

1901.

QUEENSLAND.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NORTHERN PROTECTOR  
OF ABORIGINALS FOR 1900.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command.

TO THE UNDER SECRETARY, HOME SECRETARY'S DEPARTMENT.

Office of the Northern Protector,  
Cooktown, 1st January, 1901.

SIR,—In accordance with the wishes of the Minister, I have the honour to hand you my Annual Report on the results of the the operation of "*The Aborigines Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act, 1897*," for the year ending 31st December, 1900. Hitherto, it has been my practice to complete this up to the end of each 30th June—the termination of the financial year—but it is now intended that my reports shall be in harmony, so far as dates are concerned, with those referring to other Departments under the control of the Home Secretary. Nominally, therefore, an annual report, this really deals with my work only for the past six months.

In my last Report I expressed myself as strongly adverse to any Chinese or other coloured aliens employing aboriginals, especially when the blacks can obtain equally good employment elsewhere, but that, on the racial account only, I could not conscientiously refuse any such respectable and law-abiding citizens the right to work them. That many such reputable ones are to be met with goes without saying. For instance, in the Mackay sub-district, the local Protector (Sub-Inspector Martin) reports as follows:—"My experience here is that the Chinese farmers who employ aboriginals treat them very much better than most of the white people who employ them. The Chinese offer better wages and, what is more, pay the aboriginals their wages when due; they also house and feed them well." On the other hand, the Europeans have only themselves sometimes to blame for this condition of things—aliens being allowed to employ blacks. Atherton forms a case in point: Here there are some 250 aboriginals occupying from time immemorial some 64 square miles of rich scrub, which is full of native food, both animal and vegetable. Unfortunately for the autochthonous population this land is rapidly being felled and cleared, and the blacks have accordingly to travel further and further afield to find a sufficient supply of their natural food. There are upwards of 230 Chinese employed by, or renting land from, over seventy out of the seventy-six European selectors, with the result that the blacks are, necessarily, mostly employed by Asiatics. If only to prevent the able-bodied aboriginals from starving—these rich lands being now all of them taken up, and most of them fenced—I cannot instruct the local Protector to prevent Chinese employing them (as was urged by the Atherton Progress Association some two and a-half years ago). At the same time I have given orders that blacks are not to be allowed to work for any coloured alien once convicted of supplying opium.

With regard to the length of service on the boats, the Protectors at Cairns and Cooktown do not permit aboriginals to be signed on articles for periods longer than six months, an arrangement similar to that at Thursday Island. Any longer continuous service is as a rule too much to be expected from the blacks; this applies to those engaged on land equally well as to those employed on boats.

That the natives are being removed from one district to another, without the necessary bonds being entered into for their return, is proved by the fact that during the past twelve months, only thirteen such recognizances have been forwarded to me from the whole of the Northern Districts—*i.e.*, from lat. 22 up. I also had personal proof of this breach of the Act in the Cardwell and Herberton Petty Sessions Districts, during my visit of inspection there last September and October. As the non-return of aboriginals to their native country on expiry of their term of service, constitutes a very grave abuse, I have impressed upon Protectors the necessity for seeing that provision of the Act dealing with this subject is rigidly enforced. Where blacks actually wish to remain away from their own native districts—and the employers are all that is desirable—the Minister has approved of my action in instructing that the bonds can be renewed from year to year, so that ultimately the return passage money will be forthcoming—an expense which otherwise would fall upon the State.

Several applications have been received from employers for the grant of certificates of exemption from the provisions of the Act (under Section 33) to certain half-castes. It is noteworthy that these have invariably been made on behalf of little girls. My own interpretation of such certificates is that they should be issued only to those half-castes old enough mentally able to appreciate them. Furthermore, it must be remembered that, when once granted, there is no power given to revoke such documents. Supposing for one moment that a certificate were given to such a child, she would really be worse off than before; she would be denied the protection which the Act affords, and, not being able to look after her own interests, her condition would be nothing else than one of slavery.

I am satisfied that the blacks do not, as a rule, receive the wages—small enough as they are—which they are justly entitled to under their agreements. With the amending Act, however, which I believe the Home Secretary proposes bringing forward this session, the Protectors will have power to check this and other abuses.

I note that the public continue to apply to the police to recruit black labour for them; steps are being taken to stop this practice.

Women and children under puberty are still forbidden to be carried on the boats. A young half-caste child, "Willie," was found by Protector Bennett on one of the vessels. Being too young for swimming-diving, he was taken away and put into my charge.

C. A. 55—1901.

Grant of food  
and other relief.

With regard to the grant of food and other relief, I have been made responsible for its adequate supply and distribution at the different centres, all vouchers being now certified to by me. In the matter of distribution, I have to record the valuable assistance rendered by the police, and by the officers in charge of telegraph stations in the peninsula, in seeing that the relief reaches the proper individuals, *i.e.*, those aboriginals who, owing to extreme age, or youth, infirmity, disease, and other good causes, are precluded from obtaining food for themselves. It is true that occasionally some of the Government rations are subsequently partaken of by able-bodied adult blacks, who refuse to work for Europeans; but this can hardly be invariably prevented. Amongst the general public there seems to be a good deal of misconception in regard to this relief. The Government does not for one moment intend feeding the whole native population in the North, which I estimate at not less than 25,000. Where at any given centre—and they were not a few—it was found that the relief supplied all the aboriginals' wants, the fact came into prominence that such a distribution was only acting in the way of pauperisation, with the sure result that the Government would be compelled to make the temporary relief a permanent charge. The old ones had no incentive to hunt for their native foods, while the young ones, as they got older, had no ambition or pressure brought upon them either to obtain it for themselves, or to seek employment among the settlers, who would willingly give them work. In my opinion it was, therefore, far preferable that the rations supplied by Government should prove less sufficient than ample, and I have accordingly gradually decreased the allowance in those localities where there still remains an abundance of native foods. At one centre I found that sugar and tea, as well as beef and flour, were being regularly supplied, and so far as the firstmentioned article was concerned, could quite understand that the able-bodied blacks had got too lazy to hunt for honey. Except, therefore, in cases coming under medical treatment, beef and flour are the only articles now allowed. While these reductions will thus prove of no hardship to the aboriginals themselves, the settlers in certain districts will no longer have cause for the complaint that, owing to the issue of Government relief, the blacks refuse to work for them.

Government relief has now been cancelled at Ayr, Cardwell, the Daintree, and at Bowen, where the local sergeant expressed himself of the opinion that it was simply a waste of money. In the Cairns district large reductions have been made. On the other hand, for the relief of the aboriginals—some 170 in number—excluded from Cooktown, £17 monthly has been specially provided.

Exclusive of individual cases here and there of special distress, sickness, &c., the following table shows the regular monthly expenditure of food relief:—There are a few cases where, instead of, or in addition to, food, the blacks are given tobacco, tomahawks, &c., for purposes of conciliation and of friendship. The last column represents the largest number of aboriginals benefited on any one particular occasion. The local Protector, Mr. Alex. Gordon, is responsible for the expenditure at Camooweal. The blacks who are being continuously relieved at Hampden and Cloncurry, are prevented obtaining food for themselves owing to disease and infirmity.

	July.	August.	September.	October.	November.	December.	
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Moreton ... ..	5 0 0	2 3 0	1 4 0	0 12 9	0 10 6	0 18 0	100
McDonnell ... ..	2 11 4	1 4 6	0 5 10	0 7 3½	0 7 3	2 19 2	120
Laura and Musgrave ... ..	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	38
Palmer ... ..	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	140
Coen and Ebagoolah ... ..	3 15 0	3 7 0	4 19 3	4 19 11	4 19 11	5 0 0	200
Maytown ... ..	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	80
Mein ... ..	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	2 10 0	None	4 19 0	90
Butcher's Hill ... ..	4 0 0	4 0 0	4 0 0	4 0 0	4 0 0	None	60
Cooktown ... ..	2 1 6	0 18 4	0 18 6	10 0 0	9 19 6	9 18 0	197
Cape Bedford ... ..	...	...	...	7 0 0	7 0 0	7 0 0	71
Atherton ... ..	7 4 0	6 8 0	7 4 0	6 19 0	6 4 0	7 4 0	36
Irvinebank, California Creek ... ..	1 1 6	1 1 6	1 6 10	1 1 6	1 1 6	1 6 10	21
Kuranda and Myola ... ..	6 12 0	8 5 0	6 12 0	6 12 0	7 10 0	6 0 0	36
Mareeba ... ..	3 7 6	3 7 6	3 0 0	3 7 6	3 7 6	3 7 6	30
Thornborough ... ..	4 14 6	4 0 9	4 5 0	3 16 0	2 14 0	4 5 0	22
Daintree ... ..	...	...	...	...	0 15 0	Cancelled	20
Nigger Creek ... ..	...	1 11 0	(?)	1 11 6	1 11 6	1 11 0	2
Thursday Island ... ..	4 14 10	4 15 1	2 18 0	3 8 11	3 16 6	(?)	13
Cardwell ... ..	2 10 0	2 10 0	0 15 10	Cancelled	...	...	4
Bowen and Dent Island ... ..	4 7 4	1 12 10	3 10 0	7 19 9	4 18 10	Cancelled	8
Camooweal ... ..	7 12 11	4 17 5	4 15 7	4 3 3	5 0 10	6 0 5	14
Hampden ... ..	...	1 0 8	1 0 0	1 0 8	1 0 4	1 0 0	2
Cloncurry ... ..	...	...	0 16 0	1 7 0	1 12 0	0 13 5	2

I am convinced that if white settlement is allowed to advance further up into the Gulf Coast and Peninsula, without due provision being made for the blacks who are thereby dispossessed of their native hunting grounds and sources of water supply, the distribution of food relief will in a few years become a very heavy charge upon the State. I propose discussing this same matter later on.

Blankets were distributed during April, May, and June to a total of 5,792 aboriginals at fifty-two different centres. Full particulars of this Government bounty to the native race have been very kindly furnished in a return specially drawn up for my use by the Government Storekeeper, the late Mr. A. Woodward. My recommendation in last year's report, that an aboriginal's blanket should be supplied which would be immediately distinguishable in colour from any others supplied to remaining Government departments, &c., has been acted upon. Such an one is now easily recognisable by the colour of the bands composing the border: the central band is of blue and those on either side are of yellow. In the course of correspondence, Mr. Woodward expressed himself to the effect that if police-trackers "are entitled to blankets, the cost should come out of the police vote. As regards the gins of these men, it is a moot point whether they should lose the privilege of the blacks by reason of the employment of their husbands." It is proposed this year to reduce the number of blankets to 250 pairs at Atherton, to increase the supply at Cooktown to 150 pairs, to constitute Cape Grenville a new centre (under the control of Protector Bennett), and to arrange so that the superintendents of the Mission Stations will have independent action—*i.e.*, their blankets to be forwarded to them direct.

Blanket  
distribution.

Convictions have been recorded against the following in connection with the illegal possession of aboriginals' blankets:—

Date.	Name.	Locality.	Verdict.
1900. 4 July ... ..	Ah Fat ... ..	Thornborough ...	Fined 1s., and costs 7s. 10d.
30 " ... ..	Ah Gun ... .. Pleeson (a Cingalee) ...	" ... ..	Fined " 10s., and costs " 25s., or 14 days. (P.)

An aboriginal's blanket, almost new, was sent for sale to an auction-room at Cooktown; I took possession of it.

RETURN showing the DISTRIBUTION of BLANKETS to the ABORIGINALS, in 1900, in the Territory North of the 22nd Parallel of Latitude.

Name of Centre.	Distributor.	Date of Distribution.	Number of Pairs Given Out.	Adults.		Children.	Unspecified.	Total Persons.
				Males.	Females.			
		1900.						
Atherton ... ..	Police ... ..	1 and 9 May ...	250	161	135	70	...	366
Ayr ... ..	" ... ..	12 to 17 May ...	84	39	38	14	...	91
Ayton ... ..	" ... ..	1 May ... ..	113½	64	56	34	...	154
Bowen ... ..	" ... ..	May to July ...	234	119	100	26	...	245
Burketown ... ..	" ... ..	17 April ... ..	134	86	103	9	...	198
Cairns ... ..	" ... ..	1 to 25 May ...	425	310	270	114	...	694
" Yarrabah Mission ...	Superintendent	22 May ... ..	75	35	42	44	...	121
Camooeal ... ..	Police ... ..	11 " ... ..	30	11	25	...	...	86
Cardwell ... ..	" ... ..	May to Sept. ...	150	96	126	30	1	253
Charleston ... ..	" ... ..	7 May ... ..	42	23	15	8	...	46
Charters Towers ... ..	" ... ..	1 " ... ..	51	27	17	14	...	58
Claremont Lightship ...	The Master	20 " ... ..	50	28	14	16	...	58
Clarke River ... ..	Post and Tele- graph Officer	28 " ... ..	26½	13	11	5	...	29
Cloncurry ... ..	Police ... ..	June, July, and Aug. ... ..	80½	42	27	17	...	86
Coen ... ..	" ... ..	1 May ... ..	100	95	91	2	...	188
Cooktown ... ..	" ... ..	1 " ... ..	100	100	76	24	...	200
Croydon ... ..	" ... ..	12 " ... ..	121	63	55	6	...	124
Cumberland ... ..	" ... ..	1 " ... ..	50	25	23	2	...	50
Eton ... ..	" ... ..	1 " ... ..	20	11	9	...	...	20
Georgetown ... ..	" ... ..	7 " ... ..	60	35	28	11	...	74
Geraldton ... ..	" ... ..	1 " ... ..	200	161	166	64	...	391
Halifax ... ..	" ... ..	12 " ... ..	26½	18	6	3	...	27
Herberton ... ..	" ... ..	1 " ... ..	131	77	58	20	...	155
Hillgrove ... ..	Post and Tele- graph Officer	14 " ... ..	25	12	12	2	...	26
Hughenden ... ..	Police ... ..	18 to 25 May ...	25	14	8	5	...	27
Ingham ... ..	" ... ..	12 May ... ..	300	137	145	48	...	330
Junction Creek ... ..	Post and Tele- graph Officer	1 to 6 May ...	23	10	9	8	...	27
Laura ... ..	Police ... ..	May to June ...	82	60	51	25	...	186
Lucinda Point ... ..	Customs Officer	12 May ... ..	16	9	6	2	...	17
Mackay ... ..	Police ... ..	7 to 9 May ...	44	25	13	...	6	44
" Mari Yamba ... ..	Superintendent	24 May ... ..	16½	11	3	5	...	19
Mackinlay ... ..	Police ... ..	25 to 27 August	7	4	3	...	...	7
Mareeba ... ..	" ... ..	May to June ...	102½	46	40	33	...	119
Maytown ... ..	" ... ..	1 May ... ..	48	31	34	27	...	92
Mirani ... ..	" ... ..	1 " ... ..	20	13	7	1	...	21
Mount Douglas ... ..	" ... ..	13 July ... ..	35	16	16	6	...	38
Nebo ... ..	" ... ..	May to June ...	80½	49	29	8	...	86
Normanton ... ..	" ... ..	11 April ... ..	150	62	65	52	...	179
Palm Islands ... ..	Harbour-master, Townsville ...	1 April to June	33	16	16	2	...	34
Palmerville ... ..	Police ... ..	1 May ... ..	50	35	58	7	...	100
Pentland ... ..	" ... ..	May to June ...	25	14	11	...	...	25
Port Douglas ... ..	" ... ..	1 to 15 May ...	66	60	42	18	...	120
Ravenswood ... ..	" ... ..	12 May ... ..	30	20	11	...	...	31
Richmond ... ..	" ... ..	7 to 10 May ...	50	28	20	4	...	52
Tangorin ... ..	" ... ..	No application.					...	
Tate ... ..	" ... ..	1 May ... ..	32	18	11	6	...	35
Thornborough ... ..	" ... ..	1 " ... ..	100	45	44	28	...	112
Thursday Island ... ..	" ... ..	April to June ...	113	75	85	16	...	178
" Weipa Mis- sion	Superintendent	10 May ... ..	35	33	1	1	...	35
" Mapoon Mis- sion	" ... ..	12 to 14 April	50	26	18	6	...	50
Townsville ... ..	Police ... ..	1 to 31 May ...	122	65	40	31	...	136
Turn Off Lagoons ... ..	" ... ..	4 to 26 " ...	11½	7	3	4	...	14
Urundangie ... ..	" ... ..	June, July, and August	71	35	52	10	1	98
Total ... ..	...	...	4,312	2,615	2,344	883	8	5,850

A. WOODWARD,  
Government Storekeeper.

Government Stores,  
Brisbane, 21st January, 1901.

Employment of  
aboriginals on  
boats.

I again beg to respectfully refer the whole matter of the employment of natives on the boats to the earnest and kindly consideration of the Minister; his Aboriginals Protection Amending Bill of 1899 is urgently required to be passed into law. During the course of one patrol in November, Protector Bennett came across three vessels with unsigned natives. On one of them he found the child, Willie, already referred to; it is interesting to note that this boy subsequently informed me that Mr. Bennett's boat was sighted in time sufficient to give the master of the vessel the opportunity of getting rid of the women he had on board. Some of the difficulties that I have to contend with, in the absence of additional powers, may be summarised by taking one or two examples at random. There was the cutter "Johara," for instance, which came into Cooktown from the North, about the beginning of August. I found that the coloured individual in charge (one Ahmed) had brought down with his aboriginal crew two women from Night Island. This island lies about 25 miles south of Cape Direction, and about 180 miles north of Cooktown. A boat not being "premises" I could not prosecute Ahmed for "harbouring"; similarly, I could not prove a case against him for "employing," because the employment could not be sworn to; furthermore, Night Island and Cooktown being in the same Petty Sessions District, it was impossible to press a charge of removal from one district to another. The local shipping-master was also prevented taking action because he had not found the women on the boat—they having cleared out into the Chinese quarter immediately after their arrival in port. Another case in point, about the same time, was that of "Jackie," a native of the Batavia River, on the Gulf coast. Nicholas Minster (a ? Greek) got a permit for this boy at Cairns, and brought him to Cooktown, where he was shipped on articles; he was signed off at New Guinea and brought back as a passenger to Cooktown, to be left stranded and sick upon the wharf. Here he was found by the police who put him into hospital; and finally my department was forced to pay his passage-money home. This same boy seems to have had an unfortunate experience with a previous employer who marooned him about a year before. Of course, my appointment as an inspector under the Pearling and Bêche-de-Mer Fisheries Act, and the use of the patrol cutter, the "Melbidir," will enable me to deal with and to check some of the present abuses.

Supply of liquor  
to aboriginals.

At Cooktown, as a result of keeping the blacks, other than those under agreement, out of the township, and refusing (with one particular exception for which there was good reason) to allow any publicans to employ aboriginals, the scandal referred to in my last report has now been satisfactorily put a stop to; there has not been a single conviction reported to me from here during the past six months for drunkenness on the part of a native. At Herberton the local protector has received instructions not to grant permits to any hotel-keepers to employ blacks. As Inspector Meldrum states: "The opportunities afforded to aboriginals who are employed by licensed victuallers and aliens to obtain liquor and opium are too great and require to be checked. It will be necessary, however, to treat each case separately, and deal with it on its merits. I am aware that there are many respectable hotel-keepers who are sincerely desirous of dealing justly and humanely with aboriginals, but there are others, I am sorry to say, who are ready to supply them with liquor if they have got the money to pay for it." In many cases grog is supplied by employers, &c., more through thoughtlessness than anything else. I have noticed, for instance, that Christmas, St. Patrick's Day, and other similar anniversaries and public holidays, are occasions when aboriginals especially appear to get supplied with liquor; but because on these occasions certain whites then choose to indulge in excesses, that is no reason for the blacks to be afforded the opportunity of following their example.

The subjoined convictions have been brought under my notice during the past six months for supplying liquor to natives:—

Date	Name.	Locality.	Verdict.
1900.			
4 July ...	Pleeson (Cingalese) ...	Charters Towers ...	£10 and £1 4s. costs, or 3 months. (P.)
25 " ...	A. McGregor ...	" " ...	£20 or 3 months. (P.)
8 August ...	Cassim ...	Ayr ...	£20 or 6 months. (I.)
18 September ...	Sam (Malay) ...	" ...	£23 and 6s. 6d. costs, or 6 months. (P.)
19 October ...	Rob. Laing ...	Ingham ...	£10 and £1 1s. costs, or 2 months. (P.)
12 December ...	F. Entricken ...	Hampden ...	5s. and 3s. 6d. costs.

The following blacks were convicted of drunkenness:—

Date.	Name.	Locality.	Verdict.
1900.			
11 August ...	Jimmy ...	Croydon ...	Convicted, but not punished.
22 September ...	Jack ...	" ...	Discharged.
27 December ...	Nimms ...	Camooweal ...	Discharged with a caution.

Supply of opium  
to aboriginals.

I regret to state that the supply of opium to aboriginals continues apparently with unabated vigour in spite of the vigilance of the authorities and the increasing severity of the fines inflicted. Though, as has been freely expressed, the methods adopted by the police in proving their cases to secure a conviction are not quite compatible with a sense of British justice, such action on their part is necessitated by the circumstances of the case. The police have to cope with the ever-increasing smartness of the Asiatics (the main suppliers). In one particular district, where the local constable found it practically impossible to circumvent the celestials by means of aboriginal boys with money, he employed a gin, without the usual shilling, and she has proved eminently successful in securing a conviction. So long as the evil exists, such and similar procedures must be resorted to. I look upon the opium-habit as a cancerous sore slowly but surely eating its way into the bosom of the community—a danger fatal alike to the black and to the white. I cannot close my thought to the belief that many Europeans will soon be succumbing to its influence. The local Protector, at Mackay,

(Sub-Inspector Martin) tells me it would be almost impossible to stop the supplying of the drug in his sub-district. "Most of the aboriginals are opium-smokers, and will not work without it. I have good reason to believe that most of the settlers keep it for the purpose of getting work out of the blacks." According to the experience of the Protector at Townsville (Inspector Meldrum) the supply of opium to aboriginals is confined principally to Chinese gardeners and small storekeepers, who require to be strictly watched. Warden Haldane, in his Report (1899) to the Under Secretary for Mines speaks of the Atherton Chinese as follows:—"These Asiatics are . . . located on the rich scrub land around Atherton, paying the selectors as much rent per annum as the original cost of the purchase of the land from the Crown. The result is the formation on these selections of Chinese camps, which are anything but conducive to the health and morals of the European residents, and certain destruction in the near future of the once robust native population, by their supplying opium and other abominations among them. One of the most repulsive cases of leprosy that I have seen came from these camps, and very recently a deliberate murder was committed on the main road on one of their own countrymen. Fines have been inflicted on these Asiatics, in the aggregate amounting to £80, and, in second offences, peremptory imprisonment for six months, for supplying opium to the aboriginal population, but with little or no effect other than to cause them to use more caution in carrying on the traffic, such as leaving a pipe with opium at a stump in the scrub for the aboriginals to visit at their leisure, thereby incurring no risk of prosecution."

I have had to draw your attention to the suspicion attaching to certain mail contractors in the North carrying opium for aboriginals.

The following is a list recording the convictions for breach of section 21 of the Act—*i.e.* unlawfully supplying blacks with opium:—

Date.	Name.	Locality.	Verdict.
1900.			
4 July	Charley Ah Lam	Croydon	£20, or 3 months.
4 "	Ah Sue	"	"
16 "	Ah Way	Ayr	£20, and £3 16s. costs, or 6 months. (I.)
16 "	Ah Chong	"	£20, and 3s. 6d. costs, or 6 months. (I.)
16 "	Ah Yet	"	) Summons disobeyed; warrants issued for their arrest.
16 "	Ah Sam	"	
16 "	Ah Young	"	) £20, and 4s. 6d. costs, or 6 months. (I.)
26 "	Mow Quay	"	
26 "	Ah Hoey	"	"
31 "	Ah Way	Thornborough	£10, and 9s. 6d. costs, or 3 months.
2 August	Ah Wong	Barron River	£8 2s. 6d.
20 "	Charlie Ah Tie	Normanton	£20, and £2 12s. costs, or 3 months. (I.)
21 "	Ah Long	Croydon	£20, and £1 1s. costs, or 3 months. (I.)
24 "	Ye Yek (Ah Sing)	Mackay	£5, and 17s. costs, or 3 months. (P.)
24 "	Ah Qua	"	Disobeyed summons; warrant issued.
4 September	Wah Lu	Walkerston	£2, and £1 2s. 3d. costs, or 1 month.
20 "	Ah Luey	Percyville	£20, or 2 months. (P.)
20 "	Ah Sing	Cooktown	£10, and costs, or 6 weeks. (I.)
20 "	Ah Sam	"	"
20 "	Mollimon	"	"
29 "	Sam Yin	Atherton	£23 2s. 6d.
29 "	Ah Yen	Cairns road	"
16 November	Jimmy Ah Kong	Mackay	£2, costs 9s. 6d., or 1 month. (P.)
16 "	Jimmy (Ah Sam)	"	£2, costs 10s. 3d., or 1 month. (P.)
19 "	Ah Ki	Cairns	£20, costs 17s. 4d., or 3 months.
21 "	Ah Quey	Ingham	£10, costs 18s. 10d., or 2 months.
26 "	Ah Sam	Herberton	Disobeyed summons; warrant issued.
— December	Ju See You	Thornborough	£20, costs 9s. 6d., or 3 months. (P.)
20 "	Lum Foo	Bowen	£5, costs £1 12s. 6d., or 3 months. (P.)

For the unlawful possession of opium, three convictions have been reported to me:—

Date.	Name.	Locality.	Verdict.
1900.			
14 August	J. Appoo	Hughenden	£20, or 2 months. (I.)
4 November	Johnny (Chinese)	Nebo	£10, or 3 months. (P.)
19 November	Oscar Fawcett	Bowen	£1, or 48 hours.

From the monthly returns regularly forwarded me during the past six months I have been able to arrive at the approximate average number of aboriginals who are daily taught, fed, clothed, or otherwise relieved at the various Mission Stations. This is shown in the accompanying table, wherein the Government subsidy already granted is given, as well as the particularisation of the permanents (P) from the casuals (C). The former are the blacks who permanently reside on the station, the latter those who only occasionally visit it. That some readjustment of the Government grant is necessary, so as to bear an equitable ratio with the number of blacks benefited, becomes apparent. This is a matter for the kindly consideration of the Minister. With regard to Weipa, the following remarks were attached to Rev. E. Brown's December Report:—"Though our grant is as above, which is £200 per annum, this unfortunately is not by any means at my disposal for rations. In the first place, £50 per annum has to be deducted to meet the ration debt on the two first years of our work here, and then it will cost £50 or more for the year for freight on the rations from Thursday Island." He was informed that the Government allowance should be applied towards liquidation of current expenditure on the blacks, and some other means of paying off the old debt should have been devised, &c.

Mission Stations  
Mission Reserves.

## AMOUNT OF SUBSIDY.

	WEIPA.		MAPOON.		TARRABAH.		MARI TAMBA.		CAPE BEDFORD.	
	£200.		£200.		£120.		£120.		£100.	
	P.	O.	P.	O.	P.	O.	P.	O.	P.	O.
July ... ..	14	14	52	14	112	23	20	1	39	17
August ... ..	7	12	56	15	115	23	23	1	38	18
September ... ..	39	34	53	12	122	22	23	0	38	18
October ... ..	39	59	53	18	124	23	22	0	38	20
November ... ..	25	44	} Not yet received.		129	23	20	0	38	26
December ... ..	26	34				184	28	22	1	38
Daily Average ... ..	58		68		146		22		59	

All Mission Stations have been instructed to forward returns regularly concerning any deaths occurring amongst the inmates, together with any further particulars as will ensure suitable identification of the deceased.

I am very anxious to see the intermediate portion of coast-line between the Weipa and Mapoon Mission Reserves joined with one or other of them.

Other reserves. In my last Annual Report I had the honour of drawing your attention to the necessity of reserving more land in the North for the benefit of the native, especially while there is yet time and the pecuniary sacrifice so small. I showed that the Government up to date were receiving but a total of £102 8s. in rentals from the whole of the Peninsula—*i.e.*, practically all the country north of 15 degrees latitude and west of 144 degrees longitude. In some cases land was found to be occupied but not paid for. Not only is such reservation, in my opinion, imperative on humanitarian grounds, but also on grounds of practical policy. If the blacks continue to be dispossessed of their hunting-grounds and sources of water supply by their lands being rented for grazing rights at a nominal figure—lands from which the lessees naturally desire to drive them—bloodshed and retribution will be certain to ensue, and the Executive, in order to restore law and order, will be ultimately put to an expenditure considerably in excess of the total rents received. As a case in point, I may mention that of a Northern run with a seventy mile frontage on a main river, both sides, where the manager has had trouble with the blacks of late, owing to their "disturbing" (not spearing) his cattle. As far as the police patrol could make out from the blacks, the stockmen on this same station treat the blacks very badly. "When they find the blacks out on the run any distance from the river, they race their horse on to the blacks, cut them right and left with their stockwhips, break their spears, and take their tomahawks from them." (These tomahawks have been presented to them in the name of the Government.—W.E.R.) Again, the manager himself told the police that he would allow no blacks on the run and that "the trackers should shoot them—that was what they were kept for." It would be as well, I think, to point out to certain of these Northern cattle-men (at all events those few amongst them who regard the natives as nothing more than vermin, worthy only of being trampled on) that their legal status on the lands they thus rent amounts only to this: There is nothing illegal in either blacks (or Europeans) travelling through unfenced leasehold runs. These runs are held only on grazing rights—the right to the grass—and can only be upheld as against people taking stock, &c., through them. It certainly is illegal for station-managers, &c., to use physical force and threats to turn blacks (or Europeans) so travelling off such lands. Carrying the present practice (might against right) to a logical conclusion, it would simply mean that, were all the land in the north to be thus leased, all the blacks would be hunted into the sea. The poor wretches must be allowed the wherewithal to live—their main hunting-grounds and water-supplies; they dare not voluntarily migrate elsewhere, as this, according to tribal law, would constitute a trespass, punishable by death. I plead again, that more lands be resumed for the benefit of the Northern blacks.

Sickness and disease. In response to the wishes of the Minister that I would formulate some scheme for the establishment of camps or stations in suitable localities for the aggregation of venerally afflicted aboriginals for treatment, I gave the matter my earnest attention. Fully realising the difficulties of the situation, I deemed it advisable that some of these should be brought under your notice. Though their short description constitutes sad and unpleasant reading, they are nevertheless cold-blooded facts that have to be taken into consideration before any practical scheme on the lines suggested can be determined upon. By the term "venereal," as commonly employed, must be understood at least three distinct diseases—gonorrhœa, venereal sore, and syphilis. The special treatment of each of these diseases varies. Gonorrhœa assumes a virulent form among those North Queensland aboriginals who practice intocision—"whistling." Venereal sore is generally of an aggravated type. Syphilis may answer to the ordinary drugs, mercurials, and iodides, but unfortunately this disease takes on very often a malignant or galloping form, running a rapidly destructive course. Phagedena appears to be a comparatively common complication of venereal disease, and in those cases where I have succeeded in burning away some of the sloughing tissue there has certainly been temporary local improvement—but the patient has never given me a second chance with the cautery. Success in such cases might have been probable had I been able to get the patient under chloroform, but, except in hospital, I have never yet been able to get a native to submit voluntarily to the action of the anæsthetic. I firmly hold to the opinion that syphilis, as a rule, assumes a far more serious aspect owing to its comparatively recent introduction among the natives, a long series of previous generations not having been inoculated with it. I have noticed comparatively few cases of infantile (hereditary) syphilis, but this observation must be counter-balanced by the fact that children born with disease or deformity are usually destroyed. There is a universal belief among the less civilised aboriginals that these venereal, as well as other, disorders are caused by sorcery and witchcraft at the hands of an enemy, by non-observance of certain recognised rules of conduct, by the breaking of "tabu," &c. Especially is this the case with syphilis where the long incubative period peremptorily precludes the mental appreciation of the disease being due to sexual

connection, contagion, or inoculation. As a corollary, various methods (which I have detailed elsewhere) are practised by the autochthonous population—chiefly the “medicine men”—to effect a cure. Among such may be mentioned exorcism under different guises, the local application of certain vegetable products, &c. So imbued are many of these black with this idea of all diseases, let alone venereal, being due to witchcraft, &c., that when the native “treatment” finally fails to cure, they will consider themselves doomed, deliberately refuse sustenance, and lie down to die. Some five or six cases of this suicidal mania have come under my personal observation; one, of special interest, was that of a fairly educated male half-caste employed in the Postal Department. With venereal disease in general, the less civilised aborigines cannot appreciate the time, patience, and regular administration of medicine, necessary to produce any permanently good results at the hands of the European physician. Within my own experience I discovered that my remedies, whether in solid or liquid form, have been regarded sometimes as food-stuffs, and occasionally as talismans. According to the reasoning powers of the savage, how can medicine taken by the mouth possible affect disease at the opposite extremity of the body? In this connection it may here be mentioned that one elderly individual in particular, suffering from hæmorrhoids for which I was proposing to give some common aperient, candidly told me in so many words that I was a fool: it is undesirable to state here the exact words he used. Furthermore, an aboriginal cannot be trusted with a bottle of medicine even with explicit instructions to take so much—say, what he can hold in his cupped palm—at early morn, at mid-day, and at even. If he has any faith in the talismanic virtues of the bottle’s contents at all, he considers that it should cure all the quicker if the bottleful be swallowed at once. Perhaps what is even more inimical to their own interests, is that the natives as a rule will not seek European advice until they have exhausted their own remedial measures, and the disease has already got a firm hold on them. Before the introduction of syphilis among the aborigines, many of their (to us) obscene practices were fraught with no such disastrous consequences as now inevitably ensue. Unfortunately, their present mental condition does not, as already stated, admit of their appreciating that certain effects necessarily follow upon definite causes. A difficulty in certain hospitals has been that aborigines will not submit to isolation and confinement, especially at night. Many complaints have been made on this score, and in some cases it has been found that the aboriginal inmates have even been surreptitiously visited at night by friends from the camps. I have had similar experiences myself at a small lock-hospital which I had constructed about two years ago in the vicinity of Cooktown, at the 8-Mile Native Mounted Police Camp. To arrive at any absolute conclusions as to the proportion of aborigines suffering from venereal disease is a matter of impossibility. As far as can be gathered it is at present very prevalent in the North-western districts, and along the Peninsula coast-line, especially on its lower Gulf shores, and, of course, is common in the neighbourhood of white settlement generally. At Cloncurry I reported 29th May, 1900, that the few remaining blacks are nearly all diseased; at Camooweal (27th June, 1900) that nearly all the 35 individuals in the local camp are suffering more or less from venereal; at Normanton, Dr. Rendle (25th August, 1900) states that about half the blacks (out of a total of 176) are suffering slightly from the same complaint; at Mount Garnet, Dr. Shorter (3rd November, 1900) reports that the natives are reeking with syphilis, &c. Disease amongst the blacks is undoubtedly a source of danger to the whites. I have met with two cases in private practice where European children have been thus accidentally infected with syphilis. People employing native women as nurse-girls, publicans engaging aborigines to work at hotels, and employers of black labour generally are either ignorant or callous of the risks they run. I purposely mention these contingencies, because they have been forcibly brought under my notice. From what has been my experience during the past six years in Northern Queensland, I cannot help expressing the opinion—I may be unintentionally misjudging people—that there has been a tendency for certain hospital committees to repudiate, or rather, to put obstacles in the way of, the admission of black patients, even where special lock-wards have been provided. If my surmises are correct, little dependence can therefore be placed on some of these institutions for rendering additional assistance in carrying out any scheme for the amelioration and treatment of our diseased natives.

With the facts above narrated, any scheme having for its object the segregation of diseased blacks at camps or stations in favourable localities, will require the following essentials:—

1. Complete isolation of site, and prevention of surreptitious ingress and egress. Hence, on the mainland, a stockade, &c., would be requisite, but such necessarily cramped confinement would have a deteriorating effect mentally; furthermore, sick blacks, on the whole, always do better out in the open with full freedom for hunting and fishing, and other out-of-door occupations. Islands are therefore preferable, and during my next patrol round the coast line, in the “Melbidir,” I propose looking out for one or two which may prove suitable.
2. Such sites to be proclaimed and governed under regulations, &c., as strict as those already enforced for leprosy.
3. The appointment of superintendents, &c., to keep order, find rations, and see that the medicines are administered regularly.
4. Regular medical inspection, utilising where possible the services of the Government medical officers. Increased emoluments for these extra duties would be expected. Of course I would gladly do my share of the work.

As no inconsiderable animus appears to have been unwarrantably raised among a certain section of the public over my action in advising the transfer of half-caste and true-blooded children from the hands of private employers to the various Mission Stations and Reformatories, it may be as well to state here that all action taken by me has invariably been with a view to carrying out not only the letter, but also the spirit of the law, as laid down by a humanitarian legislature in “*The Aborigines Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act, 1897.*” My chief aim is to ensure the future welfare and happiness of the children themselves. It is not a case of whether a child is willing or unwilling to leave its present environment; whether much bitterness is raised in the mind of its employer or not; indeed, the fact itself of a child being removed is not necessarily to be interpreted as the slightest slur on the character of those in whose charge it happens to be found. As things are at present the majority of these female children are engaged mostly as nurse-girls, kept in a false position by being brought up as “one of the family”—a fact which will probably account for their receiving no regular wages—and then when they get into trouble are no longer wanted, but packed off to shift for themselves as best they can. I regret very much being obliged to report that many employers have screened themselves behind the 4th section of the Act, which does

Half-castes and other children.

not deem to be "aboriginals" those half-castes who at the time of the passing of the Act were not living or associating with aboriginals as children. To circumvent the tactics of such people I was obliged to have recourse to the Reformatory Act; without the latter I could have claimed no rights whatsoever for these little waifs and strays. I am well aware also that considerable discrimination must be exercised in all these cases of removal, and while recognising the desirability of protecting girls with as little inconvenience as possible to reputable employers, I have at the same time to bear in mind that it is far better to take away such young girls before danger has befallen them, than to remove them after they have been tampered with. In this connection it should be remembered that these girls (like all other aboriginals) labour under the same great disadvantage of not being able to prove their age before a court of law, with the result that in the charges of criminal assault which have been brought under my notice, I have considered it useless to go to court. I am convinced that were the onus of proof of age—the age of consent—to rest with the accused, and not, as at present, with the prosecutor, an end would soon be put to these disgusting cases. When half-caste (and, for the matter of that, full-blooded) girls of tender years are found with European employers—they are, of course, not allowed with Asiatics—I must be perfectly satisfied that the latter are suited for the care of such children, have them under proper agreement, give them suitable remuneration, and are in a position to prevent loose behaviour on their part. Whilst the status and occupation, &c., of the employer have to be carefully considered, allowance must also be made for the length of service already past and gone. If this is found to have been satisfactory, so much better will be the chances of the present employer being permitted to retain such service. In the case of half-caste children, especially girls, found living in the camps, it is desirable that these, where old enough, should be removed at once to the Mission Station or Reformatory. The State takes upon itself the responsibility—a serious one, to my mind—of taking such children from their aboriginal environments, but at the same time hands them over to the various Mission Stations which are now under direct Government supervision and control. The following are particulars of some of the cases of young girls who have been sent to the Missions, &c. :—

(1) Jenny.—From Cairns. I cannot do better than refer to that portion of the speech, relative to this half-caste, made by the Home Secretary in the Legislative Assembly on 18th December, 1900.

(2) T.S.—Half-caste. About fifteen years of age; living with Europeans, but not under agreement, never having "associated" with blacks, in terms of the Act. Pregnant. States she had connection with three young fellows, but cannot swear to the father of the child. Willing to go to a Mission Station.

(3) L.C.—Half-caste. Nine or ten years old; with Europeans, under agreement. Complaints received about the way this child is sleeping at night under other people's houses, beaten by her employer, and as to her being often found wandering about the streets. Any day the Chinamen may get hold of her. Her mother is said to be somewhere in the neighbourhood, but so far I have been unable to trace her.

(4) Nellie.—Half-caste kanaka, eleven or twelve years, wandering about the blacks' camps around Murray River and Cardwell. She is believed to have been already tampered with. On arrival at the Mission Station was found to be suffering with venereal.

(5) Topsy.—From Torren's Creek. Her late European guardian wrote about her as follows :— "Topsy's mother then took to another blackboy; they are both demoralised with opium. Whilst on the station Topsy was taken care of; now that her mother has taken her child to the township, young as she is, she will very soon be ruined. Immediate action should be taken to withdraw Topsy from such evil associations. Can you not take her into safe custody at once? and inform the proper authorities to save the child by sending her to one of the Aboriginal Homes provided for such by the Government? This is a case wherein a timely rescue means saving an unfortunate child."

(6) (7) L. and M.—Half-caste Portuguese and kanaka respectively. About thirteen and ten years. One of them was found to be camping at night with an aboriginal female, a prostitute; the other was believed to have been already tampered with.

(8) N.—Half-caste kanaka. Under no agreement, but working for and living with Europeans, to whom she had originally been given by the police. Ran away from her employer, who forced her to come back—when she first came under my notice. Satisfied myself that she had been cruelly treated, sworn at, beaten, and kicked; she showed me a scar which she ascribed to her late employer's boot; she apparently had no blanket, and certainly received no wages—the poor thing had proved a hard-worked willing slave. I considered her about fifteen years old, if that, notwithstanding that she had had a baby (now dead) a good twelvemonth before. She expressed a wish to go to the Mission Station.

(9) P.—Half-caste, about four years of age; her mother died a year before, her death being caused—I have very good reason for saying so—by gross unkindness and ill-usage. On her way down to the Mission Station, in charge of the police, and soon after taking her departure, this child was seen by a publican who expressed a wish to have her, with the result that when she arrived at the coast, she was sent all the way back to the hotel—without, of course, my knowledge, authority, or consent. However, she only remained about a month with her new employers, and is now safe at Yarrabah.

(10) J.C.—A half-caste mother in the camp at Ayr, with three half-caste children. The removal to the Mission Station of the half-castes and all the true-blooded female children was authorised. I learn that the mother was induced to leave the camp, and go into service with her twelvemonth-old baby; the other two children being sent to Yarrabah. All the other aboriginals cleared from the kanaka's camp when they heard of their projected removal. A kanaka, named Albert, with whom the mother had been living, was sentenced a few days ago to three months' imprisonment for supplying liquor to aboriginal gins.

(11) R.—Half-caste, eight or nine years of age. In the employ of a publican who has been convicted on one occasion of drunkenness and obscene language, on another of the same weakness coupled with disorderly conduct.

And so *ad nauseam*. It is to be regretted that the parents of these half-castes cannot be traced and made to support them, instead of their being a charge upon the State. If the fathers of these half-castes knew that they would be called upon to support their progeny there would be much less of this kind of immorality. I cannot conscientiously blame the young aboriginal women allowing themselves to get into trouble. I do not expect that in one, or even in two generations, there can be instilled into them (excepting, of course, those at the various missions) all the moral virtues



and mental restraints that it has taken ourselves something like 2,000 years to learn—not necessarily to possess—ever since the Great Teacher spoke to the Magdalen whose coloured sister the general public is so ready to condemn. I have on several occasions had to point out to employers the advisability, when the time comes, of getting these girls properly and suitably married to men of their own race and colour, a condition in which—the lawful exercise of their physiological functions—there is far more chance and hope of their remaining happy and contented. As in the majority of cases this cannot unfortunately be arranged, it is, to my thinking, far more charitable and merciful to send them, while they are as yet young and uncontaminated, to the different missions where, so soon as they arrive at an age suitable, they are married and settled down to lives of happiness to themselves and of usefulness to the State. On the other hand, brought up in a false position as “one of the family,” &c., the time arrives sooner or later when the true-blooded or half-caste girl realises that she is a pariah amongst those very people with whom, probably ever since she can remember, she has associated more or less as an equal. Is it matter for wonder that any such should finally end badly? Here, for instance, is the case of Minnie, a half-caste woman about twenty years of age, who has just been sent to the Fraser Island Mission. She is an intelligent girl, having been brought up by white people; she can read and write, and is an excellent servant when she can be kept away from drink. She has now, however, become acquainted with some white people of bad character, and was going from bad to worse.

The above cases will, I trust, vindicate my course of action in the disposal of aboriginal children—especially the females. I look forward with confidence to the legislature strengthening my hands in giving me additional powers to cope with the accompanying evils and abuses which, though brought under my notice, I am as yet unable to prevent and to control.

No marriage of a female aboriginal with any other than an aboriginal should be celebrated without the authority of the Home Secretary. Legal marriages continue to take place with Europeans, coloured aliens, &c. Although the English law does not recognise the marriage ceremony of natives as legal, still I have no doubt that a great moral wrong may be inflicted by allowing gins to be thus married to Asiatics and others without previous careful inquiry being made as to whether they are not already married in the tribal sense of the term.

The work of the Protectors and others connected with them continues to be greatly hampered by the freedom of intercourse which is at present permissible between blacks and whites. Any unscrupulous European, Asiatic, &c., may enter and remain in any blacks' camp at will. To enforce the opposite condition proves also no easy matter, though at Cooktown, where under the instructions of the Home Secretary, the natives—other than those under agreement—are being kept by the police out of the township, a marked improvement is to be noted.

As mentioned in my last Annual Report, where the presence of any particular aboriginal has proved a source of possible danger to the white population, &c., his removal to, and detention in, another district has been, upon my recommendation, sanctioned by the Minister under section 9 of the Act. The following deportations have been thus authorised during the past twelvemonth:—

- “Andy,” Endeavour River, for the murder of “Breeza,” at Hidden Valley.
- “Shell-fish,” Batavia River, murder of a gin.
- “Missie,” Starcke River, believed to be the murderer of the civilised aboriginal, “Fred Fooks,” last October. A great deal of influence over his tribe, and quite capable of using it against white men as well as natives. Daring and treacherous disposition.
- “Ponto,” Endeavour River, convicted of assault on a white girl.
- “Tommy Roderick,” Normanby River, continued larcenies at miners' camps. Wilfully setting fire to a neighbouring station.
- “Long George,” Mount Amos, &c., larcenies at the miners' camps.
- “Billy Nolan,” Normanby River, larceny. A notoriously bad character.
- “Bendigo,” Mitchell River, caught spearing cattle.
- “Larry,” Endeavour River, three convictions for larceny. Being so young—only thirteen—he was sent to the Yarrabah Reformatory.

No murder of Europeans has been reported during the past six months. Two prospectors were attacked on the Coleman River last October, and one of them speared, but without fatal results. There were certain facts connected with the incident which were never made public. Hundreds of miners passed over the same track from Normanton and Croydon, and the blacks never interfered with them.”

The following reports have been forwarded to the Minister:—

- “The boundaries of the North-West Central Queensland Border Tribes.” (With map.)
- “A hitherto unrecorded method of making fire.”
- “The manufacture of the Phallocrypt.”
- “Group-relationship on the Annan River.”
- “Group-relationships among the Northern Territory and Queensland Border Tribes.”
- “On the manners and customs of the Natives of the Lower Tully River.” (Two Series.)

I have again to express my thanks to the Colonial Botanist, Mr. F. M. Bailey, for his valued assistance and kindly help in identifying the various economic plants, which I have forwarded him. During the past three years he has thus named some 384 specimens for me.

So as to make every use of the cutter with which the Minister has provided me, I propose visiting, as opportunities occur, the various islands upon which the Agricultural Department has commenced cocoa-nut plantations. Low Woody Island (north of Cooktown), and the Lizards have already thus been reported on.

During the past twelve months, 1,587 communications passed through this office; 720 inward, and 867 outward.

I have, &c.,  
WALTER E. ROTH,  
Northern Protector of Aborigines.

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# **Annual Report of the Northern Protector of Aborigines for 1900**

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