up a scientific report on its inhabitants, especially those in the neighbourhood of Mapoon, and obtaining from every available source any and all information bearing on the methods and practices of the recruiting system.

The difficulties with which the Hon. John Douglas had had to contend in attempting to remedy the abuses which had time after time arisen here under the system in vogue, must have been enormous. He had already instructed that all people recruiting here were to produce the written approval of Rev. N. Hey, the missionary at Mapoon, when bringing the boys up to Thursday Island for signing on articles; he had stipulated that aboriginals were not to be worked on the boats for periods longer than six months at a time; he had spared no efforts in the attempt to get the boys returned to their native homes on expiry of their articles; he had arranged for the proper expenditure of their wages. From a legal point of view, unfortunately, much of the Government Resident's humanitarian action was *ultra vires*, and so it came to pass that his confidence in the recruiters became grossly abused, and his voluntarily self-imposed labours in the interests of the aboriginals practically emasculated. Cases occurred in which boys were signed on without the letter; others, where they had been taken from their homes without either the knowledge or consent of the missionaries, and slipped past the island without being signed on. Often, the blacks were never returned at all. For instance, on the 4th November, 1899, I reported from Mapoon as follows: "*Eyre* was taken from here on 27th September, 1898, by C— L—, a South Sea Islander. He was just about the age for leaving school, and was at the time coming along the coast from Weipa with a message of Rev. E. Brown's for Mapoon. Mrs. W. met him at the beginning of the present year at Thursday Island, when he told her how he wanted to come home again. He has not come yet." "*Bob* was taken away by H— L—, a European, on 1st January, 1898. This child was but a schoolboy at the time. His mother anxiously awaits his return." "*Harry*, a child eleven years of age, was taken away three years ago. His parents also want him back, but, as the individual who removed him is unknown, his whereabouts cannot be traced." "*Treacle* was stolen from here in 1895 when a lad of twelve or thirteen years of age, attending school." Again, where the employers refused to send the boys home again, after being signed off at the Thursday Island shipping office, these were left stranded there, and thus practically forced to reshipe. But this was not all, for when the boy did ultimately succeed in reaching home he rarely had anything adequate to show as the result of his many months' labour. He might possibly have a bag of flour, a tomahawk, some clay pipes, a pound of tobacco, a cheap blanket, and a pair of trousers; but this was the rare exception, for the supply of goods which was usually brought back would be dear at 20s. [N.B.—These boys were signed on at a minimum wage of 10s. per month.]

Concerning the circumstances connected with the actual recruiting of the boys in this same district, I found that, under pressure from the old men, many of them were being bought and sold like so many sheep. The value locally of such a boy was a bag of flour and a pound of tobacco: at Thursday Island it was about 30s., the price which, as far as I could ascertain, was paid to the recruiting agent by the owner on whose boat the lad would then be shipped. The additional hardship lay in the fact that it was not the young recruits who obtained the flour, &c., but the old men, they bringing the pressure to bear in getting the younger folk to ship: the corollary was that, in their absence, the old people got the pick of the women left behind, an occurrence which always gave rise to subsequent quarrelling. Indeed, it was to the personal and selfish interest of the aged males that the younger ones should be kept out of the way as long as possible. I personally obtained absolute proofs (already reported) that boys were thus being recruited against their will.

The continual presence of these recruiters on this particular portion of coast line—eleven boats visited at Mapoon during my fortnight's stay there—was also having a demoralising effect on the aboriginal women; these creatures used similarly to be bought, for temporary use, flour and tobacco being again brought into requisition. Not only were the coloured alien employers evil in this respect, but even those in the services of Europeans: a South Sea Islander, the agent for one of the large pearling fleets, was caught and reported to the authorities only a few months previous to my visit. European employers could also be included in the category of individuals guilty in this respect: J— N— had women on board his boat one night that I was there. Within the space of a very few days, I caught two South Sea Islanders roaming about the Mission Reserve with firearms, and a Manilla man shooting within the precincts of the blacks' camp.

As the result of careful investigation among the blacks—still referring to those inhabiting this same portion of coast line—I found that the pearling and *bêche-de-mer* industries, as formerly carried on, had been proving injurious to the aboriginal population in two ways: directly, in the high mortality amongst the younger males engaged on the boats, and indirectly in removing any chances of increasing the already low birth rate amongst the women left behind. Thus, the following are cases of deaths all within eight weeks after the boys' return from the boats, which may be considered to be directly attributable to the life and exposure:—

Boy.	Returned.	Subsequent Death.
Kidai	January, 1897	2 weeks
Dick I.	October ,,	8 ,,
Joce	November ,,	7 ,,
Pigeon... ..	December ,,	6 ,,
Jack	March, 1898	5 ,,
Doctor... ..	April ,,	4 ,,
Wallaroo	July ,,	8 ,,
Dick II.	September ,,	7 ,,

All these boys were apparently in sound health at the time they were originally signed on, and, with one exception, were well under twenty years of age. The symptoms were in common: general emaciation, pains in the back and chest, coughing, and the spitting of blood. In case my statement should be challenged that these deaths were due to the causes assigned—*i.e.* to the exposure and general life led on the boats—I would submit that no deaths with similar duration, symptoms, &c., have occurred here in either sex at corresponding ages. Furthermore in 1899, when the recruits were not allowed to be shipped at so early an age as was formerly customary, no deaths from similar causes occurred.

It is now a matter for sincere congratulation that since the appointment of the Missionaries-in-charge as Superintendents of the Mapoon and Weipa Reserves, and the induction of a Protector of Aborigines at Thursday Island, that at least an improvement is noticeable in the condition of affairs above alluded to. Mr. G. H. Bennett, the local protector, is keeping a sharp lookout for any abuses on the boats during his periodical trips, especially by seeing that the crews are all legally engaged and well fed, by attending to any complaints that may be made, and insisting that no women shall be carried. He tells me that owing to his determination of limiting the articles to a maximum of six months, there has been a marked decrease in the number of desertions. Other checks on the occurrence of abuses amongst the aborigines employed on boats down the eastern coast of the Peninsula will be offered by the supervision with the patrol boat now in course of construction.

Further legislation, however, on the lines laid down by the Home Secretary in his Aborigines Protection Amending Bill of last session, is urgently required, and I accordingly beg to respectfully refer the whole matter of the employment of aborigines on boats to his earnest and kindly consideration.

In one or two of the Northern townships the supplying of grog to the blacks has become a standing disgrace. At Thursday Island, Protector Bennett, under date of 1st July, 1900, reports that "the sale of liquor to aborigines is practically open and undisguised, and is a source of serious injury to the men themselves and of danger to the community." For your information, I may point out that there are individuals and companies here having interests in the pearling and bêche-de-mer boats as well as, directly and indirectly, in the sale of liquor, wholesale and retail. At Cooktown, the scandal became so bad at last that it was deemed advisable to permanently keep the non-employed blacks out of the township, whence they had been previously removed, owing to the late plague scare, at the instigation of the municipal council. It is on record that, "in February, 1885, the Cooktown Council endeavoured to get the blacks excluded from the town at night, and afterwards also in the daytime." This present action is in sympathy with the wishes of the more enlightened of the blacks themselves. At the beginning of last year, upon the occasion of the death of an aborigine, when drunk, by drowning—the seventh case of death caused by drink amongst the local blacks during the past few years—the relatives and children of some three or four men (*Kalkadu, Bedford, Sugar, &c.*), who were too weak to withstand the many chances and temptations of obtaining liquor in Cooktown, appealed to me to have them kept out. On the other hand, it is only fair to state that there are a few places, like Camooweal, Cloncurry, &c., which are comparatively free from the evil. The only means at present at my disposal for dealing with the abuse, in the case of publicans, is to instruct the local protectors to refuse them permission to employ any blacks whatever, except under very exceptional circumstances, which are to be reported to me. This procedure has already been followed at Cooktown, with beneficial results. The intentions of the Legislature had been stultified here by the action of the local bench, which, within a space of about five months, imposed fines of only £3, £4, and £3, respectively, in three successive cases where hotel-keepers had pleaded guilty to the charge of supplying liquor to aborigines.

As in the case of alcohol, I cannot, in the absence of any definite and regular returns of charges and convictions, draw any conclusions as to the probable increase or decrease of this infamous traffic. That the practice is still prevalent may be gauged from the following facts:—During the past twelve months, in the Croydon sub-district, there have been seven cases against Chinese for supplying opium, all with convictions, and fines amounting to £144 5s. imposed; in the Mackay sub-district there were three convictions, totalling fines of £30; at Cairns there were eight charges on this count, &c. I sincerely regret, on behalf both of the Europeans and the blacks, that the drastic provisions of the opium clauses in the Aborigines Protection Act, 1897, have been rendered inoperative; at the same time I fully appreciate the difficulties of the Executive in dealing with an import which at present means an addition of over £30,000 to the general revenues of the colony.

The most important innovation so far in the management of the Mission Stations has been the inauguration, at the instance of the Home Secretary, of the provisional school system. With this object in view, teachers have been appointed by the aborigines' department at Weipa, Mapoon, Cape Bedford, and Yarrabah. Except at Cape Bedford, for which a lady was specially selected, the missionaries have qualified for these positions after rendering themselves familiar, by a short practical experience at various State schools, with the methods of the Education Department. The Home Secretary, however, has no intention of interfering with their religious teaching so long as sufficient prominence is given to elementary secular subjects to the approval of an inspector. [Incidentally, it may be mentioned that in the Torres Strait, provisional school teachers have been appointed at Murray, Yam, Mabuig or Jervis, Badu, York, and Darnley Islands.]

In order to bring those missionaries working outside the pale of civilisation, in the Northern confines of the colony, into touch with the authorities, &c., arrangements have been made for the fortnightly delivery of mails on the Embley River for Weipa, while a temporary bi-monthly trip of the "White Star" has been kindly promised to the Batavia River for Mapoon.

The gentlemen in charge of all the Mission Stations have been appointed superintendents of reserves under the Aborigines Act over the respective areas on which they labour.

Superintendent.	Reserve.	Government Gazette.
Brown, Edwin	"Weipa," Embley and Mission Rivers	4-11-99
Freiboth, Christof	"Marie Yamba," Andromache River	11-11-99
Gribble, Ernest R. B.	"Yarrabah," Cape Grafton	4-11-99
Hey, Nicholas	"Mapoon," Batavia River	4-11-99
Poland, Wilhelm	Cape Bedford	4-11-99
Schwarz, Georg H.		

This action was necessitated on account of the abuses consequent upon the stubborn determination of many undesirable characters to enter and remain in these reserves, notably the timber-getters at Yarrabah, the cattle men at Cape Bedford, and the recruiters of black labour at Mapoon and Weipa. At Yarrabah these people continue (1st July, 1900) to be a source of grave anxiety to the missionaries, especially as they are working in the close vicinity to where some small farms are being laid out for the married people. Trouble was also courted on this station through the fishermen to whom licenses for traps in the Mission Bay were granted by the local authorities; the result was that certain blacks in their employ brought opium and grog into the reserve. To remedy this latter evil, the Mission boys, out of

their own earnings, purchased the whole plant of these individuals, and thus came into possession of the boatshed, tools, and traps now on Rocky Island. The Home Secretary also took steps to ensure that no similar licenses for fishtraps in the immediate vicinity of the reserve would be issued in the future. At Cape Bedford the presence of other people's cattle developed into an apparently organised system of cattle-duffing, and gave rise to the blacks being forcibly hunted from off their own reserve. After repeated warnings to the owners, the police were called in, and fifty-eight head of cattle impounded with their assistance. At Mapoon the outrages in its neighbourhood have been considerably checked.

In pursuance of the provisions of the "*Industrial and Reformatory Schools Act of 1865*," an Industrial School has been established at Yarrabah for the detention of aboriginal and half-caste children, to be known as the Yarrabah Industrial School, for which the Rev. E. R. B. Gribble has been appointed superintendent. (*Government Gazette*, 7-4-00.)

With a view to putting the amount of the annual Government subsidy to these Missions on a rational basis—*i.e.*, making the grant bear an equable ratio with the number of aboriginals taught, fed, clothed, or otherwise relieved—it has been deemed advisable that the missionaries should regularly forward a monthly return of aboriginal attendance and Government relief. Each return gives the daily number of blacks (permanent and casual) obtaining relief, the nature of the relief (flour, meat, tobacco, &c.), and any remarks that it may be considered advisable to make. As this plan has only been inaugurated the last three or four months, it has not been as yet possible to draw up a complete collective return for the guidance of the Minister. Those which have come to hand, however, furnish me with the following average number of aboriginals daily relieved:—[*P* refers to those permanently residing on the station, *C* to those only casually visiting it.]

Mission Station.	March.		April.		May.		June.		Present Subsidy per month.		
	P.	C.	P.	C.	P.	C.	P.	C.	£	s.	d.
Yarrabah	112	26	10	0	0
Cape Bedford	40	19	39	20	39	17	8	6	8
Weipa	6	24	9	22	12	10	0
Marie Yamba	19	...	19	...	10	0	0
Mapoon	52	9	43	12	48	10	12	10	0

Owing to the meagre results and unsatisfactory management, so far as the aboriginals are concerned, the Government subsidy to the Bloomfield River Mission has been withdrawn. The Home Secretary has suggested that this station should be discontinued by the Lutheran Missions Committee of Adelaide, S. A., and that some Queensland organisation should be allowed to take charge.

A recommendation has been laid before the Minister, who has favourably considered it as to the desirability of joining the intermediate portion of coast line between the Weipa and Mapoon Mission Reserves with one or other of them.

Another mission reserve is urgently required low down on the Gulf coast for the benefit, spiritual and material, of aboriginals from the north-west central districts. Two localities specially offer themselves for the purpose, one being Sweer's Island, the other at a spot to be subsequently decided upon somewhere on the coast line in the neighbourhood of the Staaten River. The former is about forty-five miles from Burketown, thirty from the mouth of the Albert River, is well watered, and carries excellent soil; in the early days a portion of it was reserved for the township of Carnarvon. The latter, perhaps preferable, would not only tend to control the coast line further north in conjunction with the Embley River missionaries working to the south, but also assist to a large measure in ameliorating the condition of the blacks consequent on the gradual advance of white settlement there.

As expressed in clause 11 of the *Aboriginals Protection, &c., Act, 1897*, it was the distinct intention of the Legislature to prevent the entry of any undesirable people into the reserves. Unfortunately, under the definition clause of "*The Mining Act of 1898*," and section 15 of that Act, any holder of a miner's right has power to occupy an aboriginal reserve for mining purposes.

Though the aboriginals are necessarily under the immediate care and protection of the missionaries, who are, in their turn, responsible directly to the Minister, I have been instructed to visit them occasionally, to tender advice and assistance to the gentlemen in charge, and report annually to the head of my department. Of course, a spirit of kindly and helpful co-operation towards the Mission Stations is expected from all protectors of aboriginals. The following are dated extracts, with subsequent additions, from my reports, already forwarded to the Minister, dealing with such visits of inspection:—

Yarrabah Mission, Cape Grafton (19-12-99): An Anglican Mission in charge of the Rev. E. R. B. Gribble. There has been a marked increase in the number of aboriginals receiving the benefits of the institution during the past year, the Yarrabah population now standing at 156. Four births have taken place—three girls and one boy. Among the five deaths was that of "Dick Melbourne," a lad about fourteen or fifteen years of age, who had been taken away by a travelling circus some six or seven years previously, and stranded finally in Melbourne, whence he was sent by some charitable people to his home in Cairns, where, at the Mission, he died soon after his arrival. The general health of the community continues very good. At the distribution of blankets in May last, 151 people received them. The missionaries continue to visit the aboriginal camps in the surrounding districts, and have thus come into personal touch with some 282 blacks distributed along the Barron River, the Mulgrave River, and at Kuranda. In addition to the spiritual advantages accruing from this peripatetic method of holding religious service, Mr. Gribble does a great deal of good in relieving sickness and disease with his case of medicines, in cleaning up wounds, foul sores, &c., and loses no opportunity of proclaiming the benefits of the Mission Station. By those means he picks up many a little waif and stray, and, with the consent of the parents, brings them into Yarrabah. Similarly, some of the older Mission boys have been trained for this particular kind of work, and parties of these young men, independently of Mr. Gribble, have brought several little children to the station. A general view of the buildings is shewn in Plate 1, from a photograph taken during the Home Secretary's visit last year. Plate 2 gives a view of Rev. Gribble's residence, in front of which a group of natives is seated. Many improvements and works have to be noted. Stables and store and five huts have been erected; these buildings are now made with split boards instead of with slabs as formerly, the advantages being better walls, neater buildings, and quicker construction. Most important of all, however, is the permanent supply of water right through the settlement, this being brought about by means of 1,200 feet of piping from the adjacent mountains.

Three miles of road have been constructed through the scrub to some open grass country, where good stockyards have been put up. Three acres of land have been ploughed, and, in close proximity to the Mission buildings, some six acres have been cleared for a recreation reserve. One hundred coconuts have been planted around the shores of the bay, on Rocky Island, and at the settlement. A fishing camp has been formed on Rocky Island, where three fishtraps are now in working order, and two men always in charge. Among the works in hand, but not completed at the time of my visit, were a boatshed, a hospital, and church porch, the fencing in of a poultry run, the planting of three acres with sweet potatoes, and the ploughing of five acres for rice. The stock on the station consists of thirty-six cattle, six horses, seventy goats, and 200 poultry—ducks, fowls, and geese. The machinery, &c., comprises a chaff-cutter, corn-cracker, corn-sheller, dray, plough, and various tools. A new whaleboat, the "W. M. Cooper," subscribed for in the colonies, and built at Sydney, reached the station at the beginning of December. It is intended to build as soon as possible a vessel of 8 or 9 tons, with moneys derived from private subscriptions and the Government grant of £60. It is to be hoped that she will be fitted with propelling power—*e.g.*, naphtha—for she would then be able to carry out the missionaries' long-cherished idea of visiting regularly the coastal blacks from Port Douglas on the north to the Johnstone River on the south. Some forty-five scholars are attending school. So far the Mission standard of education has been fluent reading, fair writing, and very elementary arithmetic; this will of course be raised now that the Minister's proposals for the introduction of the provisional school system are being carried into effect. For the benefit of the five males and five females who have reached the present standard, and whose daytime is now taken up with the progressive work of the Mission, a weekly night-class has been started, where new subjects have been discussed and lectures given. These lectures have proved of great interest to these elder pupils, the range of subjects being very varied. Thus, in one on "opium," pictures of the poppy were shown, its manufacture explained, its uses in the form of painkiller, chlorodyne, &c., discussed, and its abuses, in the form of personal reminiscences from the neighbouring camps, seriously drawn attention to. "Alcohol" was dealt with on similar lines, while in one on "water," a few simple chemical experiments added increased interest. "Drill," with illustrations, was another subject lectured upon. A singing-class meets every Monday evening, and a sewing-class on Mondays and Fridays. During the past year several new departures have taken place in the routine and administration. In order to get the people to take an interest in their own welfare, as well as in that of their fellow-creatures, and in the Mission as a whole, a number of senior men have been formed into a governing body—"The Government"; this meets on the third Thursday in each month, and decides all work to be undertaken, frames new rules, and regulates the routine of the settlement. Together with the missionaries, twelve aboriginals constitute this "Government," the sittings of which are presided over by the "king," who signs the minutes. John Barlow Menmurry, who is, by hereditary right, chief of the local (Yarrabah) Gungganji tribe, was chosen "king" early in the year. Strange to say, this old gentleman was the first aboriginal to come into the Mission Station some seven years ago. His son is regarded as his successor, but the missionaries have made it quite clear to all that any serious offence may deprive the holder of the title from the dignities of the office. An excellent idea of this "Government" was to institute special measures for suppressing the introduction of opium within the precincts of the reserve. For this particular purpose, three officers were appointed to watch all canoes coming from the mainland, and searching both them and their occupants not only for the narcotic, but also for alcohol. In addition to the "Government," a "police court" has been established; this meets every second Monday evening and deals with all disputes and offences, for which light punishments are inflicted—*e.g.*, military pack-drill, the stoppage of half-holidays, &c. Military drill takes place every Friday afternoon, and I was extremely interested in witnessing the many varied evolutions some two dozen of the lads had been taught to perform. At present, they drill with lance and pennon manufactured by themselves. A captain, sergeant, and bugler have been chosen, the last-mentioned playing most of the military calls from music. I recommended the grant of some simple and cheap uniform, and any obsolete arms, especially bayonets, with which the missionaries were very anxious to get the squad provided. During the past season, some of the senior men have been taking contracts for coffee-picking, &c., and, with their earnings, have not only been able to benefit the Mission as a whole by buying the fishtraps, &c., but have also purchased many little things to furnish their own houses with.

Cape Bedford Mission (20-2-00): Under Lutheran auspices, in charge of Revs. Schwarz and Poland. Notwithstanding the barren nature of the soil, the garden on the north side of the Cape was enlarged by two acres, independently of the planting of about 100 coconuts. Fortunately these trees thrive remarkably well here, and their cultivation on a large scale has been decided upon. Plate 3, from a photograph taken during Mr. Foxton's trip, gives a very good idea of the growth of these useful and elegant trees in the immediate neighbourhood of the Mission buildings. At the south side, Mr. Schwarz succeeded in raising seven tons of potatoes, two tons of sugar-cane, bananas from off one and a-half acres, and half a ton of rice; some mangoes, corn, &c., was grown for household consumption. It is to be regretted that three-quarters of an acre of rice was entirely destroyed within the space of two nights by a plague of caterpillars, a scourge which made its appearance elsewhere in the Cook district. The fishing-net supplied by the Government continues to prove of service, quite one and a-half tons of fish having been captured by its means, any surplus over temporary requirements being salted for subsequent use. On the south side of the Cape it is impossible to use any net for nine months out of the twelve, in consequence of the rough seas, with the south-east winds. Its operations had therefore hitherto been limited mainly to the north-west side, but even here, owing to the dangerous condition of the Mission dingy—any native canoe being, of course, too light to carry it—it could only be used at one particularly well-sheltered spot, which had had to be cleared carefully of snags. Thanks, however, to the Home Secretary's gift of a small cutter, the difficulty is now remedied, and the net can be worked anywhere, but especially at the mouth of the McIvor River, where the fish supply would appear to be endless. This vessel is also utilised for conveying Mission stores, &c., from Cooktown, an expenditure which has hitherto run into as much as £20 per annum, and will prove of great assistance in getting the blacks over to the islands for fruits, and on to the reefs for turtle. Though the aboriginals can only get across in their canoes to these reefs during one period of the year, the passage even then is always fraught with danger, six deaths by drowning having already occurred to the missionaries' knowledge. The damage done to the station buildings by the cyclone of March, 1899, was rectified at a cost, for new material alone, of £60 from the Mission funds. It was now recognised that the utmost limits of accommodation for the aboriginal inmates—*i.e.*, the young people permanently residing there—had at last been reached. On the other hand,

Cape Bedford
Mission.

there was no suitable timber to cut in the neighbourhood, and the gentlemen in charge had no further monetary resources to draw upon. With a view to putting this Mission to the best possible advantage for the aboriginal population of the district, the Home Secretary sanctioned some very noteworthy improvements. Hitherto the residences of the two missionaries had been upwards of five miles apart, thus necessitating a loss of time and labour consequent on a daily ride of more than ten miles for Mr. Poland, who superintended most of the indoor teaching, as compared with the outdoor farming work. The buildings from the north side of the Cape were accordingly removed to the south side, where everything is now "under one roof," so to speak, with the result that the missionaries will now be in closer touch, the general supervision better, and the administration more effective. A new dormitory, with kitchen, was also erected. Consequent on the increase of the Government subsidy during the latter half of the year, ten more children were admitted, thus completing the total of seventeen girls and seventeen boys as permanent inmates. Now that a provisional school teacher has been appointed, the instruction in and of the English language has commenced. Hitherto all teaching has been imparted in the local Koko-Yimdir dialect. The general health of the inmates continues good; indeed, it is a matter for congratulation that no deaths have occurred amongst them during the eleven years that the missionaries have pursued their vocation here.

Marie Yamba
Mission.

Marie Yamba Mission, Andromache River (30-4-00): This is in charge of Rev. C. Freiboth, who works under the auspices of the Lutheran-Scandinavian Mission. The chairman of its central committee, Mr. Gösseling, resides at Laidley. This station is situate about fifteen miles from the Proserpine, on the southern bank of the Andromache, in the midst of fairly good black-soil country. The present superintendent has been installed here for the past two and a-half years, and has carried out no inconsiderable improvements on the farm in the way of cereals, fruit trees, and vegetables. Barley had been tried, but, owing to the want of sufficient water, had come to nothing. A first attempt at growing arrowroot had proved eminently successful. I noticed under cultivation some two acres of imphee, a plant much resembling sorghum; its stalks are found to be of great fattening quality for the milking-cows and pigs, while its seeds are much relished by the fowls. The stock comprises seventeen pigs, twenty-eight horses, and thirty-eight cattle; these last constitute the remnant of some 150 which the Mission owned previous to the ticks putting in an appearance. The buildings may be particularised as follows:—A six-roomed cottage (with kitchen, &c., underneath), wherein reside Mr. and Mr. Freiboth, their six children, and two aboriginal girls; two small detached slab buildings constitute respectively the schoolhouse and aboriginals' dormitory dining-room. Well removed from the dwelling-house are the piggery, stables, harness-room, and yards. There were twelve permanent inmates on the occasion of my visit. In addition to being occupied in outdoor work, the children learn the elementary rules of arithmetic, the counting of money, reading, and writing. An adult half-caste woman helps to teach in the school. Scripture catechism is taken in hand twice weekly. Two great drawbacks to the general efficiency of the Mission are the want of material to work upon, and the close proximity to white settlement. As was pointed out to me by the local police, there are not sixty aboriginals in the whole area comprised by Marie Yamba, the Proserpine, and the Normanby. For a few months last year the missionaries managed to collect thirty-eight blacks, the largest number they have ever had, but these were tempted away by offers of grog and money, they naturally preferring the life on the goldfields, on the cattle-stations, or in the neighbouring township of Proserpine. I advised Mr. Freiboth as to the numerous applications he receives for the supply of aboriginal labour, and showed how he could protect his Mission's interests now that he had been appointed superintendent of its reserve:

Weipa
Mission.

Weipa Mission, Embley River (18-7-99): Carried on by the Moravian missionaries. The boundaries of the station reserve are as follows:—The Mission River on the north, the Embley on the south, Albatross Bay on the west, and York Downs cattle-station on the east. The homestead is about seventeen miles up the Embley on its northern bank; this distance from the coast having been necessitated by unsuitable soil and absence of permanent fresh water lower down the river. The Rev. E. Brown took up his duties here last year, when he commenced building operations and started a garden. So far, he has made satisfactory progress in getting into touch with the aboriginals. The following table shows the average school attendance during the last quarter of 1899:—

	1st week.	2nd week.	3rd week.	4th week.
October	19	18	31	28
November	21	17	28	22
December	15	28	57	54

The supply of flour running short, would not allow of the missionaries continuing to feed the large number of aboriginal visitors, with the result that when the parents went off to the bush, the children went too. It is satisfactory to learn, however, that up to latest advices there were 101 names on the school register. This Mission Station served somewhat as an object lesson for the Home Secretary during his official visit last July, in affording him an opportunity for seeing the raw material upon which the missionaries have to work. Such aboriginals are portrayed in Plate 4. The presence of Mrs. Foxton on that occasion will be long remembered by the mango-tree which she planted there, while the native name of "Weipa," which she gave this station, is that by which it will in the future be officially designated. Plate 5 represents this interesting christening ceremony.

Mapoon
Mission.

Mapoon Mission, Batavia River (30-9-99): Also carried on by the Moravians, with assistance from the Presbyterians. The natives here are all kept very busy on the station improvements, acting under the instructions of the Superintendent, Rev. N. Hey, and Harry Price. The latter is a native of Tahiti, and, in the words of his clerical employer, "a great deal of the Mission's success amongst the aboriginals is due to his fidelity, sagacity, and tact." He receives a salary of £60 a year, a sum which is defrayed by the students of Ormond College, Melbourne. These improvements consist of two large gardens, in which, with considerable labour, suitable irrigation, and seaweed as manure, various fruits and vegetables have been raised; two forty-acre paddocks all rail-and-wire fenced; milking-sheds and drafting-yards; a home-made windmill for irrigation purposes, and a small sawmill. All the station buildings, outhouses, and native cottages were in good repair, and the whole settlement showed every sign of life, activity, and industry. During the past year the crops have proved unusually poor, owing to the extraordinary drought, but no pains have been spared in making the best use possible of the land in the immediate vicinity of the homestead. About 12 acres of a swamp have been reclaimed, and planted in part with bananas. A commencement has also been made with the clearing of some scrub with a view to planting it with lemon, lime, and other fruit trees

so soon as the wet season sets in. Coconuts planted in previous years have borne fruit for the first time in this. Within the last twelve months, in addition to the repairs of fences and houses, several new cottages have been erected, while last, but not least, they have built themselves a small jetty and boat-house, all the timber used therein being sawn into boards by the aboriginals themselves. The Mapoon reserve is now stocked with about seventy head of mixed cattle, which not only affords a good meat supply for all the station hands, but also gives employment to some of the young men. The total number of aboriginals under the supervision of this Mission is about 400, all of whom, as occasion requires, receive rations or medical relief; of course all able-bodied men who obtain food, work for it according to their capabilities. About 160 have settled down in the neighbourhood of the station; the remainder come and go, spending their time in visiting other tribes, or else in fishing and hunting. In the north-west season, and at other times when the native foods are scarce, these numbers are considerably increased. (It may be stated, without fear of contradiction, that, between them, Mapoon and Weipa influence the destiny of quite 1,000 lives.) A group of such visitors to Mapoon is to be seen in Plate 6: many of these blacks came in specially to see the Home Secretary. Though the death-rate has been high—sixteen deaths having been reported—the general health continues good. A great contrast is observable between the girls who have gone through the Mission routine, and those still in their semi-wild state; the former are far healthier, comparatively free from disease, and are of course preserved from too early and (what appears so to us) unnatural marriage, with the result that they are becoming more prolific—an advance of four births this year on that of last. Turning now to the children generally, the average daily school attendance has been thirty-five. Their general attention, good conduct, intelligence, and obedience, bear silent yet irrefutable witness to the untiring energy and loving kindness of their teachers, Mrs. Ward and Mrs. Hey. Plate 7 shows some of the children in the Mission Hall. The boys, when not in school, assist in the general field and garden work, while the girls qualify themselves in all kinds of domestic duties suitable for their future requirements. With regard to the recruiting system, owing to the timely action taken, the appointment of a protector at Thursday Island, &c., matters are “greatly improved.” In a letter just received from Rev. Mr. Hey, he tells me that, notwithstanding the shipping of 104 young men from Mapoon during the past twelve months, he has now no complaints to make; that the spending by him, for the benefit of the boys, of a portion of their wages earned on the boats, promises to become a great factor in their civilisation; and that an improved condition of the Mapoon settlement is already apparent.

In order to carry into execution the provisions of the Act in its relation to aboriginal reserves, Other trustees have been appointed to the large majority of them in the Northern and Central divisions of the colony. The Hon. J. F. G. Foxton, W. E. Parry-Okeden, and W. E. Roth have been so appointed to the following, described under “Parish or Place” (*Government Gazette*, 3-2-00) as—
Suggested resumption of more land.

Endeavour and Pryde (Cape Bedford)	50,000 acres.
Clerk (Bloomfield River)	25 square miles.
Boggy Creek Run (Butcher's Hill)	25 “ ”
Kelsey	76 acres.
Trinity and Sophia (Cape Grafton)	75 square miles.
Pitt (opposite Hinchinbrooke Island)	50 “ ”
Hammond Island	2 “ ”
Batavia River (Mapoon)	100 “ ”
Empley and Mission Rivers (Weipa)	200 “ ”
Box Hill No. 4 Run (Georgetown)	2 “ ”
Box Hill No. 5 Run (Georgetown)	2 “ ”
Bluff Downs and Southwick (Charters Towers)	110 “ ”

I have suggested that there should be included in this list the reserve at the Andromache River (Marie Yamba) described in *Government Gazette*, vol. 3, page 1333, of 1887, and, unless already cancelled, the reserves for aboriginals on Stuart Creek (*Government Gazette*, 1835, vol. 1, page 430), and in the Mackay Land Agent's District (*Government Gazette*, 1889, vol. 1, page 1217).

In the section dealing with the grant of food, and other relief, I have pointed out how that the advance of white settlement in the more outlying districts is forcing the blacks away from their own water supplies and hunting grounds. While there is yet time, and the pecuniary sacrifice so small, I beg most earnestly to plead for some more land to be resumed for the benefit of the outcast aboriginal. In the extreme North, for instance, the formation of one large aboriginal reserve of the whole of the Peninsula north of the Coleman and Morehead Rivers—*i.e.*, practically all the country situate north of 15 degrees latitude, and west of 144 degrees longitude—would answer the purpose without any appreciable loss to the general revenues. According to the latest returns procurable by me, in the annual rent lists of 28th July, 1899, I find that in all this large area only 290 square miles are held, and those at a total rental of £102 8s.—a fraction over £100. In order not to see the mining or any other industry interfered with, it would be undesirable to proclaim this portion of country a reserve under the Aboriginals Protection Act. So again, on the north-west central confines of the colony, there is plenty of scope for land to be similarly resumed. Finally, with regard to the coastal blacks, there are several islands which could be made use of for their permanent benefit, and in this connection the following extract from a report of Mr. G. H. Bennett's affords matter for reflection: “I think that if the people living a wandering life along our north-eastern coast could be by any means induced to make homes for themselves on the various small islands of the Torres Strait, much trouble would be avoided, and they themselves, by judicious treatment, might be made the means of checking the misconduct of others. At any rate, a man with a ‘local habitation’ is more easily dealt with than a vagabond. The islands themselves are, and ever will be, useless for settlement in the ordinary meaning of the word. If one excepts Murray, Darnley, Stephens, and a few others (not half-a-dozen) there are none which would be of any use whatever for agricultural purposes. The day for expecting them to be used by white people for fishing stations has passed away with the palmy days of pearlshelling and *bêche-de-mering*.”

All the minor ailments afflicting European communities are met with amongst the aboriginal population, though what with ignorance and superstition, want of proper care and nourishment, &c., their effects are not so transitory. At Cloncurry five deaths took place last October during the epidemic of a disease resembling measles, while at Urandangi, in April of the present year, thirteen deaths occurred from influenza and dysentery; in both cases, the rations supplied assisting in saving many lives. Carious teeth are comparatively prevalent amongst the town blacks. At Cooktown I have had to pull as many as seven in the course of one month. Sickness and disease.

Of the more serious diseases, phthisis and syphilis appear to be fairly common in the townships, becoming comparatively rarer as the more unsettled districts are reached; the Moreton, for instance, is free from venereal. Indeed, speaking generally, the health of the bush blacks is invariably far superior to that of those in the close settlements; the difference is even already noticeable in those cases where, as at Burketown, the blacks have been removed from the townships. The communicability of syphilis amongst the aboriginals is enhanced by the fact that, owing evidently to no signs of the disease showing themselves for some three to five weeks after connection, its venereal origin is lost sight of, and the complaint ascribed to sorcery and witchcraft. I am further strongly of opinion that in the Western districts of the colony the spread of the disease is also facilitated by the use of "pituri," the quid of which, after being chewed, is passed from mouth to mouth. The treatment and cure of this foul-smelling disorder has occupied no small amount of my attention, but the attendant difficulties are indeed great. Internally, the ordinary semi-civilised black will take medicine neither constantly nor regularly, it being a case of either a whole bottleful at once or nothing. Even when he can be induced to take it, and a cure is not effected within the next day or two, he regards both doctor and medicine as being "no good." Externally, a little relief may be afforded by the use of local remedies, and in this respect both police and protectors have been very thoughtful and considerate in arranging for the supply of such things as carbolic, iodoform, bluestone, &c. Furthermore, the outside public fails to realise that syphilis is a disease which is absolutely new to the aboriginal, whose forefathers, unlike ours, have never been inoculated with it in previous generations, and that its effects are in consequence more difficult of eradication and cure. It has been suggested that all diseased blacks should be removed to reserves, but this is a physical impossibility; even were it feasible, many of the Europeans, as a matter of justice, would have to go too. With a view to affording as much benefit as I personally can to the poor suffering wretches who are thus wandering throughout the district in which I have made my headquarters, I have instituted a lock hospital, about eight miles out of Cooktown, where any such really bad cases might be treated. In other districts, especially where medical advice is not available, I have suggested to the police and others that the most merciful thing to be done with the worst of these unfortunates is to grant them relief in the shape of rations and tobacco, and so help to make their last days on earth a little more bearable.

During the past twelve months two aboriginal lepers have been discovered—a male on the Pennefather River, and a female at Georgetown.

It is perhaps not too generally known that among the duties imposed on Government medical officers is that of the attendance on aboriginals. Medicines have been supplied by my department, when requested, to various police officers, Missions Stations, &c. In return for the liberal subsidies already granted by the Executive to the various hospitals, I am of opinion that, on the recommendation of a protector or other authorised person, these institutions should be made available without payment—most certainly so far as medicine is concerned—to any sick aboriginal.

Half-caste children.

To accurately gauge the actual number of half-caste children in the North is a very difficult matter. During my last trip through the Cloncurry, Camooweal, and Burke districts I obtained particulars of some forty-eight such. Still more uncertain is any definite knowledge as to the number of half-castes actually born, many of these infants being killed as a matter of principle, the colour only being often sufficient. It is, therefore, quite within the realms of possibility that when once the blacks can be made to understand the intentions of the Government in making provisions for these waifs, that this form of infanticide will cease. The little girls have especially claimed my active and earnest solicitude, and arrangements continue to be made for their removal to the different Mission Stations. My recommendations to the Home Secretary in these cases are not necessarily made on account of present ill-treatment, &c., but only for the future welfare, care, and happiness of the children themselves. It is far better to know that all such are ultimately legally married and protected by the missionaries, and, through them, by the State, than to realise that as soon as they get old enough to be tampered with by unscrupulous whites—the present normal condition of things—they are sent back into their camps as bad girls and left there to ultimate disease and ruin. My efforts to ameliorate the condition of the little true-blooded girls lie in a similar direction.

Cases continue to be brought under notice where girls under sixteen years of age have been criminally assaulted; but in the absence of any legal proof of age, the futility of attempting to press for a conviction is apparent. As a remedial measure, I would suggest that some legislative provision might be made for the onus of proof of age, in these cases, to rest on the person accused.

Mixed marriages.

No marriage of a female aboriginal with any person other than an aboriginal should be celebrated without the authority of the Home Secretary. Marriages are at present taking place with Europeans and coloured aliens.

Whites at blacks' camps.

In exercising the powers which a humane legislature has given them, the various protectors and others connected with them are greatly handicapped by the freedom of intercourse which is at present permissible between blacks and whites. I refer particularly now to that existing at the blacks' camps which any unscrupulous white can enter and remain in at will. In my opinion, a very large majority of, nay, almost all, the abuses which have been brought under review, are the direct consequence, and I earnestly trust that some provision may shortly be made which will put an effectual bar to the practice. No one other than an aboriginal, police officer, or person authorised by a protector should be allowed within the precincts of a blacks' camp. As things are at present, the police realise the danger, but are unable to prevent it. The following extract is taken from Sub-Inspector Garraway's report, relative to the blacks at the new Ebagoolah (Hamilton) Gold Fields:—

In one camp I visited there were about 300 men, women, and children. As I anticipated much trouble from at least a few of the Europeans flocking to the rush, I gave very strict orders to the police officers under my charge on no account whatever to allow gins or children to mingle with the whites. In consequence of this order being strictly adhered to, we have so far had but little trouble on that score, but in a few cases which have come under my notice, I find that many of the more civilised blacks have already begun to trade with their gins for tobacco, &c., and seem only too willing to meet whites half-way. The aboriginals (or most of them) around Hamilton are of fine physique, both men and women are well-nourished and healthy-looking, but I fear that unless in some way the police are given more power to enable them to prevent whites from entering a blacks' camp, doubtless, in a short time, immorality and disease will follow. At present we have no power to stop the whites from walking about amongst the blacks in their own camps, and too much familiarity will be certain to ensue.

So far I have had no opportunity of ascertaining whether the offences committed by aboriginals generally are on the increase or decline. The Minister, however, has kindly given instructions to the effect that I am to be supplied with the necessary returns from the various police officers, and accordingly, in my next report, I trust to be able to furnish some interesting statistics. I fully appreciate the difficulties experienced by our judges in meting out punishment for the more serious of the charges brought before them, and I note with satisfaction that when they err, it is on the side of mercy. That an ignorance of the laws is no excuse for breaking them, is an axiom which I freely admit in the case of civilised man; but most assuredly not in the case of the untutored savage. Until our Northern aboriginals reach a higher scale of social order—and this can only be done by the influence and precepts of the missionaries, and the commingling with a better class of Europeans than at present—they should, in my opinion, be regarded in the same light which influenced the conduct of the Imperial Government in dealing with the laws and customs of the native races of India—that is to say, a passive non-interference, except in cases where gross cruelty or the sacrifice of human life are concerned. As the result of an experience gained through many generations, the savage knows, respects, and appreciates his own tribal laws, which have now become ingrained as a part and parcel of his nature, and he acts accordingly; he exercises the power of life and death over his wife and family; he slays a trespasser; he punishes witchcraft with death, and inflicts the capital penalty for incest, &c. I am, therefore, strongly impressed that the so-called “crimes” committed as a rule in the exercise of such tribally-recognised laws and customs, and committed by blacks on blacks, should be dealt with rather by an organised system of expatriation than by the verdict of a jury. The absence of suitable interpreters, the generally unreliable nature of the aboriginal evidence, and the heavy expense to the State, without adequate results, are facts which all militate against the present method of bringing such cases before the courts. A few years’ imprisonment, with no anxiety for his food supply, is as nothing to the savage; so much so, that during my last visit to the penal establishment at St. Helena, the officials informed me of cases where blacks, on expiry of their incarceration, were unwilling to leave. Their ultimate return is also fraught with danger on account of the imprisonment not being regarded by them in the light of any punishment, and I, therefore, shortly propose making arrangements whereby all such time-expired aboriginal prisoners shall be effectually prevented from getting back to their native countries. Furthermore, the protection of the blacks must not be carried out at any risk to the safety of the Europeans, and accordingly, where the presence of any particular aboriginal has proved a source of possible danger to the white population, his removal to, and detention in, another district has been, upon my recommendation, sanctioned by the Minister.

Sub-Inspector Garraway, P.A., who can speak from an experience of over twenty years gained in the North Queensland bush, writes as follows:—“I am glad to say that the Aboriginal Act has certainly caused the blacks to be treated with much more consideration by their employers. . . . Kidnapping, &c, which, no doubt, was common on a few outside stations, has been stopped; naturally, on account of this, and from the fact that the blacks are constantly in receipt of relief at different centres, &c., the lives of Europeans are safer than they were before.” Inspector Lamond, P.A., reports “most favourably” on the working of the Act in his district. Sergeant Dunn similarly speaks most highly of the benefits which the blacks now derive in the Croydon sub-district. Constable Little, in charge of the Turn-off Lagoon Native Police Camp, not only does the same, but shows that the aboriginals along the South Australian border are now quiet, and no longer a source of danger. Inspector Marrett, P.A., reports that the Act appears to be working satisfactorily now, &c.

The prosecution of scientific investigation in connection with the ethnology and anthropology of the North Queensland aboriginal, is being actively pursued by me, and as soon as the organisation and necessary arrangements consequent on the inception of the Act become gradually completed, I trust to have more time than at present to devote to these studies.

The following list comprises the purely scientific reports, containing numerous photographs and sketches, which have been written since I had the honour of receiving my present appointment, in January, 1898:—

- “The Aborigines of the Bloomfield River District.”
- “Variations of the Mesh Observable in the Manufacture of the Woven Dilly-bag.”
- “Cat’s-Cradle, as practised on the Morehead River.”
- “The Manufacture of Human Hair-Twine.”
- “The Manufacture of Fibre-Twine.”
- “Plait-work, Chain-work, and Joining.”
- “The Pandanus-leaf Armllet.”
- “The Aborigines of the Rockhampton and surrounding Coast Districts.”
- “Some Ethnological Notes on the Cape Grafton Blacks.”
- “Ethnological Notes on the Atherton Blacks.”
- “The Aborigines occupying the Hinterland of Princess Charlotte Bay.”
- “Some of the Plants of Economic Value to the North Queensland Aborigines.” First series, No. 1-108; second series, No. 109-174.
- “On some of the Queensland Implements illustrative of a Stone Age.”
- “A Grammar of the Koko-Yimidir Language, as spoken at Cape Bedford.”
- “The Rock-Paintings of Clack’s Island, Princess Charlotte Bay.”
- “An Account of the Koko-Minni Aborigines occupying the country drained by the (Middle) Palmer River.”
- “On the Aborigines of the Pennfather (Coen) River, and surrounding Coast Districts.”
- “The Colour-sense and Pigments among the North Queensland Blacks.”
- “On the Process of Flaking adopted by the Camooweal Blacks in the Manufacture of certain Stone Implements.”

Unless the Minister should express a wish to the contrary, I think it would be inadvisable for these reports to be printed until such time as my ethnological survey of the whole Northern Peninsula is completed.

Fifty anthropometric charts have been carefully filled up, illustrative of different types of men and women to be met with in the North. These have been measured on the Bertillon system, with photographs and thumbprints attached. This particular work has comprised over 2,000 distinct measurements.

The Colonial Botanist, Mr. F. M. Bailey, has continued to render me most valuable assistance in determining those plants which have been collected as being of economic value to the aborigines. Up to date I have forwarded him 294 specimens.

Furthermore, the Minister has very kindly sanctioned the purchase of certain literature bearing upon the history of the North Queensland blacks; together with my own scientific library, which I am gladly donating to the Government, these books will prove the nucleus of a collection of works of reference, which, added to from time to time as opportunities occur, will prove of inestimable value to my department.

My anthropological and ethnological collections—the result of eight years' labour—comprising upwards of 800 articles, are now to be considered the property of the nation. I have forwarded 100 to the Brisbane Museum. In this connection I shall be pleased to receive from the general public, for permanent record and reference, any information, &c., bearing upon the manners, customs, and life-history of our Northern aborigines.

Office work.
Travelling.

What with the numerous interests thus connected with the proper execution of my duties as the Northern Protector of Aborigines, my official correspondence is ever on the increase. During the six months ending 30th June, 651 communications have been dealt with. Of this number, 284 have been received and 367 despatched. Owing to my being so much away from Cooktown, and often at a very great distance, a large proportion of the correspondence becomes delayed both in receipt and in reply. I have no clerical assistance.

My official trips for the past twelve months may be summarised as follows (Cooktown being the initial and final stage of each):—1. Thursday Island, Burketown, Thursday Island, Torres Strait (in company with the Minister). 2. Thursday Island, Batavia River, Embley River, York Downs, Mein, Moreton, Embley River. 3. Brisbane. 4. Townsville, Cairns. 5. Bowen, Townsville, Hughenden, Cloncurry, Camooweal, Avon Downs (N. Territory), Lawn Hills, Burketown. 6. Cape Bedford.

I have, &c.,

WALTER E. ROTH,

Northern Protector of Aborigines.

APPENDIX A.

LIST OF PROTECTORS OF ABORIGINES (IN THE NORTH) APPOINTED FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE ACT, AND THE DISTRICTS ASSIGNED TO THEM RESPECTIVELY WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF WHICH THEY HAVE AND EXERCISE THEIR PRESCRIBED POWERS AND DUTIES.

WALTER EDMUND ROTH, M.R.C.S., &c., Northern Protector, the Petty Sessions Districts of Ayr, Bowen, Burke, Cairns, Camooweal, Cape River, Cardwell, Charters Towers, Cloncurry, Cook, Croydon, Douglas, Etheridge, Herberton, Hughenden, Ingham, Mackay, Mareeba, Mourilyan, Norman, Palmer, Ravenswood, Somerset, Thornborough, Townsville.

(The following act as the deputies and assistants of the Northern Protector.)

JAMES LAMOND, Inspector of Police, Normanton, the Petty Sessions Districts of Burke, Camooweal, Cloncurry, Croydon, Etheridge, Norman.

GEORGE HARPUR BENNETT, Shipping Master, &c., Thursday Island, the Petty Sessions District of Somerset.

ROLAND WALTER GARRAWAY, Sub-Inspector of Police, Laura, the Petty Sessions Districts of Cook, Etheridge, Norman, Palmer, Thornborough.

HENRY HAZENKAMP, Acting Sergeant, Cooktown, the Petty Sessions Districts of Cook, Palmer.

CHARLES BEAUCHAMP MARRETT, Inspector of Police, Cairns, the Petty Sessions Districts of Cairns, Cook, Douglas, Herberton, Mareeba, Mourilyan, Palmer, Somerset, Thornborough.

ALEXANDER GORDON, Boulia, the Petty Sessions District of Camooweal.

EDWARD MARTIN, Sub-Inspector of Police, Mackay, the Petty Sessions District of Mackay.

ALEXANDER MELDRUM, Inspector of Police, Townsville, the Petty Sessions Districts of Ayr, Bowen, Cape River, Cardwell, Charters Towers, Herberton, Hughenden, Ingham, Mackay, Ravenswood, Townsville.

APPENDIX B.

REGULATIONS UNDER "THE ABORIGINES PROTECTION AND RESTRICTION OF THE SALE OF OPIUM ACT, 1897."

Definitions.

1. In these Regulations the term "the Act" means "The Aborigines Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act, 1897," and any Act incorporated therewith; and the terms used have the meanings respectively assigned to them by sections three and four of the Act.

Northern and Southern Protectors.

2. Two of the Protectors appointed under the provisions of the Act shall be called respectively the Northern and Southern Protectors, and shall be charged with the administration of the Act and these Regulations within the Districts hereinafter respectively assigned to them.

The Districts assigned to the Northern Protector shall be the Petty Sessions Districts within the Northern and Central Divisions of Queensland.

The Districts assigned to the Southern Protector shall be the Petty Sessions Districts within the Southern Division of Queensland.

Provided that the Northern Protector and Southern Protector shall be guided by, and carry into execution all instructions and orders of the Minister, and shall in all matters report to him.

The Protectors.

3. Every Protector appointed for a District assigned to the Northern Protector or Southern Protector shall act as the assistant and deputy of the Northern Protector or Southern Protector as the case may be, and shall, in all matters of aboriginal interest, report to the Northern Protector or Southern Protector as the case may be.

Application for Permit.

4. Every person who desires to employ an aboriginal or half-caste shall make application in writing for the purpose to the nearest police officer in charge of a station, in the following form:—

[APPLICATION FOR PERMIT.]

“The Aborigines Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act, 1897.”

I, the undersigned, hereby apply for the grant of a permit to employ the aboriginal [or half-caste], particulars of whom are hereunder written:

Particulars of Aboriginal [or Half-caste].

1. Name :
2. Sex :
3. Approximate age :
4. District where born :
5. Nature of employment :
6. Period of proposed employment :

Employer.

1. Name :
2. Residence :
3. Occupation :

Dated at the day of

Such police officer shall keep a supply of such forms and shall furnish the same to applicants without fee.

Applications How Dealt With.

5. Upon receipt of any such application such police officer shall endorse thereon his report upon the desirableness or otherwise of granting the application, and forward the same to the Protector of his District. If the Protector grants the application he shall forward a permit to such police officer, together with a form of agreement in duplicate, and it shall be the duty of such police officer to see that such agreement is duly executed in duplicate, and to forward the duplicate copy to the Protector.

Such police officer shall keep a register of all applications made under this Regulation and of the manner in which the same have been dealt with.

Protector to keep a General Register.

6. Every Protector shall also keep a like general register for the District for which he acts.

Form of Permit.

7. Every permit to employ an aboriginal or half-caste granted under the provisions of the Act shall be in the following form:—

PERMIT.

“The Aborigines Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act, 1897.”

Permission is hereby granted to [name in full], of [address and occupation], to employ [name], a [male or female] native of [place where born], in the capacity of [occupation], for a period of months.
Dated at , this day of

A.B.,
Protector.

Form of Agreement.

8. Every agreement for the employment of an aboriginal or female half-caste under the provisions of the Act shall be in the following form:—

“The Aborigines Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act, 1897.”

Memorandum of Agreement made this day of , between of (hereinafter called the employer) of the one part and of , an aboriginal [or female half-caste] (hereinafter called the employee) of the other part. Whereby the said employee agrees to serve the said employer as , and otherwise make self generally useful, and obey all the reasonable commands of the said employer for the period of months, commencing on the day of

In consideration of which services the said employer agrees to pay the said employee [or to a Protector or police officer at , or other responsible person appointed by a Protector in that behalf, as agent for the said employee] wages at the rate of , payable , and to provide the said employee with the following accommodation, namely:—Suitable shelter, blankets, rations (including tobacco), clothing, and maintenance during sickness, and to return the said employee to his native place on the expiration of the period of this agreement at the expense of the said employer.

And it is further agreed that this agreement may be determined by the said employee forthwith upon the happening of any of the following events:—Ill-treatment by the said employer, or failure by the said employer to provide the proper accommodation hereinbefore set out, and it may also be determined forthwith by the said employer if the said employee deserts from the service or refuses to obey the lawful commands of the said employer.

In witness whereof the parties hereto have affixed their signatures the day and year first above mentioned.

Employer.
Employee.

The above agreement was explained in my presence to the said employee, who appeared to me to understand the same, and was then signed by by affixing mark thereto, and by the said employer in my presence.

J.P. [or member of the Police Force].

When a Protector or police officer or other person appointed by a Protector in that behalf, receives any wages of an employee under such agreement, he shall expend the same solely on behalf of the employee, and shall keep an account of all moneys so expended by him. He shall, when required, produce such account to any Protector or police officer.

Recognisance on Removal of Aboriginal.

9. A Protector shall not authorise the removal of any aboriginal or female half-caste from one district to another district, or to any place beyond Queensland, for any period exceeding twelve months, nor unless nor until the person desiring such removal enters into a recognisance with a surety, or sureties, at the discretion of the Protector, in a sum which the Protector considers sufficient to defray all expenses of the return of the aboriginal or half-caste to the place from which he is to be removed, and to pay all wages due to him during the period of his absence.

Every recognisance may be taken by a Protector or officer in charge of police, and shall be in the following form:—

RECOGNISANCE.

"The Aboriginal Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act, 1897."

Queensland, }
to wit. }

Be it remembered that on the _____ day of _____, A.B., of _____, in the said colony [pearl-shell] and L.M., of _____, in the said colony [commission agent] personally came before the undersigned _____, Protector of Aboriginals [or Officer in Charge of Police] in and for the District of _____, and severally acknowledged themselves to owe to our Sovereign Lady the Queen the several sums following—that is to say, the said A.B. the sum of _____, and the said L.M. the sum of _____ sterling, to be made and levied of their several goods and chattels, lands and tenements, respectively, to the use of our said Lady the Queen, Her Heirs and Successors, if he, the said A.B., shall fail in the conditions endorsed.

(Signed) A.B.
L.M.

Taken before me the day and year first above mentioned at _____ in the said colony. W.R.,
Protector [or Officer in Charge of Police].

Condition.

The condition of the within written recognisance is such that if the said A.B., the employer of the aboriginal [or half-caste] X.Y. [describing him so that he may be identified], shall return the said X.Y. from _____ [place to which he is to be removed] to _____ [place to which he is to be returned] within _____ months from the date of these presents, and shall in the meantime pay to the said X.Y. in lawful money all wages from time to time accruing due to the said X.Y. from the said A.B., under an agreement of hiring bearing date the _____ day of _____, then the said recognisance to be void, or else to stand in full force and virtue.

Duty of Person taking Recognisance.

10. Every Protector and officer in charge of police shall forthwith transmit to the Northern Protector or Southern Protector, according to his district, a copy of every such recognisance taken by him. He shall also, upon the expiration of the period limited for the return of the aboriginal or half-caste concerned, adopt such means as are in his power to ensure the return of such person, and the payment of such person's wages in pursuance of the condition of the recognisance, and shall report the performance or non-performance of the condition to the Northern Protector or Southern Protector, as the case may.

Form of Register.

11. The register to be kept by police officers in charge of stations and by Protectors with respect to the employment of aboriginals shall be in the following form:—

Register of Employment of Aboriginals.

Date of Application for Permit.	Date of Issue of Permit.	No. of Permit.	Employer.	Occupation of Employer.	Residence of Employer.	Aboriginal's (or Half-caste's) Name.	Sex.	Approximate Age.	A Native of	Place of Employment.	Nature of Employment.	Remarks.

Monthly Collective Return of Relief.

12. Every Protector shall forward to the Northern Protector or Southern Protector, according to his district, as soon as possible after the expiration of each month, a monthly collective return of all relief issued to aboriginals in each police sub-district during that month. Such return shall be in the following form, or as near thereto as circumstances will permit:—

"THE ABORIGINALS PROTECTION AND RESTRICTION OF THE SALE OF OPIUM ACT, 1897."

Return of Relief issued to Aboriginals in _____ Sub-district during the month of _____ 19__

Stations.	Date.	NATURE OF RELIEF.								Amount Expended.	Number of Aboriginals Relieved.	By whom Relieved.	Remarks.
		Flour.	Tea.	Sugar.	Meat.	Tobacco.	Oxen.	Tomahawks.	Potatoes.				

I hereby certify the above to be a correct return.

Protector.

Annual Report.

13. Every Protector shall forward to the Northern Protector or Southern Protector, according to his district, on or before the thirtieth day of May of each year, a report with respect to the working of the Act in his district during the previous year.

APPENDIX C.

REPEAL OF CLAUSE 2 OF THE REGULATIONS UNDER "*THE ABORIGINALS PROTECTION AND RESTRICTION OF THE SALE OF OPIUM ACT, 1897.*"

Northern and Southern Protectors.

Two of the Protectors appointed under the provisions of the Act shall be called respectively the Northern and Southern Protectors, and shall be charged with the administration of the Act and these Regulations within the Districts hereinafter respectively assigned to them.

The Districts assigned to the Northern Protector shall be the Petty Sessions Districts within the Northern and Central Divisions of Queensland.

The Districts assigned to the Southern Protector shall be the Petty Sessions Districts within the Southern Division of Queensland.

Provided that the Minister may from time to time, by notification in the *Government Gazette*, for the purposes of the Act—

(a) Assign to the Southern Protector any Petty Sessions District included in the Northern District; and

(b) Assign to the Northern Protector any Petty Sessions District included in the Southern District.

The Northern Protector and Southern Protector shall be guided by and carry into execution all instructions and orders of the Minister, and shall in all matters report to him.

Price 2s.]

By Authority: EDMUND GREGORY, Government Printer, William street, Brisbane.

Report of the Northern Protector of Aboriginals for 1899

Corporate Author: Queensland, Chief Protector of Aboriginals

RS 25.4/3

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a329147_1899_a.pdf