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1904.

QUEENSLAND.

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NORTHERN PROTECTOR OF ABORIGINALS FOR 1903.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command.

TO THE UNDER SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC LANDS.

Brisbane, 2nd April, 1904.

SIR,—I have the honour to hand you my Annual Report on the results of the operation of "*The Aborigines Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Acts, 1897 to 1901*," for the year ending 31st December, 1903.

LABOUR: PERMITS, AGREEMENTS, WAGES.

Permits.—A total of 1,745 permits has been issued by the local Protectors. Particulars of their distribution are shown in the following table:—

Issued in the Petty Sessions Districts of—	By Protector—	Stationed at—	Males.	Females.
Somerset	Bennett, Geo. H., Sub-Collector of Customs	Thursday Island	489	
Cairns, Douglas, Herberton, Mareeba, Mourilyan, Thornborough	Marrett, Chas. B., Inspector ...	Cairns	146	72
Cook, Palmer	King, James, Sergeant	Cooktown	312	73
Burke, Camooweal, Cloncurry, Etheridge, Norman	Galbraith, Percy D. F., Inspector	Normanton	360	121
Mackay	Martin, Edward, Sub-Inspector ...	Mackay	8	1
Winton	Brosnan, Michael, Acting Sergeant	Winton	22	12
Ayr, Bowen, Ingham, Cardwell	Graham, David, Inspector	Townsville	22	7
Townsville	Quilter, John, Sub-Inspector	Townsville	11	2
Charters Towers, Cape River, Hughenden, Ravenswood	McNamara, James, Sub-Inspector	Charters Towers	27	4
Boulia	O'Connor, Francis J., Sergeant ...	Boulia	41	15
		Total	1,438	307

Casual Employment.—At Townsville, Protector Quilter says:—"There are a good number of female aborigines about here who go around washing on odd days during the week. The persons who employ them are very kind to them, and supply them with rations, and give them a few shillings occasionally. The males do little odd jobs around the outskirts of the town, and are similarly treated; in my opinion it is advisable to allow them to continue this work, as a large number of the people in Townsville are not in a position to engage them for any term under an agreement."

In the Charters Towers district, according to Protector McNamara, "The aborigines in the vicinity of the towns refuse in most cases now to enter into agreements which would debar them from having a spell or getting employment elsewhere when they please. The boys, particularly around Charters Towers, will only do very casual work, and make no complaints of bad treatment from their casual employers."

"The aborigines in the Winton camp are permitted to do odd jobs for townspeople without any permits, in return for their food and a few shillings occasionally. By this means, those of them who can work are able to support themselves as well as others, who are either too old or infirm to do for themselves. Consequently, there has been no relief in this district during the year."—(Protector Brosnan.)

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Employment under Permit and Agreement.—Protector Galbraith, in discussing permits, &c., says:—"There is an increase of 135 aboriginals under agreement, as compared with the previous year, and I have every reason to believe that there will be a further increase at the end of the present one. These figures speak for themselves, and prove that aboriginal labour is in demand and required. Many employers wilfully mislead aboriginals by telling them all sorts of fearful consequences will follow after they sign an agreement. The results are that a few boys decline to sign, but state that they are willing to work without an agreement. The manager of a large cattle station in the Gulf informed me that if the police went out to his station they would not see a black. When asked why he replied, 'I have told all the blacks that if a policeman sees them they will be sent away to an island.' Further comment is needless on my part. . . . Where aboriginals put their marks to agreements, documents, receipts, &c., I also take the impression of the thumb; this, I think, might be followed up with advantage throughout the State."

Wages.—With regard to the payment of wages, as foreshadowed in my last Annual Report, certain suggestions were put before the Minister, with the result that, at the beginning of the year, the two following circular memoranda were forwarded to all the local Protectors in the northern districts of the State:—

Cases have been repeatedly brought to the knowledge of the authorities where aboriginals do not receive the wages to which they are entitled under their agreement, and though the difficulties attendant upon the various local Protectors ensuring the due payment of all labour is fully recognised, the present time is considered opportune for doing something to minimise the evasion of the law in this direction. It is the Minister's wish that a commencement be now made with all female half-castes and female aboriginals in permanent legal employment (*i.e.*, under permit and agreement), and that in future the wages be paid to you every three or six months, as may be convenient (under the powers vested in you by the *Aboriginals, &c.*, Act of 1901, section 12, subsection 2, and by section 13). With regard to the amount of wages to be paid in all future agreements, the following scale may serve as a guide:—Aboriginals up to 12 years of age, 1s. 3d. per week (the minimum allowed by law); from 12 to 14 years of age, 2s. per week; over 14 years of age, from 2s. 6d. upwards (according to the nature of the work, the capability of the employee, &c.) A good deal must be left to the discretion of the Protector.

Please be good enough to deposit all wages received by you, in the names of the aboriginals respectively, in the Government Savings Bank, with yourself (the local Protector) as trustee. All moneys thus received by you will be accounted for through the Government Savings Bank, for which the necessary cashbooks, &c., have been forwarded you from the Audit Office.

As time goes on, I am more and more convinced of the necessity for safeguarding the wages of the aboriginals, and seeing that they get a fair return for their labour. From a certain Western township comes the case of a young half-caste, "Alice," working for a household of three, under agreement, at 2s. 6d. per week, but who, it was subsequently discovered, had been compelled to work on different occasions for at least seven other people at a daily wage of 6s., which, except on one occasion, the girl herself never received; her mistress, however, complained to the Minister concerning the wages having to be paid to the local Protector!

In order to evade the provisions of the Act and Regulations, especially those relative to the payment of women's wages through the local police and Protectors, I am convinced that here and there employers are inciting their employees to raise objections to their signing agreements. I have notified one of my Protectors that if any gins threaten to cancel their agreements on account of this payment-of-wage regulation, to warn them beforehand that they will only be allowed to accept employment elsewhere on the conditions, *inter alia*, that their wages are to be paid through the police, and that in case of refusal they will be compelled to hunt for their own native foods in the bush.

Protector Galbraith says:—"There is considerable hostility to the payment of the gins' wages to the Protector; the only reason that I can assign, and believe to be true, is that in the past no wages were paid to them." Protector Brosnan "has taken every opportunity to verbally explain to the girls the advantages to them of this system (of payment of wages to the Protector), and they in every case appreciate it; but some employers endeavour to make them discontented by saying the money will eventually fall into the hands of the Government."

On the other hand, the result of my action has been that the following amounts for wages have been recovered, and lodged in the Government Savings Bank, with the local Protectors as trustees:—£69 13s. 1d. at Cooktown, £187 0s. 9d. at Cairns, £41 10s. at Winton, and £205 4s. 6d. at Normanton. At Normanton, where there is still £50 to come in, Inspector Galbraith says that next year he expects to bank over £500: a difficulty which this gentleman foresees in the future "will be the identification of each depositor, also in tracing them if they leave their employ, and hence the system of thumb-marks."

Care continues to be exercised in the issue of permits for publicans to employ blacks—three hotelkeepers have been refused. In one instance, the police reports showed that the two gins were being harboured for immoral purposes; in another, the police reported the publican to be a cattle-stealer.

Mainland Aboriginal Labour in General.—In the course of my peregrinations, I have reason to believe that aboriginal women are on several Northern stations employed at cattle mustering. Personally, I am much averse to women doing this kind of work, especially when I believe that the practice is supplementary to concubinage, but the whole subject is one difficult to cope with.

I note also that comparatively young males—in some cases, almost children—are largely employed at horse-work. So long, however, as they are properly treated by reputable employers, I have raised no objections, recognising that in the long run it is far better to see them trained to some useful purpose than to have them continuing to wander in the bush as useless vagrants.

I was very much struck, also, in the Gulf districts, with the large amount of aboriginal labour employed on the cattle-stations. At Normanton, for instance, Inspector Galbraith showed me the application for permit received from a manager, acting on behalf of a bank, for ten males and eight females. On several occasions I have pointed out to managers that, while I naturally like to see aboriginals humanely treated and regularly employed, it seemed to me somewhat of a hardship that the

work could not be given to the numerous deserving and unemployed Europeans of these and more southern districts. The reply has almost invariably been that such white labour is not obtainable, and even if available, that it is unreliable and too expensive. This last expression of opinion has generally constituted my argument why the payment of a minimum wage of 5s. per month is, to say the least of it, equitable, and one upon which I am determined to insist, but to which many employers, I regret to say, continue to object. Another factor that comes into operation here is that, though higher wages (from 10s. to 30s., &c., per month) may be here and there named in the agreements with males, I believe that in several cases the blacks receive comparatively nothing. There is still a great deal to be done in getting the present arrangement of paying the wages of females (to the local police) into thorough-going order, but until such time as efficiency and practicability is assured, it is useless to insist on the disposal of the wages of males (other than those employed on boats), in similar fashion. Yet another difficulty I have to cope with is that I have no means of learning whether the directors—*i.e.*, the executive heads of the many financial institutions controlling the majority of these station properties—are allowing their managers (men receiving presumably on an average from £120 to £150 per annum), any specified sum for wages for their aboriginal employees, or whether any moneys paid the latter, now and then in cash, are placed under the heading of "Blacks' Account" in the station books. When, therefore, the agreement and payment of the minimum wage is resisted, it is no easy matter to discover whether the bank, &c., or the manager, stockman-in-charge, &c., is primarily to blame. It is true that at first sight 5s. per month for stock-work seems very poor pay, but it must be borne in mind that the station employing an aboriginal stockman is perforce compelled, in many instances, to support his relatives and dependents, who might otherwise become a charge upon the Government. For instance, Mr. J. G. Edge, manager of Curandotta, gave me the opportunity of inspecting the station books, where I found, under "Blacks' Account," that during the twelve months ending 28th August, 1903, a sum of £126 4s. 2d. had been expended in cash and stores (every item particularised), on ten aboriginals (eight males, two females), permanently employed, and on at least ten relatives and others casually, if at all, employed. This sum does not, however, include the rations for the permanent, which, at 10d. each daily, amounts to £152 1s. 8d. for the year. The total cost to the station, therefore, of these twenty blacks, of whom only half do any permanent work, is £278 6s.; an expenditure sufficiently large, in my opinion, to warrant the local Protector being satisfied that the ten in permanent employment are put under agreement at the minimum monthly wage of 5s.

Prosecutions.—"Burke" was sentenced to three days' cells for absconding from his hired service (Georgetown, 8-1-3); for a similar offence "Charlie" was arrested on warrant, and ordered by the Cooktown Bench (3-11-3), to return to his employer.

Commonwealth Restrictions on Mainland Aboriginal Labour.—In connection with the employment of aboriginal labour, according to the Commonwealth Regulations, in order that the bonus may be earned in the growing of sugar, no aboriginal, not even a half-caste, may be employed. By the Sugar Regulations, dated 6th October last, under the Commonwealth Excise Act of 1901, and the Sugar Bounty Act of 1903, "The expression 'white labour' in these Regulations is used to the exclusion of all forms of coloured labour, whether aboriginals of Australia or not, and whether half-caste or full blood." Thus, even if a white man marries an aboriginal woman, their son would not be eligible for employment on a sugar plantation where the bonus was being earned. Furthermore, paragraph 33 of the Federal Mail Contract reads:—"Only white labour is to be employed in the conveyance of mails, and such rates of wages are to be paid, and such working conditions observed, as are recognised in the locality in which a contract is being carried out." In the Federal Postal Act, it should be observed, there is no definition of white labour, and the fact remains that the specific instruction that only white labour is to be employed has been interpreted to mean that aboriginals must not be engaged in postal work, and it has operated that way. Since the matter, however, has been referred to Melbourne, the postal authorities state (*Brisbane Telegraph*, 2-12-3) that "aboriginals can be employed to groom the horses required for country mail services, but they must not drive the coaches which carry the mails. The objection is that blacks cannot read, consequently they could not deliver letters along the route."

CERTIFICATES OF EXEMPTION.

Exemption Certificate.—The second certificate to be issued has been granted to the half-caste "Nellie," about fifteen years of age, at present with Mr. W. B. Kelly, J.P., of Atherton. Two applications for certificates have been refused.

ABORIGINALS ON BOATS.

Unseaworthy Vessels.—It having come to my knowledge that in the bêche-de-mer and pearling fisheries no one had power to stop an unseaworthy vessel proceeding to sea, or to regulate the number of blacks carried, I asked Protector Bennett to report on the matter. He did so, as follows (4-4-3):—

"The Pearl-shell and Bêche-de-mer Fishery Acts do not give an inspector power to stop an unseaworthy vessel from going to sea. The powers of an inspector, as to the examination of vessels, are defined by section 6 (5th and 6th pars.), 55 Vic. No. 29, "*Pearl-shell and Bêche-de-mer Fishery Act Amendment Act of 1891*," and are thereby limited to (a) the examination of sails, lights, boats, anchors, grapnels, and fishing implements; (b) the examination of diving-dresses, air-pumps, air-tubes, and gear, and all other gear and tackle. His powers do not extend to the hull. Should a vessel's equipment or any part thereof, as above specified, be in his opinion unsafe or insufficient, he may forbid the further use of such gear or tackle, but may not forbid the vessel proceeding to sea. If the master or employer, or person in charge, of a fishing station, &c., uses, or permits to be used, any gear or diving-dress, air-pump, or air-tubes, which have not been submitted to an inspector for examination within six months, he is penalised (Sec. 8, 55 Vic. No. 29). Any person who uses any gear or tackle after an inspector has forbidden the further use of it, is liable to a penalty of £50 (Sec. 9, *ibid.*). Cases of unseaworthy vessels (*i.e.*, unseaworthy as regards the waters in which bêche-de-mer fishing is prosecuted), are not common here. Proof of that is found in the very few wrecks of bêche-de-mer fishing vessels reported. Still, it

would be better if, when an inspector may have reason to believe that a vessel is unseaworthy as regards hull, authority were given him to order a survey by a shipwright surveyor. Also, if a vessel is found unseaworthy in hull, or tackle, or fittings, he should have power to forbid her going to sea until the defects are remedied. To give the necessary authority it would, I suggest, be necessary to amend the 5th paragraph of section 6, 55 Vic. No. 2, by adding, after the word "station," "and may direct that the hull of any vessel or boat shall be surveyed by a shipwright-surveyor or, in the absence of a shipwright-surveyor, by a competent shipwright or master mariner." The 7th paragraph would require to be amended by adding after the word "insufficient" the words "and may, in like manner, forbid any vessel or boat proceeding to sea until any defects in sails, &c., diving-dress, &c., or hull have been made good, repaired, or remedied to his satisfaction, or to the satisfaction of a shipwright-surveyor, &c." A penal clause, dealing with owners, masters, or persons in charge, disregarding or disobeying an inspector's order in writing would have to be inserted. There is not any power given an inspector to regulate the number of persons (aboriginal or other), which any one vessel or boat may carry. There is an Ordinance in British New Guinea which forbids a vessel carrying more than a certain number of natives for each registered ton. I think the number is two. The difficulty might be met by an order that no vessel shall be allowed to sign on more than one native for each half-ton of registered tonnage; with a proviso that the total number of persons (inclusive of aboriginal natives), shall not exceed the proportion named. I may say that the instances of overcrowding which have come under my notice were generally when vessels were making a passage from one fishing ground to another. Around here, the crews live more on shore than on the boats, unless when away on the Barrier and outer reefs." This expression of opinion was minuted to the Hon. the Treasurer (4-6-3) by the Hon. the Minister for Lands.

Boys Recruited at Thursday Island.—"The number of aboriginal (mainland) natives on articles of vessels engaged in the pearl-shell and bêche-de-mer fisheries on 31st December, 1903, was 183, or about 8 per cent. of the total number of men on articles, as against 148, or 6.7 per cent. on 31st December, 1902. The number of aboriginal natives of Torres Straits islands on articles, on the same date (31-12-03), was 306, or 13.26 per cent. of the whole. Ninety-three applications were put in for permits to recruit 670 native labourers (mainland), in the aggregate; of that number 308, or about 45 per cent. of the number applied for, were recruited. Of those recruited 133, or 43.18 per cent., came from Mapoon Aboriginal Reserve. Thirty-nine cases of desertion, in which wages were due to deserters, were reported during the year, and the sum of £46 1s. 10d. was collected in accordance with sub-sec. 5 of sec. 10, 2 Edw. VII. No. 1."—(Protector Bennett.)

Proposed Government Recruiting at Thursday Island.—A proposal having been made to the Minister that the Government should take upon itself the work of recruiting (and returning) mainland aboriginal labour for the bêche-de-mer and pearl-shell swimming-diving boats, I reported (13-5-3) adversely on the project, basing my opinion mainly on the following grounds:—

- (A) *The question of expense.*—Mr. Bennett estimates the cost at £1,200 per annum for the recruiting of something like 200 boys, the maximum number which has ever been shipped here in a twelvemonth (1902). It was only due to the recrudescence of swimming-diving and the sudden rise in the value of pearl-shell (up to £300 per ton) that even this number (a third of the actual number asked for by the employers) was obtained, and even then the recruiters were obliged to give a larger purchase price (two bags of flour, &c., instead of one, &c.) for each boy—a practice which gave rise to various abuses, detailed by Messrs. Bennett and Hey, and mentioned in my last Annual Report. To recruit then, even the maximum of 200 boys, under Government control would, on Mr. Bennett's estimate of £1,200, be £6 per head—a sum which the employers would certainly not be prepared to pay.
- (B) *Similar action would have to be taken at other ports.*—If the Government took over the control of recruiting, &c., at Thursday Island, it would be morally compelled to take similar action at Cooktown, Cairns, and Townsville, where, with a fewer number of available boys, the cost would run up to anything from £9 to £12, and probably more per head.
- (C) *Government blamed for all deficiencies, &c.*—As Mr. Bennett rightly puts the matter: If the Government takes upon itself the whole work of recruiting and returning the natives to their homes, it would find itself beset with difficulties, and its servants (charged with the execution of the resulting duties) placed in positions at once intricate and invidious. The employers of aboriginal labour would at once, and (from the point of view usually taken by the public) rightly, look to the Government to supply *all* their needs, and would visit on the heads of the unfortunate officers all shortcomings.
- (D) *Mainland labour required is not legitimately obtainable.*—I would never advise or sanction any subordinate officer of mine recruiting mainland labour on the same lines (by purchase from the local elders) as followed by the present recruiters. Even if the Government were, therefore, to take control of the system into its own hands, not one-half—probably not a quarter—of the number of boys required would be legitimately obtainable.
- (E) *Value of boats and dependence of natives upon the trade.*—Mr. Bennett's estimate of the value of the Thursday Island boats at present engaged in the bêche-de-mer and swimming-diving trade is £2,500; if we include the boats at Cooktown, Cairns, and Townsville, at a value of £1,500, we may safely assert that the total value of all the boats engaged in the North Queensland trade is £4,000. The amount of money involved in the whole of the Queensland bêche-de-mer and pearl-shell swimming-diving fisheries is accordingly but very small, and infinitesimal as compared with the number of human lives ruined and sacrificed. At Cape York, and along the north-east coast line, the bêche-de-mer fisheries have been going on for thirty years past now, and the natives here—although hopelessly demoralised from a protective point of view (as I pointed out in a previous Annual Report)—have, nevertheless, as Mr. Bennett tells me, come to that stage of civilisation when their very existence is in a sense dependent upon the trade. On the other hand, the natives on the Gulf coast, from the Batavia River (Mapoon) downwards, are as yet able to be freed from the

abuse and contaminations in the way of slavery, disease, alcohol, and opium, and other sources of annihilation consequent on the visits of the recruiters and the hardships endured in employment on the boats. There are thus three important factors that have to be kept in full view with regard to any proposed legislation—the capital invested in the trade, the north-east coastline natives dependent upon it, the Gulf coast natives independent of it.

On the other hand, I strongly recommended Protector Bennett's proposition made to the late Premier—and which the latter told me he endorsed—that the whole Gulf coast from the Batavia River downwards be once and for all closed to the recruiters. The question was subsequently raised in Parliament, the Hon. J. F. G. Foxton (*Hansard*, 1903, p. 779) expressing himself as follows:—"Under these circumstances, after consulting the then Premier, they arrived at the conclusion that it would be desirable to stop all recruiting after a given date. He was not sure whether official instructions were given to that effect, but if not, it was intended that they should be given." With the proclamations lately made of aboriginal reserves, extending continuously from the mouth of the Batavia River to below the Archer, and another at the Mitchell, the return of Rev. N. Hey from the old country is only awaited for to give the recommendation practical effect. It is, therefore, to be hoped that the recruiting of mainland aboriginal labour will soon be limited to the north-east coastline on the one side of the Peninsula, and to the upper Gulf coast as far south as the northern shores of the Batavia River on the other. Below the Batavia River, probably below Vrilya Point, the natives do not cross the Peninsula, so that there is little likelihood of any aboriginals being coaxed away from these Gulf reserves to the opposite coastline.

If, with the above restrictions, all of which have been carefully thought out, mainland labour still continues to be scarce, as there is every reason to expect it to be, there are no legal obstacles to the recruiters trying to obtain it from the Torres Strait Islands and British New Guinea, the natives of which are better able to take care of themselves.

Miscellaneous.—There is reason to believe that several abuses in the bêche-de-mer fisheries have taken place this year in the neighbourhood of Forbes and Night Islands. Should these recur, I trust that the *Melbidir* will prove instrumental in bringing the delinquents to justice. [For the necessity of patrolling this coast line regularly, see "*Melbidir*."]]

Information has come again to hand *re* the drunken orgies going on at the Seven Rivers, Cape York Peninsula, owing to the presence of the recruiting boats.

Complaint was made by a Cooktown firm of storekeepers *re* the local Protector (Sergeant King), having refused permission to a client of theirs to go and recruit boys for the bêche-de-mer trade, bring them into Cooktown, and then hand them over to another individual to sign on articles. I approved of Sergeant King's decision in the matter—which he regarded as "trafficking"—it being always understood that the bêche-de-mer man who wants to sign on boys has to go and recruit them himself. The object of this arrangement is to prevent the boys from being unduly influenced when once away from their native haunts, their friends, and relatives, and at the same time to afford them the opportunity of seeing something of the individual on whose boat they will have to spend at least the following six months. On not a few occasions have I had a chat in the Peninsula with boys who have run away from the boats, and in the majority of cases the reason given me was that the men who recruited them, and brought them from their homes, was not the same with whom they ultimately found themselves signing articles.

At Thursday Island, Protector Bennett refused R. Spink, of the "Fawn," permission to sign on any aboriginals.

For ship desertion, Eugene Brown prosecuting, "Billy Dito-Feralatan," "Jack Barata," "Thara Madu-Juda," "Parry-Digata," and "Jack Dantumba," each received one month's imprisonment at Thursday Island (10-8-3).

"MELBIDIR."

"*Melbidir*."—I have pointed out to the Minister, in making my financial statement, that the charge of the "*Melbidir*" is placed as against the 500 or 600 blacks (mainland aboriginals as well as Torres Strait islanders), engaged in the bêche-de-mer and pearl fisheries, the Acts relating to which are administered by the Treasury, for doing whose work, however, the Aboriginal Department does not receive a penny. The whole coastline from Burketown to Mackay is patrolled twice annually, all fishing boats met with are boarded, the crews and articles examined, and prosecutions undertaken where necessary. John Schluter, the master of the "*Melbidir*," as well as myself, were appointed inspectors under the Bêche-de-mer, &c., Acts, to empower us to carry out the above duties—both of us are appointed without salary. I am of opinion that I have right on my side in suggesting that the Treasury pay a reasonable proportion of the annual cost of this vessel. The main *raison d'être* of the "*Melbidir*" is to check abuses on the boats; without her, the advisability of my refusing to allow any aboriginals to sign on articles would have to be seriously considered.

Unforeseen duties which this vessel has been called upon to execute during the year were the following:—The conveyance of Sub-Inspector Garraway and family to Port Stewart (*en route* for the Coen); the collection of the Federal electoral rolls, for which I forwarded vouchers for £33 5s. 1d., since paid, as against the Federal Government, for expenditure incurred; the conveyance, on two trips, of lepers from Mackay and Townsville to Friday Island; a month's cruise around the Torres Strait islands, thus enabling the Hon. John Douglas to visit and inspect the various aboriginal schools and settlements; an eight-days' trip around the Howick Group, in view of the alleged loss of a sailing ship which was reported to have taken place there. As directed, every assistance is given to the missionaries on all possible occasions. I regret to report that, for the first time, the "*Melbidir*" has been somewhat unfortunate this year. In February she was struck by a squall, and got damaged while on her way to Cape Bedford; in June, while crossing the Gulf, between Mornington Island and Normanton, her mainsail was carried away; in August she was accidentally run on a reef at Saibai, when her keel was injured to such an extent that she had to be sent to Townsville for repairs, which could not be effected either at Thursday Island or Cooktown.

Owing to the serious illness, from which I am glad to state he is at last recovering, John Schluter, the master, received three months' leave of absence. During this period, H. M. Allen took his place.

The "Mystic" is stationed at Thursday Island. Protector Bennett (at whose disposal this vessel has been kindly placed by the Marine Department) says:—"I have been out on patrol duty thirty-one days during the year, and have visited from Mapoon northwards to Cape York, besides islands, &c. Pressure of business prevented me reaching the limits of my district on the eastern coast of the Peninsula, which I much regret, as I have reason to believe my presence was necessary in the vicinity of Cape Grenville and the adjacent islands. I cannot too strongly urge the necessity for proper patrol of the Peninsula and its coast, not only in the interests of aboriginal protection, but also to keep control of and maintain authority over the already fairly numerous hybrid population which is taking the place of the aboriginal race, and which is much more difficult to deal with than the latter. When I was under the undivided authority of the State I was allowed to devote a fair amount of time to patrol work, but since the transfer of the Customs Department (to which I belong), to the Commonwealth, I have not been able, owing to increase in my Customs duties, to devote to patrol work the time required for even the minimum necessary to a proper discharge of the duties of a Protector of Aborigines, an officer who, I submit, should be familiar with his district and the people in it." . . . "I feel very keenly being held answerable for the proper discharge of important duties—how important cannot be estimated by those unfamiliar with the people and conditions which make the office of Protector of Aborigines necessary—but which, through no fault of my own, I am unable to discharge satisfactorily."

REMOVALS AND RECOGNISANCES.

Removals and Recognisances.—The system of bonds for the removal of aborigines out of a district constitutes the only legal measure we possess of preventing blacks being ultimately stranded, and the cost of their return home being made a charge upon the Government. It works very satisfactorily. Thirty-five bonds, varying from £5 to £40 (in the case of removal to another State), are at the present time in force. It has only been necessary to require the performance of the bond in one case, that of Mr. Underwood, of Mudgee, N.S.W., for the return of the aboriginal "Gobo," from Rockhampton to Camooweal; the amount paid (£20) was placed to the credit of the Aborigines Protection Property Account.

The return from British New Guinea to Cooktown, under bond, of aboriginal "Billy God-help-us," has led to my communicating with the local Protector to the effect that I consider it highly undesirable that any Queensland aboriginal should be taken to the Possession. He concurs with me, and I accordingly propose putting an end to the practice.

Correspondence has passed between the Adelaide S.S. Company and myself concerning the illegal removal in one of their steamers of a half-caste female from Townsville to Brisbane: they have expressed regret, and given me satisfactory explanations. The attention of the Howard-Smith S.S. Company has also been drawn to the provisions of the Act.

"Jimmy," a myall from the (?) Gilbert River, appears to have been taken to Cooktown, worked on the bêche-de-mer boats, and then removed to Townsville and stranded. He was found in a starving condition at Ingham, where the police magistrate granted him relief. The circumstances appearing so serious, I asked that the matter be placed in the hands of the police, with a view to bringing the alleged kidnapper (? Jack), to justice. Unfortunately, the latter could not be traced.

HARBOURING.

Harbouring, Illegally Employing.—The following schedule shows the convictions for harbouring, or otherwise illegally employing aborigines:—

Date.	Prosecutor.	Locality.	Offender.	Verdict.
1903.				
21 Feb. ...	Sergeant King	Cooktown	Thos. Roberts, master of the "Ethel"	Fined £1 and £6 4s. 6d. costs, or one month
24 " ...	Constable Ford	Chillagoe	Out Fong	Discharged on paying £3 costs
24 " ...	" "	" "	J. Martin, Station-owner	Fined £10 and £4 1s. 6d. costs
10 Mar. ...	Constable Huey	" "	Thomas Stewart	Discharged; defendant to pay costs of court, and return the boy to his native place
7 May ...	Sergeant Quain	Camooweal	Edward Gilbert	Fined £1 and 3s. 6d. costs
29 June ...	Sub-Inspector McNamara	Charters Towers	Joe Newey (Kanaka)	Fined £1 5s. 4d., including costs, or fourteen days
1 July ...	Sergeant Casey	Geraldton	Ah Kin	Fined £10, or two months
2 " ...	Constable Reddan	Barron River	Ah Sam	Fined £1 13s., including costs, or one month
— " ...	Constable Fitzgibbon	Cooktown	Ah Gin	Fined £1, or seven days
22 " ...	Acting Sergeant Moorhead	Thursday Island	Peter Seden	Fined £10 and costs, or three months
— Aug. ...	Sergeant Brosnan	Winton	E. D. Wells	Fined 5s. and 1s. costs
3 Oct. ...	Constable Reddan	Atherton	Sing Ann (Malay)	Two months' imprisonment
13 " ...	Constable Smith	Nelson	John Serion (S.S.I.)	Fined 10s. and 3s. 6d. costs, or seven days
23 " ...	Police	Geraldton	Ah How (S.S.I.)	Fined £2, or one month
23 " ...	" "	" "	Minambeera (S.S.I.)	Fined £2, or one month
29 " ...	Sergeant McCreery	Thursday Island	Geo. Alex. Power, publican	Fined £10, or two months
1 Nov. ...	Sergeant Doherty	Norhampton	Ah Bow	Fined £5 and 3s. 6d. costs, or two months
24 " ...	Constable Fenwick	Cairns	Ah Wong	Fined £10, or three months
24 " ...	Acting Sergeant Brennan	" "	Ketchell	Fined £10, or three months
24 " ...	Constable Reddan	Atherton	Charlie Carlie	Fined £10, or three months

FOOD AND OTHER RELIEF.

Food and Other Relief.—The question of relief has been a source of great anxiety to me for years past. What with necessary retrenchments relief has certainly been curtailed, but in the distribution of the amount at my disposal, every care has been taken to prevent both the charity being abused and the blacks becoming pauperised and demoralised. At one particular relief-centre, the police reported that the European residents generally would like to see all the relief cancelled, so that the blacks would have some incentive to work. When I first took charge (January, 1898), I found that throughout the Cairns and Cook districts a most pernicious system of relief was in vogue, sums varying from £5 to £10 monthly being regularly allowed for distribution, with the result that the local storekeepers naturally came to consider themselves possessed of vested interests in the welfare of the blacks, while the distributors apparently came to the conclusion that, because the money was available, it was therefore their duty to spend it. Another result was that able-bodied blacks were disinclined either to seek employment for themselves, or to procure their own native foods, or to provide for their families and aged dependents. As time wore on I accordingly gradually reduced all these amounts to sums varying from £1 to £3, with the exception of Cape Bedford where, independently of the Mission Station, £7 monthly is spent in flour and tobacco on between eighty and ninety aboriginals turned out of Cooktown, the native resources of the local reserve being inadequate for the support of so large a number of natives. It is true that an expenditure of £5 monthly is authorised at Thursday Island, but this is under the control of the Government Resident. Within the next few months I hope to be in a position to abolish, in most cases, the idea of monthly relief altogether, and distribute it only when and where the circumstances demand it.

The charges for rationing police-trackers' gins, hitherto paid out of the aboriginal vote, are now paid by the Police Department. The fees and clothing of the Torres Strait island police cannot be charged to the police vote, as these men are not in any way officially connected with the police proper, but are merely appointed by the Hon. John Douglas to act under him and to support the "mamoose" in maintaining order. These island police are paid a small retaining fee of £1 a year, in addition to a dole of tobacco, and are also supplied with a uniform.

Amongst unforeseen circumstances, necessitating the issue of relief, were the floods at Burketown in March, which prevented some ninety blacks hunting for their own native foods; and a malarial kind of fever at Cape York, during the same month, whereby a number of natives required nourishment and medicine. For purposes of conciliation, the Turn-off Lagoon police, during July, were instructed to incur a small expenditure for fish-hooks, &c. Some twenty pounds of tobacco were purchased for distribution by me amongst the aboriginals of the newly-proclaimed reserve in the neighbourhood of the Mitchell River.

The regular relief—*i.e.*, rations for blacks unable to work or to obtain food for themselves—lapsed at Koorboora owing to the aboriginals having followed the mining camps to Stannary Hills. So, also, at Chillagoe, when the police notified the householders that if they wanted to employ black labour, they must get permits for them, the natives left the district. On the advice of the local Protector relief was discontinued at the Palmer. At the present time, a sum of about £36 is expended monthly for the relief of aboriginals, in the form of food or personal comforts, at the following distributing centres:—

	£	s.		£	s.		£	s.		£	s.
Atherton ...	2	0	Cooktown ...	1	10	McDonnell ...	3	0	Musgrave ...	1	0
Cape Bedford ...	7	0	Irvinebank ...	2	10	Maytown ...	2	0	Pentland ...	2	0
Cloncurry ...	2	10	Kuranda ...	0	10	Mein ...	1	0	Stannary Hills ...	2	0
Coen ...	1	10	Laura ...	2	0	Moreton ...	3	0	Thorborough ...	2	10

It is proposed this year to draw upon the Treasury vote [*see* "Blankets"], for the distribution of tomahawks, fishhooks, and other articles of assistance to the blacks in obtaining food.

BLANKETS.

Blankets.—The Minister has approved of my suggestion, that at the next blanket distribution (1904) the gift of blankets is to be substituted, to some extent, by one of tomahawks, toys, gins' homespun dresses, tobacco, beads, wooden pipes, fishhooks, and knives. This proposal is the outcome of repeated applications from Protectors and others that such a partial distribution is desirable, and one which I know from my own experience will be much appreciated by the aboriginals themselves. The distribution of blankets, for instance, in the tropical portion of the Peninsula is unnecessary, and my views on the subject have already been given expression to in previous annual reports. Even during the present year the Coen police report that the blacks were too lazy to come in for their blankets, while the master of the Claremont Lightship informed me that the coastal natives in his neighbourhood were cutting these articles up for canoe sails. The cost of the goods which I have recommended should be so substituted will not exceed a total of £275, delivered at the present distributing centres.

I reported adversely on the application of the Chillagoe Progress Committee for constituting that township a distributing centre.

Through an oversight no blankets were distributed at Clump Point this year.

At Hughenden (11-8-3) Constable A. W. Noakes prosecuted Lena Young for being in unlawful possession of an aboriginal blanket. She was fined 5s., with 3s. 6d. costs.

Blankets were distributed in my district to a total of 4,500 aboriginals (2,129 men, 1,743 women, and 628 children under sixteen years of age) at fifty-nine centres, full particulars of which have been kindly furnished me by Mr. McLennan, the Government Storekeeper, as follows:—

RETURN OF BLANKET DISTRIBUTION TO ABORIGINES NORTH OF THE 22ND PARALLEL OF LATITUDE FOR THE YEAR 1903.

Name of Centre.	Distributing Officer.	Pairs standing over from previous Year.	Supplied this Year.	Total Pairs.	NUMBER AND DESCRIPTION OF PERSONS SUPPLIED.					Total Pairs Issued.	Pairs Remaining
					Males and Females under 16.	Men.	Women.	Un-specified.	Total.		
Atherton	T. Reddan, constable, police	...	200	200	31	134	107	...	272	200	...
Ayr	A. Fraser, sergeant, police	8	66	74	6	30	34	...	70	67	7
Ayton	J. M. Kenny, constable, police	...	20	20	...	12	8	...	20	20	...
Boulia	F. J. O'Connor, sergeant, police	...	100	100	14	43	55	...	112	100	...
Bowen	D. Keane, sergeant, police	10½	150	160½	24	67	49	...	140	122	38½
Burketown	S. Behan, acting sergeant, police	7	100	107	14	36	63	...	113	98	9
Cairns	J. D. McGuire, acting sergent, police	8	360	368	105	185	148	...	438	358	10
Camooewel	P. Quain, sergeant, police	...	44	44	9	20	35	...	64	41	3
Cape Bedford Mission Station	G. H. Schwarz, superintendent	17	...	17	...	...	...	...	...	...	17
Cardwell	P. Keogh, acting sergeant, police	...	150	150	36	99	68	...	203	150	...
Charleston	P. Joyce, first-class constable, police	...	25	25	...	11	11	...	22	22	3
Charters Towers	J. McNamara, sub-inspector, police	...	55	55	2	34	20	...	56	55	...
Claremont Light-ship	M. McDonald, master	...	44	44	23	21	19	...	63	44	...
Clarke River	J. Woolly, electric telegraph officer	8	7	15	4	9	4	...	17	15	...
Cloncurry	J. Fitzgerald, first-class constable, police	5	70	75	27	23	31	...	81	66	9
Coen	J. Whiteford, sergeant, police	...	100	100	21	77	36	...	134	70	30
Cooktown (Northern Protector)	Dr. Roth, N.P.A.	6½	...	6½	6	5	...	...	11	5	1½
Croydon	T. Doherty, sergeant, police	5	70	75	19	34	43	...	96	75	...
Cumberland	E. Toomey, constable, police	...	26	26	...	15	11	...	26	26	...
Eight-mile	J. M. Kenny, constable, police	...	96	96	...	58	38	...	96	96	...
Einasleigh	H. P. Hansen, first-class constable, police	6	14	20	1	6	3	...	10	10	10
Eton	J. Sargent, acting sergeant, police	...	19	19	...	10	7	...	17	17	2
Georgetown	J. E. Old, acting sergeant, police	...	42	42	4	30	14	...	48	42	...
Geraldton	D. Casey, sergeant, police	...	167	167	29	156	144	...	329	167	...
Halifax	W. Horan, acting sergeant, police	1	19	20	...	10	10	...	20	20	...
Herberton	J. O'Donnell, sergeant, police	...	126	126	21	72	59	...	152	126	...
Hillgrove	T. J. Fury, post and telegraph officer	...	19	19	...	7	7	...	14	14	5
Hughenden	H. Blyton, sergeant, police	...	22	22	1	13	9	...	23	22	...
Ingham	P. Connolly, acting sergeant, police	...	300	300	23	157	128	...	308	294	6
Irvinebank	J. Runny, first-class constable, police	...	16	16	2	10	5	...	17	16	...
Junction Creek	C. Woodland, electric telegraph officer	...	21	21	2	11	9	...	22	21	...
Laura	D. J. Fitzgibbon, constable, police	...	69	69	14	39	44	...	97	69	...
Lucinda Point	F. Kimbell, Customs officer	...	12	12	2	5	4	...	11	10	2
Mackay	E. Martin, sub-inspector, police	...	43	43	...	30	13	...	43	43	...
Mackinlay	J. Fitzgerald, first-class constable, police	...	11	11	1	4	3	...	8	8	3
Mareeba	T. Clines, first-class constable, police	2	78	80	21	36	34	...	91	80	...
Maytown	D. Twaddle, constable, police	6	34	40	25	13	18	...	56	40	...
Mirani	A. McBride, first-class constable, police	2	22	24	3	16	7	...	26	24	...
Mount Douglas	J. O'Neill, sergeant, police	...	32	32	3	19	12	...	34	32	...
Mount Garnet	J. McKeirnan, acting sergt., police	9	56	65	8	19	20	...	47	43	22
Mapoon Mission Station	Rev. N. Hey, superintendent	...	10	10	16	3	1	...	20	10	...
Nebo	T. J. Balaam, first-class constable, police	...	66	66	9	40	22	...	71	66	...
Normanton	J. Henderson, sergeant, police	...	128	128	12	98	80	...	190	128	...
Palm Islands	W. C. Romer, pilot in charge	8	23	26	2	13	12	...	27	26	...
Palmer	D. Whelan, acting sergeant, police	10	43	53	...	59	35	...	94	53	...
Pentland	E. Fox, first-class constable, police	...	21	21	2	10	10	...	22	21	...
Percyville	W. Stockbridge, first-class constable, police	...	32	32	1	21	17	...	39	32	...
Port Douglas	A. Thiesfeld, first-class constable, police	...	73	73	2	58	46	...	106	73	...
Ravenswood	A. S. O'Donohue, acting sergeant, police	3	22	25	...	14	6	...	20	20	5
Richmond	M. O'Connor, sergeant, police	...	42	42	5	25	15	...	45	42	...
Tangorin	J. Dunlea, first-class constable, police	3	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Tate	J. Ford, first-class constable, police	...	28	28	4	19	15	...	38	28	...
Thornborough	P. J. Colahan, first-class constable, police	...	100	100	7	56	38	...	101	98	2
Thursday Island	M. J. McCreery, senior-sergeant, police	4	78	82	10	55	50	...	115	82	...
Townsville	J. Quilter, sub-inspector, police	...	100	100	10	57	23	...	90	85	15
Turn-off Lagoons	G. Dwyer, constable, police	...	17	17	...	7	10	...	17	17	...
Weipa Mission Station	E. Brown, superintendent	...	15	15	17	...	3	...	20	10	5
Winton	M. Brosnan, sergeant, police	...	34	34	4	15	17	...	36	34	...
Yarrabah Mission Station	Rev. E. R. Gribble, superintendent	...	33	33	26	3	13	...	42	33	...
Totals		...	124	3,670	3,794	628	2,129	73	4,500	3,586	208

SUPPLY OF LIQUOR TO ABORIGINALS.

Supply of Liquor to Aborigines.—During my ten days' stay at Thursday Island last May, I again satisfied myself that the supply of liquor to mainland aborigines continued to be the public scandal which I had already, in previous reports, represented it to be. I accordingly communicated with Protector Bennett as to the advisability of reducing the amount usually allowed from their wages to the boat-boys, for spending on the Island, from 15s. to 10s.; they would then receive 2s. 6d. as pocket money (cash), and have 7s. 6d. expended on their behalf at the stores. He replied as follows:—"I beg leave most respectfully to ask that you will allow the present arrangement to stand. The fault of the supply of liquor to aborigines does not lie with the boys, but with those who supply it, and (even more) with those who allow it to be supplied. The boys would (not unnaturally, from their limited standpoint) regard the suggested action as a hardship and punishment on them, and, worst of all, they would still continue somehow to get the liquor, and the regulation would be made use of by those interested as a further reason for prompting the boys to dislike and avoid even the present modicum of Government control and protection which it is possible to extend them." I accordingly appealed to the Minister, who instructed the putting into effect of the "harbouring" clauses of the Aborigines Acts against the Thursday Island hotelkeepers, provided clear cases could be got. One of the results was that Power, a publican, was fined £10 or two months. My complaint with regard to the supply of liquor was subsequently confirmed by the Government Resident, the Hon. John Douglas, before the Royal Geographical Society, Brisbane, on the 22nd December, when he said:—"Of course you all know, that under our laws persons are prohibited from supplying liquor to aboriginal natives, or to South Sea Islanders, and at Thursday Island we are sometimes held up as examples of how a good law may be violated with the utmost impunity. A distinguished visitor, a Senator from the South, for instance, remarked the other day that he saw aboriginal natives served at the bars of public-houses with the police looking calmly on. This, I admit, is perfectly true. There appears to be great apathy on their part. When challenged, however, with negligence of duty, they say that they arrest offenders who exceed, and that they prefer the open violation of the law, as practised, to the illicit sale of bottles and cases of grog through intermediate persons. They also say that it is almost impossible to secure a conviction against a publican who sells to an aboriginal across the bar, for the law requires proof that the liquor so sold contains, or contained, so much per cent. of alcohol. How are they to prove that, they say, when the alcohol is absorbed into the stomach of the participant? I fancy myself that a way out of the difficulty might be found." As already mentioned, the remedy is to prosecute, when aborigines are found in or upon the premises of a publican, under section 14 of the 1897 Act.

As an example of the condition of things, and difficulties of remedying them, on the Torres Strait islands, the following extract from the *Torres Strait Pilot* (3-10-3) will be perused with interest:—

At the Police Court, before the Hon. John Douglas, on Wednesday last, a sergeant of island police at Saibai, named Nowia, pleaded guilty, and was sentenced to one month imprisonment with hard labour for supplying liquor to Darko, a native of that island. In passing sentence, Mr. Douglas said, in the first place, Nowia had been in custody for fully two months. That, he considered, was rendered necessary by pending correspondence in reference to Mr. James Doyle, who in reality was the chief offender. Various complaints had been made, both at Mabuag and at Saibai, about Mr. Doyle's conduct to the natives. Those complaints gave him (Mr. Douglas) a good deal of anxiety and trouble, and he made several visits to both islands in order to satisfy himself as to their nature. He finally felt convinced, from all the evidence he could get, chiefly native evidence, that the complaints made by the natives were substantiated, and that Mr. Doyle's conduct towards them, latterly at any rate, had been very unjustifiable. At first he (Mr. Douglas) had received a good deal of assistance from Mr. Doyle in connection with the management of native affairs on these islands. After he returned from England, and during his absence from the islands, an interval of about nine months, he found that great advantage had been taken of his absence in various ways with regard to the natives by Mr. Doyle. He had at last thoroughly satisfied himself as to this, though the evidence all rested upon native testimony. However, in the particular case then before the court, there was documentary evidence to prove with certainty that Mr. Doyle had, in one particular at any rate, infringed the law. Nowia had been made a tool of by Mr. Doyle, not only in the way of giving grog, but in many other unjustifiable ways. As regards Mr. Doyle, he felt that a mere fine for his being concerned in supplying grog to the natives would not be a sufficient recognition of his conduct, and insisted that Mr. Doyle should resign the commission which he held as a justice of the peace. A bad use had been made of his powers as a magistrate by Mr. Doyle, and there was justification for requiring his resignation. This had now been carried into effect, and he was no longer a magistrate, and, consequently, his powers as such could no longer be abused. The natives of both Mabuag and Saibai believed that, because he was a magistrate, his word was law. It was hoped they would now understand that he had no more authority as a magistrate. It was necessary to make these statements in a public way, as Mr. Doyle was a large employer of labour, and had a good deal of influence with the natives of the islands of Mabuag and Saibai. It was highly desirable that such influence should not be perpetuated. The offence to which Nowia had pleaded guilty could be punished either by a fine or imprisonment. He had already been in gaol for two months, and must be regarded as a tool of Mr. Doyle's: he would, therefore, not inflict a heavy sentence. He would sentence him to one month imprisonment with hard labour, and at the expiry of that time would consider whether he should be allowed to remain at Saibai. He was an intelligent man, and had a wife and children at Saibai, but had in the first place been misled by Mr. Doyle, and had misused his powers as a constable. The people of Saibai were now perfectly aware of this, and were also aware of the fact that he would not again be entrusted with any authority.

A second charge against Nowia of abducting native women for immoral purposes was withdrawn, Mr. Douglas stating that there was ample native evidence to prove the charge, but the difficulty of producing the evidence and understanding it when produced were in the way of a legal conviction. In the meantime, Nowia's capacity for mischief and wrong-doing had been considerably diminished. The documentary evidence to which Mr. Douglas referred was contained in a note to the following effect, and was dated, Beggar Passage, 13th June, 1903:—"Nowia,—Please give Darko four bottles of rum from case at Dauan, and I will return same to you when I come from Thursday Island. Keda.—(Signed) Jas. Doyle."

On the state of the liquor traffic at Cooktown, Protector King writes:—"There has only been one aboriginal locked up for drunkenness during the year. This I attribute to blacks not being allowed to work in hotels, and to the fact that when the *hêche-de-mer* boys are paid off I attend at the shipping

office, take them to a store, and spend all their money on tucker, clothes, and other things which they fancy, for the purpose of taking home to their own country. By so doing they have no money to spend in liquor, and no doubt this is the principal reason of so much sobriety. I am really surprised at the good behaviour of the boys in Cooktown . . . there is no trouble whatever with them."

In the Boulia district, Protector O'Connor forwards a similarly favourable report as to the absence of any supplies of liquor to aboriginals, and their generally good conduct.

At Charters Towers, Protector McNamara says the natives "indulge in liquor whenever possible, and will not divulge the source whence it was obtained."

Protector Martin, of Mackay, reports that "section 8 of the Amended Act [Penalties not to be mitigated], has had the desired effect here with those in the habit of supplying the blacks with liquor; consequently there has been very little drunkenness among them."

The following schedule shows particulars of the prosecutions reported to me. Full penalties (£20, &c.), were inflicted in all except four cases: in regard to these, the presiding magistrates were called upon by the Minister for explanations, and in reply expressed ignorance of the amending Act of 1901, section 8:—

Date.	Locality.	Defendant.	Date.	Locality.	Defendant.
1903.			1903.		
3 January	Mackay	Fred. Huggee	19 June	Townsville	Jno. Lynch
9 February	ditto	Chas. Busten	21 July	Geraldton	Morris Murray
17 "	ditto	Ah Sue, <i>alias</i> A Fook	27 "	ditto	Alf. Crossey
8 March	Ravenswood	Jn. McKelvey (publican)	6 August	Hughenden	Peter Cook (Malay)
8 April	Mackay	James Woods	7 September	ditto	Chas. St. Vincen
16 "	ditto	Ah Lee	30 "	Thursday Island	Nowia (Tories Strait Islander)
29 May	Geraldton	Christie (Malay)	23 November	ditto	Francis Madrilao
4 June	Mackay	Peter McGrath	4 December	Mackay	Ah Tie
4 "	ditto	Robt. Ross	5 "	ditto	Paddy Scott (aboriginal)*
10 "	ditto	Douglas Nidderie			

* This Paddy Scott was the aboriginal to whom Ah Tie had supplied grog the day before: Paddy in turn was caught supplying it to a Pacific Islander.

The following prosecutions for drunkenness were reported:—"Charlie," discharged with a caution, Mackay (18-1-3): "Jimmy" and "Trecele," each 10s. or one week, Thursday Island (21-4-3): "Charlie" (ex-tracker), cautioned and discharged, Mackay (4-6-3): "Echo," 12s. or three days, Croydon (1-7-3): "Pickwick," discharged, Cloncurry (11-8-3): "Butter," 10s. or one week, Thursday Island (22-9-3): "Tommy" and "Jimmy," each 5s. or six hours, Townsville (21-9-3): "Mick," £1 or two days, Winton (21-10-3): "Johnny," convicted, but not punished, Croydon (11-9-3): "Tommy Dodd," cautioned and discharged, Normanton (23-11-3): "Johnnie," £1, Georgetown (23-12-3).

As an example of the evil effects of supplying liquor, I may mention that there was an affray in the Hughenden camp on 13th September, when "Jackie" was seriously wounded by "Charlie," both of them fighting with knives. "Charlie," an old offender, was committed to the District Court, but was discharged. At Charters Towers, on the other hand, the blacks appear to give "very little trouble to the police or public, even when under the influence of liquor, and tribal or camp fights are very rare."

OPIUM TRAFFIC.

Opium Traffic.—The impression has prevailed amongst Protectors and others that a naturalised Chinaman could hold a poison license, which would give him power to sell opium. I have been favoured, however, with a ruling on this matter, given by the Attorney-General, under date of 10th July, 1903:—"By section 7 of 'The Sale and Use of Poisons Act, 1891,' the granting of a certificate as a dealer in poisons is forbidden. It is true that by section 12 of the Aliens Act all the rights and capacities (with certain exceptions), enjoyed by a natural-born British subject are conferred upon a naturalised African or Asiatic, but that is a *general* provision, and by a well-known rule of construction a later, especially if it is a *special* enactment, implied by, repeals an earlier enactment with which it is inconsistent."

There are difficulties in the way of obeying the law as to taking opium out of bond. The State does not allow any medical man, pharmaceutical chemist, or wholesale dealer in drugs (except within a certain radius of Brisbane, Rockhampton, and Townsville), to have at any one time more than two pounds of opium in his possession, and, accordingly, such licensed people have here and there (Normanton, for instance), removed from bond only that amount at any one time, and got rid of it before obtaining a further supply. The Federal Government, however, so I learn, does not allow a less quantity than ten pounds at a time to be removed out of bond, with the result that, nilly-willy, the importer is in a difficulty as to obeying the law.

As the result of inquiries made by me while the Estimates were going through the House last October, I learn that 219 illegal so-called "permits" are at present in force: that since the traffic has been put into the hands of Inspector Gabriel, of the State Inland Revenue Department, no fresh "permits" have been issued: that all the "permits" already in force are signed by the Collector or Sub-collector of Customs, although there are some which cannot be found, verbal permission having only been given: that there are no "permits" in force not so signed: that there are twenty-six "permits" in existence, of which the acknowledged owners or applicants are unknown: that "permits" have been issued since federation by the Sub-collectors, the last so issued being dated in May, 1903.

To enable the Treasury to keep watch and control over these opium "permits," circumstances render it necessary that a slight amendment be made to the 1897 Aboriginals Act, sections 23, 24, and 28, in

that, in addition to the powers vested in the police, the power to search and to seize, as well as to make or to lay a complaint, is required by an Inspector of the State Inland Revenue Department.

I sincerely trust that some definite action may shortly be taken to release the Aboriginals Department from the equivocal position in which it has been placed by the issue and continued existence of the so-called "permits" for the sale of opium. I continue to regret that so long as the restrictive clauses of the "*The Aboriginals Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Acts, 1897 to 1901*," are neither enforced nor repealed, this Department must be held morally responsible for all the abuses consequent upon the present practically promiscuous sale of the drug.

During the year the quantity of opium imported into the State was 15,381 lb., valued at £21,640: the duty on the drug is 30s. per pound.

The following extracts from reports furnished by the local Protectors will prove of interest in connection with the supply of opium to aboriginals:—

"In the neighbourhood of towns where there are police stations the supply of opium, although not entirely stopped, is considerably checked. There are about twenty-five adult blacks in the islands near Mackay, and I have reason to believe they are supplied with opium, and I consider it advisable that they should be visited occasionally. There are also about forty blacks who wander from station to station in the north-west portions of this district, to which the same remarks also apply."—(Protector Martin, Mackay.)

"The supply of opium to aboriginals is very limited, owing to the vigilance of the police. It would be of great benefit if Chinamen, who supply opium to aboriginals, could be legally arrested, as very often they clear out before receiving the summons, and the police cannot trace them."—(Protector King, Cooktown.) [The necessity for an amendment of the law on these lines was drawn attention to in my last year's Report. At present the only means appears to be the arrest of the Chinaman, &c., as a vagrant, the withdrawal of the charge, and rearrest, &c.—W. E. R.]

"I am glad to again report that the aboriginals here do not use opium or liquor."—(Protector O'Connor, Boulia.) [This desirable condition of affairs is possibly explicable in large measure, so far as the opiate is concerned, to the facilities with which these natives can obtain their own supplies of "pituri."—W. E. R.]

"The blacks in these districts are not much addicted to opium smoking, as it is confined mostly to the elder people, and the younger ones evidently perceive that opium has been killing their race, and avoid using it."—(Protector McNamara, Charters Towers.)

"In some portions of the district this vice is decreasing—in fact, Camooweal is free from it—but in Georgetown and district it still holds its own, mainly owing to the large number of Chinese that are settled there. Constable Toomey, of Cumberland, states that the aboriginals will not work for any one but Chinese, once they have taken to opium."—(Protector Galbraith, Normanton.)

"There have been no prosecutions under the Act during the year, though the vigilance of the police with regard to the sale of opium has been kept up. The only conclusion the sergeant can come to is that the severe punishments inflicted have had the desired effect of suppressing its sale."—(Protector Brosnan, Winton.)

In the course of a report on a complaint made by Messrs. Cutten Bros., of Clump Point, as to Chinese and Malays supplying opium and harbouring aboriginals, Sergeant Casey, of Geraldton, says:— "The Chinese no doubt supply the opium which the aboriginals demand in isolated places. . . . Nearly every month there are Chinese prosecuted here for supplying opium, but still they keep on giving it."

On my last trip down, in the "Melbidir," I found evidence of the supply of opium to aboriginals almost everywhere, especially in the Mackay district, where the Protector tells me that it is exceptional to find a station not supplying it.

The accompanying table particularises the prosecutions for supplying opium to aboriginals. With three or four exceptions full penalties were inflicted (£20, &c.), the exceptions being due to ignorance on the part of the presiding justices *re* section 8 of the amending Act of 1901:—

Date.	Locality.	Defendant.	Date.	Locality.	Defendant.
1903.			1903.		
24 January	Townsville	Ah Foo	1 July	Geraldton	Ah Kin*
3 February	Ayr	Ah Gurr	14 "	Normanton	Ah Sam
10 "	Einsleigh	Ah Kit	15 "	Cooktown	Ah Sue
20 "	Mackay	Charlie Mackay (Chinese)	22 "	Hughenden	Jam Kim
27 "	Geraldton	Ay Chck	27 "	Cooktown	Nee Lee
— "	Georg. town	Mow Hen	31 "	Ingham	Ah Lee
16 April	Geraldton	William Lippert	16 September	Ravenswood	Ah Gow†
16 "	"	Ah Kin	28 "	Hughenden	Joe Gee
6 May	Kallanda	Ah Hoe	15 October	Atherion	Sing Sin
9 "	Proserpine	Foon Kee	12 November	Ingham	Ah Nee
20 "	Ingham	Ah Dick	12 "	"	Put Lun
20 "	Ravenswood	Luke Tenison	12 "	"	Ah Yin
21 "	Ingham	Bacha Timon	13 December	Normanton	Ah Sam‡
22 June	Geraldton	Messey (S.S.I.)	17 "	Geraldton	Ah Chee
			18 "	Ingham	Ah Fat

* Case dismissed.

† No appearance of defendant: warrant issued.

‡ Discharged.

The following schedule shows the prosecutions reported to me on the charge of illegal possession of opium:—

Date.	Locality.	Defendant.	Sentence.
1903. 4 March	Richmond	Peter Cook (Malay)	24 hours' imprisonment. He also received 4 months for vagrancy.
23 May	"	Chum Lee	£20, &c.
23 "	"	Ah Lin	£20, &c.
24 "	Aloomba	Ah Sue	Remanded.*
6 August	Burketown	War Long†	£7 5s. 6d. (including costs).
14 September	Hughenden	"Nipper" (aboriginal)	14 days.
29 September	"	Joe Gee	£5 or 1 month.

* No further particulars received.

† Before the Court twelve months ago for supplying to aboriginals.

WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

Unprotected Women and Children.—My sincere thanks are again due to the superintendents of the Yarrabah and Mapoon Missions for their continued willingness to receive the little waifs and strays, as well as unprotected women, that are continually being sent them. On the other hand, it is only right that they as well as other mission superintendents, should be protected from abuse of their charity. With the general public, for instance, the opinion appears to be gaining ground—though I am exerting my utmost to destroy it—that these institutions are being run for the convenience of employers, and afford them an easy means of obtaining or ridding themselves of their black labour. Mission stations are not registry offices for domestic servants, neither are they dumping grounds for blacks whose services their employers deem it inconvenient any longer to retain. It is only right that when girls are sent to a mission station in a certain condition from places of employment that the employers should make a payment of so much a month, or say, three months' wages. The superintendents cannot, of course, refuse to receive these girls, *for their own sakes*, but the employers too easily get rid of all responsibility in the matter. The following letter was addressed by me to a lady in the Cairns district, and expresses the views I hold with regard to the moral obligations of the employers, the circumstances dependent upon which it was written being, I regret to say, applicable to not a few other cases:—

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 22nd October, *re* removing an aboriginal woman to Yarrabah, but note with surprise that you omit to make mention of the rather important particular as to whether she herself is willing or unwilling to go there. Your letter also appears to me to call for further comment. Having been in your service so long—twenty years—you have presumably obeyed the law, put the woman under agreement, and paid her wages. Has she any savings, or is she absolutely destitute? Your reason for wishing to have her removed is apparently because she has a child now. Am I to conclude that she is, therefore, of no further use to you? If she has been your faithful servant for twenty years, surely she has some claim on your indulgence in her days of trouble, and I am accordingly anxious to learn to what extent you, as a Christian woman, are prepared to help her. Because the poor creature has sinned according to our standard of morality—but certainly not according to her own—I decline (on this account only, of course) to make any recommendation to the Minister for her compulsory removal. On the other hand, I am perfectly willing to ask the Yarrabah superintendent to receive her, provided you are prepared to make some donation to the mission funds (informing me to what extent) and pay her passage money there: provided also that she goes voluntarily. The Yarrabah, or any other Mission, is not to be regarded as a dumping-ground for aboriginal female servants, whom employers, after twenty years' service, find it inconvenient to any longer keep. The whole circumstances appear to be a sad comment on the illogical ideas of many European employers, that their black domestics are expected to remain single all their lives.

The following are notes concerning the half-caste and other helpless aboriginal children and young women who have been forwarded during the course of the year to Yarrabah (Y.) and Mapoon (M.):—

- "Billy," "Norman," "Topsy," and "Nancy," four little half-caste children in the blacks' camp, were sent from Normanton (28-1-3) under the Reformatories Act. (M.)
- "Topsy," half-caste, about eight years old, was found by the police "with a number of blacks at Granada Station, most of whom are suffering from syphilis." (Y.)
- "Daisy," half-caste, seven or eight years old, found with an alleged shanty-keeper at F——. The police did not consider her employer a fit or proper person to have charge of her. (M.)
- "Archie," thirteen years of age, brought before the Kynuna Police Court (3-2-3), pleaded guilty to a charge of stealing. The bench then convicted and discharged him on condition that he be kept in the care of the Kynuna police until I could be communicated with. (Y.)
- "Lizzie Baker," a civilised Cooktown aboriginal, with already one or two half-caste children, the paternity of one of which is admitted and being paid for. After her confinement, unable to work for herself or to find employment owing to her erratic habits, I sent her to the Mission, whither she was willing to go. (Y.)
- "Ethel," a young woman, originally from the Cairns district, was "adopted, &c.," by a Mrs. M——, and taken to Victoria, where she was getting into trouble. She was sent back at the expense of her late employers. (Y.)
- "Maud," half-caste, five or six years, in the camp at Camooweal. Her mother "Rosie" states that the father, T. W——, died at Boorooloola twelve months ago, and that she is now married to a black boy, "Bob," who brought her in to Camooweal. "Bob," who is well known to Sergeant Quain, states that "Rosie" was his gin a long time ago; that T. W—— took her from him, and that on his death she returned to him; both are natives of Brunette, N.T. (M.)

- "Maudie," half-caste, ten years of age, in the Percyville camp. This child is an orphan, and totally blind. She was brought down to Brisbane with the intention of sending her to the Blind Asylum; unable to obtain admission here, she was sent to Fraser Island.
- "Jessie," half-caste little girl from Lawn Hills, (M.)
- "Nellie," a Cooktown gin, taken away from there to the Mosman by kanakas, with whom she was found living as a prostitute. (Y.)
- "Emily," the ten month old half-caste daughter of "Jinnie," of Kuranda. Owing to the ill-treatment meted out to this infant by the other camp blacks, the mother applied to have it sent to the Mission. (Y.)
- "Annie," a young half-caste female from Geraldton, who was either an accessory or witness in the murder for which the aboriginal "Papa" was deported South, last April. (Y.)
- "Charlie Coates," twelve years of age, a bright, intelligent, half-caste lad, living in the Cooktown Eight-mile district. He was being brought up among very undesirable surroundings. (Y.)
- "Nellie Steele," an aboriginal gin from Charters Towers (for harbouring whom the kanaka "Newey" was convicted), with her two half-caste children. (Y.)
- "Jock," four or five year old half-caste from the Hughenden camp, where his two drunken and dissolute parents are. (Y.)
- "Ada Lyall," half-caste, aged about eleven or twelve, from Strathleven. This case was interesting in that, as soon as steps were instituted for her removal, a relative of the old man who had reared her since infancy, put in a claim of paternity. (Y.)
- "Maggie," half-caste, eight or ten years old, from Carandotta camp. The station-manager wrote that he could not hold himself responsible for her safety. (Y.)
- "Walter," half-caste, fourteen years of age, from Cardwell. (Y.)
- "Martin," half-caste, four years old, from Butcher's Hill. (Y.)
- "Maggie" and two children, from Mount Emu, on the application of Mr. Klein-Peel. (Y.)
- "Minnie," half-caste Chinese-aboriginal girl, about nine years old, from Normanton. This child had been frequenting the Chinese quarters, both at the gardens and in the township. (M.)
- "Topsy," another half-caste Chinese-aboriginal child, about six years of age, at Normanton. (M.)
- "Daisy," half-caste girl, about thirteen years of age, continually in and around the Chinese quarters at Normanton. She was found in a Chinaman's hut, her companion being prosecuted for harbouring her. (M.)
- "Lucy," "Georgie," and "Lucy," three half-caste children from the blacks' camp at the Tate. (Y.)
- "Michael," "Arthur," and "Jimmy," the three half-caste children of the aboriginal female "Keating," found in the blacks' camp on the Herberton Range. The mother elected to go with them. (Y.)
- "Rosie," about ten years of age, and a boy "Davey," both half-caste, from the blacks' camp at Rifle Creek, Mount Molloy. (Y.)
- "Maude," a nine-year-old aboriginal from Cargoon. She is alleged to have been brutally ill-treated. (Y.)
- "Ruby," half-caste wife of the aboriginal Peter, an incorrigible, whose deportation South, from Atherton, the Minister had authorised. Two children with her. (Y.)
- "Sam," thirteen years of age, a Cardwell native. In the course of a police court case it transpired that he had attempted an offence on his employer's infant daughter. Sentenced to the Reformatory. It appears that he was escorted there by a police-tracker. (Y.)

In addition to the above, the Minister has given authority for taking the necessary action for the removal of "Harry," a half-caste orphan child, at Lawn Hill.

Instructions were received in 1901 for the removal to Yarrabah of half-caste "Lillie," about ten years of age, from the Millechester (Charters Towers), camp, but before the Minister's order arrived, she had been taken away by her people in the direction of Clermont, and the Protector, in spite of inquiries, has still been unable to trace her. So again, little half-caste "Billy," a child too young to do any work, found on Pine-tree Station, got away with the blacks to the Eastern coastline before it could be taken to the Weipa Mission. Protector King expresses himself as follows *re* sending children to these institutions:—"I am strongly of the opinion that all female half-castes would be much better off at a mission station. There are certainly a few exceptions where private individuals bring them up as well . . . but when they arrive at the age of about fourteen, then I recommend that they should all be sent to a mission station. No matter how well they are watched, it is my experience that they are invariably got into trouble by some unprincipled white man, who only laughs at the poor unfortunate whom he has seduced. It is almost impossible to prove paternity. . . . No doubt there will be a great number of half-castes sent to Yarrabah during this year from this district."

On the recommendation of the local Protector, permission was granted "Charley," one of the more enlightened natives, to accompany some aboriginal children sentenced to the Industrial School at Mapoon. On his return to Normanton, Protector Galbraith writes that "'Charley' gave the most glowing accounts of Mapoon; he stated that all the children were happy, and had no desire to return to their homes; he also informed me that he would like to live there. This visit of 'Charley's' has done an incalculable amount of good, as he has told all the blacks about this locality, and the news has spread far and wide. The blacks have heretofore been under the impression that the children were badly treated; this idea has been fostered in them by many whites. I have intimated that one or two of the mothers, who would like to see their children, could get a trip once a year. This action, from a humanitarian as well as from a diplomatic point of view, would have many advantages."

A maintenance order was issued against Harry Lockett, at Thursday Island (11-8-3), for three children by an island woman, to whom he had been "married" some years ago by the Samoan teacher—

until recently the recognised and accepted form of marriage in the Torres Strait. I am glad to say that these forms of marriage are gradually being dispensed with, and the islanders afforded every opportunity of getting the ceremony legally performed at Thursday Island.

In those cases of half-caste children, where paternity is admitted on oath, I have allowed them to remain with their European fathers (provided the surroundings are satisfactory), because, should it ultimately become desirable to maintain them at the cost of the State, the fathers can be made to contribute towards their support under section 19 of the 1901 Act. This applies, for instance, to half-caste Eleanor Stephenson, about seven, of Bedford Creek, *via* Cardwell.

The Registrar-General has allowed the birth of the illegitimate quadroon child of "Nelly Kelly," of Atherton, to be registered. The mother is a half-caste, and likely to come into some property.

MIXED MARRIAGES.

Mixed Marriages.—Acting on the authority conferred on me by the Minister (G.G. 30-8-2), I gave the necessary permission in writing for the celebration of marriage between the following individuals and aboriginal females, on the recommendation of the various Protectors, police, or clergy concerned:—

Simaki, a native of Samoa, but resident in Torres Strait over ten years; son of the Samoan missionary teacher at Murray Island; engaged in pearl-shelling; has no intention or desire to return to Samoa; has a house at Naghir (Mount Ernest); is about nineteen years of age, and in a position to keep a wife. The girl, Assau, is a full-blood native of Warrior Island; about eighteen years old: father and mother both living at Yam Island.

Henry Lewis, of South Sea Island parents, but born in Queensland. Full-blood aboriginal "Pauline," of Mapoon (on the application and recommendation of Rev. N. Hey.)

John Martin (European), of Gingerilla Station, Rocky Tait, near Chillagoe. Gin "Annie," on whose account he had been prosecuted for harbouring.

John Page (European), woodcutter. Half-caste "Minnie," late of Opalton, but latterly of Winton.

Juan Santos, native of Guam. Clara Fabian, whose mother is an aboriginal of Two-Brothers Island (Gabbaree) in the Torres Strait.

Ibrahim Ben Mahomet, of Calcutta, twenty years' resident at Thursday Island. Agnes Minjoot, the half-caste daughter of an aboriginal (Coen district) woman by an Indian father, Said Abdurrahman.

"Ponto," aboriginal ex-tracker, a member of the Yarrabah Mission. Half-caste "Minnie," lately in the employ of Mr. Connolly, the police magistrate at Port Douglas.

"Cheery," a South Sea Islander, member of the Queensland Kanaka Mission. Aboriginal "Kate."

Fred. Peachy (European). Aboriginal "Lily," of Glendower Station, Hughenden.

Wambi (kanaka), a naturalised British subject, of Gum-Hole Station, Staaten River. Aboriginal "Mary." There has been upwards of twenty years' cohabitation, and two children, whom the father is very anxious to legitimate.

Domingo Xeromenes, a Filipino, of good character, and many years resident at Thursday Island. Eleanor Roas, the fifteen-year-old daughter of Raymonds Roas, a Filipino, by Mary Kass, a Torres Strait Islander (the father consenting).

Ah Mat (Mahomet) Pablo, thirty-five, a native of Singapore, diver, resident at Thursday Island. Selini, eighteen (age authenticated), a half-caste native of Mabuag (Jervis Island), daughter of George Anker, or Anken, a native of Samoa, by Kerisi, his wife, an aboriginal native of Mabuag.

Robert Athow, thirty-seven, native of Api, Pacific Islands, a boardinghouse-keeper at Thursday Island, and resident in Queensland for twenty-three years. Rebecca, seventeen, native of Errub (Darnley Island), daughter of Gimai, a Darnley Island female native, by Sela, a native of Lifu: both parents consenting.

Lucio Rosario, a Filipino, twenty years resident of Thursday Island, and of good character. Sepe, a Murray Islander.

George Hooper, half-caste aboriginal, stockman. Aboriginal "Polly," of Walgra (out-station of Carandotta).

Delamo, a Malayta boy, of Geraldton. "Nellie" (Nuibra)

Urimboh, also a Malayta, Geraldton. "Nellie" (Dingarra.)

Macario, a Filipino, of Cooktown. "Maggie," of the Starcke River. In reporting on this case, Protector King says:—"I am satisfied that the gin has a good husband, and one that will give her a good living. This is another instance of the beneficial effects of the Act, which, if not in force, would simply mean that they would live together, and have several children, which no doubt would be thrown on the community for support."

Pelay, a Filipino, eleven years' resident at Thursday Island, and of good character. Johanna Favian, a Filipino aboriginal half-caste minor.

Thomas Fuller (European), timber-getter, Geraldton. "Lucy," an aboriginal employee at the Imperial Hotel; it was she that first wrote for permission to marry the man.

Charley Ah Sing, Normanton. Helen Ah Sam, a China-aboriginal half-caste; her father consenting.

Ah Gim, Chinaman, gardener, Burketown. "Minnie," with whom he has been living for upwards of ten years, and who has borne him two children.

- Mulgobbie, of Malo, New Hebrides, working at Innisfail Plantation. Bearie Gingarra, of Mulgrave River. This couple have been living as man and wife for three years past.
- Qualla-fare-better, of Malayta, Solomon Islands, working at Innisfail. Nellie Cavoo. These people have been together for one year.
- Dessemah, of Motlap, New Hebrides, working at Innisfail. Laura Yarringa, of Mulgrave River. Living together for nine years past. They have two children.
- Gee-arlo, of Santo, New Hebrides, working at Mundoo. Annie Sui-arie. They have been together for five years.
- Minambeera, of Malayta. Nancy Mara-meré, of Mundoo. Living together for two years past.

I refused the applications for marriage with aboriginal females made on behalf of Pimbolo, a South Sea Islander, a member of the Queensland Kanaka Mission, Geraldton, and C. O. Fong, of Fossilbrook, against both of whom there had been convictions for harbouring. A school teacher at Culcifer sought permission to marry a female half-caste, but subsequently changed his mind.

My chief anxiety, however, has been in connection with the marriages of kanakas with our native females, in view of the federal legislation for ultimately deporting these islanders, a matter which I discussed with Commander Rason on his last visit to Brisbane. While realising the present social condition of affairs, I have had to guard the rights of the women themselves, equally with those of the kanakas they have been consorting with, and those of the aboriginals to whom they have been "betrothed" or tribally belong. With the Geraldton kanakas, I have received great and valuable assistance from Mr. Thomas, of the Queensland Kanaka Mission, and I cannot do better than quote some very pertinent remarks, more or less endorsed by the local police, in his letter to me of 5th November, 1903:—

In every case the women have declared their desire for the official marriage, and also their readiness to accompany their respective husbands to their island homes when they have to return thither. . . . These women are all undoubtedly better off with the kanakas than with their own people. The aborigines only too often have nothing but blows for their women, besides being evidently always ready to sell them to any and every debased profligate that will pay for the service. On the other hand, with the kanakas they are wives. They are regularly clothed and fed, and lead decent lives, and not infrequently are brought by their husbands to school. I have no desire to interfere with the administration of the Act, but I must at least suggest that a more humane treatment of these people might be secured without any violence to the Act, by giving them a specific time in which to conform to the Queensland law in the matter of marriage. Such act of grace could be made to apply only to those who at present have wives. As it is deemed undesirable that such marriages should take place, I would earnestly advocate the wisdom of asking the inspectors to impress upon the boys that they must not take these women. The number of kanakas at present living with aboriginal women is not great, but still there are a good many of them who have not yet the legal sanction, nor have yet bestirred themselves in the matter. One reason for their neglect is that in some instances the masters have expressed the opinion that the legal marriage is not necessary in their case. I can only warn the boys of the danger in which they stand, but the application for lawful marriage must of necessity be their own act. In all cases that have come under my notice, the women desire to remain with their husbands. The comparatively easy conditions of life with the kanakas make them unwilling to return to the old camp-life, with its abuses, privations, and depravities. For my own part, I am always sorry when boys have these women. But I am of opinion that when they have them they should keep them, and conform to the law in the matter of marriage. Unless they are taught that the latter is necessary they will never do it, but they invariably have a readiness to do so on being made to understand that it is essential.

With these views I entirely concur.

DISEASE, ACCIDENT, DEATH.

Disease, Accident, Death.—My action with regard to relief, &c., in cases of sickness and disease, is summarised in the following excerpts, month by month, from reports regularly furnished to the Minister:—

The police have reported finding the dead body of a gin in the bush at the Eight-mile Creek, Golden Gate. (January.)

Correspondence has passed with the Cloncurry and Cooktown Hospitals *re* my department refusing to pay charges made for aboriginal paupers—*i.e.*, blacks not in legal employment. "Jimmy," a Camooweal boy who has been specially rationed by the local sergeant for some few months past, has at last succumbed to his disease of ulcerating granuloma. The police report the death of gin "Maggie," at Golden Gate. The New South Wales Government Statistician, and Dr. Jenkins, of Sydney, have both written for information *re* prevalence of cancer among our natives. (March.)

Of the fever-stricken blacks at Cape York, for whose benefit Protector Bennett sent across rations and medicine last month, some of the men have died. During the late floods at Geraldton, aboriginal "Kitty" was seen on a log being carried out to sea: Sergeant Casey and a man named Dawson jumped into a boat and rescued her just as she was passing the Black Buoy. (April.)

The death is reported of aboriginal "Charlie," under agreement with a carrier, plying between Burketown and Camooweal. (May.)

Protector Graham reports the death of the half-caste wife of Johnny Murray (kanaka), at Ross River. On the recommendation of the police, I have granted 10s. to aboriginal "George" for burying a black gin found dead in the South Townsville camp. (June.)

Some medicines were supplied by Protector Martin, of Mackay, to aboriginal "Willie." (August.)

"Bob," a young aboriginal in the employ of Barclay Downs, was killed by his horse running him against a tree. (September.)

"Tatsy" was brought up at Halifax (17-8-3), on a charge of being of unsound mind, but was discharged. "Emma Monday" was accidentally killed by falling over a balcony in the Townsville Hospital. "Alice," the wife of "Tommy Maryborough," died suddenly at the Three-mile, Cooktown. The police also reported the death of gin "Lizzie," at Rochford. Sergeant King has placed in the local hospital a sick black seaman, brought into Cooktown by the "Melbidir." (October.)

A copy of the depositions at the magisterial inquiry held at Georgetown (28-8-3), into the alleged suicide—by revolver shot—of an aboriginal, while under police escort, has been received. The superintendent of Yarrabah very kindly came to the assistance of the Townsville police, and has taken into the Mission a blind aboriginal adult "Johnny," who had no relatives to look after him. (December.)

ABORIGINAL CRIME.

Aboriginal Crime.—In terms of section 3 of the 1901 Act, instructions for the removal of the following incorrigibles to districts (Fraser Island, Durundur, Mapoon), far removed from their native haunts, have been given by the Minister:—

- "Antoni," "Tiger," "Billy," "Paddy," "Jacky," and "Peter." Antoni (his second sentence for a similar offence), and Tiger, are already serving sentences of six months for housebreaking. The police reported that these boys had banded themselves into a gang under the leadership of Antoni, and that their removal from the district was very desirable.
- "Tomny," for the murder (by stabbing), of aboriginal "Albert," at Mareeba, on 9th March. "A drunkard and an opium smoker. All the aboriginals in the district are afraid of him. He generally camps by himself, but when he gets drink he goes into camp, where he nearly always causes trouble. Both he and deceased have given more trouble to the police than all the aboriginals in the district. The legal evidence against him on the capital charge was too slight to secure a conviction."
- "Papa" (partly deaf and dumb). For the murder of "Ningi," at Liverpool Creek (Geraldton), on 7th July, 1902. The murder was committed in conjunction with "Mick," still at large, and witnessed by a female half-caste, "Annie" (whose removal to Yarrabah has since been effected). There were some peculiar circumstances connected with the case in that the tomahawk which was used for the purpose was alleged by the blacks to have been borrowed for the purpose by a white settler. Owing to the prisoner being partly deaf and dumb, it would be impossible to explain the nature of the charge to him. He subsequently appears to have escaped from Fraser Island, whither he was deported.
- "Harry," on the complaint of the Pentland (Deep Lead) miners to Mr. Geo. Jackson, M.L.A., that he has been repeatedly stealing from their camps. Since then he stole eighteen sovereigns from a wagonette at Cape River Siding.
- "Toby," on the complaint of the manager of Lawn Hills. The police reported that Toby has been the cause of many fights between different blacks, and the organiser of all depredations committed by the tribe of which he is "king." Before the Minister's warrant for his removal to Mapoon was received, he was convicted at Burketown (7-7-3), with a six months' sentence, of having meat illegally in his possession.
- "Mallin," on the requisition of the Herberton justices, was sentenced to two months' imprisonment in Cairns gaol for assaulting a white woman.
- "Hero," an incorrigible horse-thief from Maytown. In connection with this case Protector King reports that this practice of deporting such characters has a far more deterrent effect on the blacks than sending them to gaol. He has since made his escape from Fraser Island.
- "Friday," continually thieving from the camps of the Cape River fossickers, by whom he is even more dreaded than his mate "Harry" [see above]; he obstructed the police, with a tomahawk, when they were arresting the latter.
- "Marabo," at present serving six months' imprisonment with hard labour at Stewart's Creek: sentenced at Geraldton (1-7-3) for assaulting a young white woman. About twenty-two years of age, and has been a noted thief in the district for the past two years. "After the expiration of his sentence, it would be of the utmost service to the district to have him deported, as if he is allowed to return he will be looked upon as a hero among the other aboriginals, and perhaps continue in his depredations."
- "Toby" and "Jack." On the application of the local Protector at Cairns. Two incorrigible thieves, of Atherton, now in the Herberton cells. "Toby escaped from Herberton gaol in March last year."

Application was made for the deportation of "George," of Butcher's Hill, for thieving from the miners' camps, but I did not consider the evidence strong enough to warrant my recommending it to the Minister.

"Joe" has returned to his old haunts in the Peninsula. This is the same boy who, with "Jimmy" and "Pumpkin," was deported South on the Minister's orders, and taken away by the police sometime during September last year, on the conclusion of the inquiry into the murder of four aboriginals by police trackers. It would appear that he escaped from Fraser Island in the early part of February, 1903, and, although the police were notified next day, he seems to have eluded their vigilance, making the overland journey of at least 800 miles in under six months. Considering that he is a "myall," and hardly

able to speak a word of English, that he has had to pass through tribe after tribe, and country all foreign to him, and that he was originally taken down by steamer from Thursday Island, the performance is a remarkable one.

Tommy Deighton has written again from St. Helena. I have promised to pay him a visit shortly.

I have reported adversely on Darkie's application on expiry of his sentence to be allowed to return to Cairns. He originally murdered a European, escaped from Fraser Island last year, wandered back to his native country, was caught again and sent to Durundur, where he was convicted of an assault on the superintendent, the penalty for which he subsequently paid. He was finally sent to Deebing Creek.

For the alleged murder of aboriginal "Charlie" on the Murray River (Cardwell), "Mango," "Fred," and "Daisy" were committed.

For attempted rape, "Billy," "Johnny," and "Paddy," aged 17, 19, and 21 years respectively, were committed for trial at the Normanton Circuit Court (9-10-3) to five years' imprisonment with hard labour. In commenting upon this case, Protector Galbraith expresses himself thus:—

The three aboriginals, even after arrest, did not understand the seriousness of their offence. This class of crime will increase very much in the near future. My reasons for saying so are as follows:—Male aboriginals employed on stations, and with other folk, are continually coming to my office, asking me to get them a gin. I also receive requests from station managers to the same effect. By both colours I am looked upon as a matrimonial agent, but, unfortunately, I am unable to assist them, as the female element does not respond. Most of the males are unable to go back to their own country for gins, owing to the fact that they were taken away as youngsters, and have forgotten their mother-tongue; also distance, feuds, and other causes. A number of private families, also stations, have gins. Most of these gins have been given to their owners when about seven or eight years of age. These gins are not allowed to mix with other blacks. After a time, this enforced separation is strengthened by the girls' surroundings; they get attracted towards white men, and look down upon males of their own race. The result of this means that semi-civilised males, being deprived of women of their own race, will gratify their sexual desires by committing assaults on unprotected women and children.

There were four prosecutions for assault: "Donegan" was discharged at Camooweal (12-2-3); "Tommy" received fourteen days at Georgetown (15-5-3); "Willie" was sentenced, for assault on a female, to six months at Hughenden (21-1-3); "Jimmy" was discharged with a caution at Cloncurry (24-9-3) At Thursday Island, Protector Bennett says:—"There has not been any crime accompanied with violence by aboriginals against Europeans during the year, nor, indeed, against others than Europeans."

Reports have been received *re* the following convictions for stealing:—"Burke" and "Chillie Baloo," three months, Croydon (11-1-3); "Micky," seven days, Pentland (5-2-3); "Charlie," two months, Croydon (27-3-3)—for escaping from gaol, he subsequently received one minute's imprisonment at Normanton; "Costello," ex-tracker, six months, Maytown (—5-3)—employment was sought by me for this boy on expiry of his sentence; "Trina," "Tricalima," "Obingan," each three months, Thursday Island (15-6-3); "Charlie," three months, Townsville (17-8-3); "Norman," three months, Cooktown (17-8-3); "Georgie," three months, Cooktown (15-9-3); "Martin Kane," six months, Chillagoe (9-10-3); "Leonard," two months, Nebo (23-10-3); "Tommy," "Peter," and "Charlie," twenty-one hours' imprisonment, Cooktown (29-11-3); "Charlie," two months, Cooktown (21-12-3).

One complaint from Herbert Vale has been made to Inspector Galbraith for cattle-stealing.

For being in possession of property, reasonably supposed to be stolen, at Elliott River, near Bowen, "Billy" was fined £10, or three months' imprisonment. For having beef, which he could not account for, "Diamond" and "Toby" each got six months at Burketown (7-7-3). The Minister authorised Toby's deportation to Mapoon, but in the case of Diamond, I wrote Protector Galbraith as follows:—"I do not recognise sufficient evidence before me to warrant my recommending his permanent removal, and, unless this is forthcoming, consider that no harm will accrue if we allow him to return to his tribe, after a good caution from you. He will be in a position to inform his mates as to what penalties will certainly ensue if they persist in killing cattle."

On charges of being illegally on enclosed premises, &c., the following convictions were reported:—"Sambo," three months, Mirani (2-6-3); "Echo," six months, Croydon (—7-3); "Johnny," three months, Chillagoe (7-8-3); "Tommy," six months, Cooktown (3-11-3).

"Jacky," nine years of age, received six lashes for burglary at Burketown (20-5-3).

"Sandy" was cautioned and discharged for obscene language at Mackinlay (26-12-3).

OFFENCES ON ABORIGINALS.

Offences on Aboriginals.—No true bill was filed in the case of *Rex. v. Charles Wilkinson* (an African), who was committed for trial to the Normanton Circuit Court (4-4-03) for the murder of aboriginal "George," at Burketown, in the previous December. The following are the particulars of this case, as given by Protector Galbraith:—"The accused, Wilkinson, was heard and seen sending two aboriginals from his camp to look for horses, the deceased boy being one of them, the gin remaining in camp with Wilkinson. Two witnesses saw Wilkinson place this gin on a horse, he himself being on the same horse, and riding away in the direction of the river, and close to where the body of the deceased was afterwards found. One of these horse tracks was very peculiar owing to a large portion of the hoof being broken away. The tracks were followed by two aboriginals. Wilkinson got off his horse near where deceased body was found, covered with sand. The impression of his boots was sworn to, these

boots being very peculiar and unusual in this district, being very heavy hob-nailed boots. His horses were also tied up at this spot. The body of deceased on examination was found to have a bullet wound through the head, and also what appeared to be a lead bullet inside the skull. An empty cartridge case was also found with a peculiar indentation on the side of cap where struck by needle. Wilkinson, on being arrested, denied ever having seen the gin or the boy. Stains, which I have not the slightest doubt were blood-stains, were found on his trousers; also a revolver was found in his possession with twenty or thirty rounds of ammunition. The empty cartridge case found near deceased fitted the chamber of the revolver. The revolver, on being loaded with some of the cartridges found in Wilkinson's possession, and discharged, left the same peculiar indentation on cartridge as found on the empty shell near deceased. I may add that the gin has not been discovered, and there is little doubt in my mind but that she also was murdered. Much indignation was expressed in the Press and to myself personally at Burketown at there being no bill filed. Wilkinson was committed for trial by Burketown Bench on 3rd January, 1903."

Henry Herbert Howell was arrested near Cloncurry on the 13th August, charged with the murder of an aboriginal named "Jack." He was committed for trial at the Circuit Court, Normanton, where he was discharged.

William Preston was fined £5, and ordered to pay £2 5s. 6d., value of property, at Urandangie Police Court (13-10-3), for wilfully and unlawfully destroying half Government blanket, two dresses, one net, and two handkerchiefs, the property of "Polly," an aboriginal. Preston visited the blacks' camp, and being unable to obtain a gin to accompany him to his camp, he collected the above articles and set fire to them.

In commenting upon the proposed new mission at the mouth of the Mitchell River, Protector Galbraith writes that:—"It will act as a deterrent in preventing some white men, with black boys under them, from rounding up small mobs of wild natives and despoiling their women. This practice is more common than many people imagine."

MISSION STATIONS AND REFORMATORIES.

The following table shows the average daily number of natives connected with the various mission stations, according as they are permanently resident (P.), or temporarily visitant, casual (C.). Permanents are those who have continuously resided at the mission, and have been continuously and entirely supported with rations for a period of at least six months.

AVERAGE DAILY NUMBER OF ABORIGINALS AT MISSION STATIONS.

1903.	YARRABAH.			MAPOON.			WAIIPA.			CAPE BEDFORD.		
	£200.			£250.			£200.			£250.		
	P.	C.	Total.	P.	C.	Total.	P.	C.	Total.	P.	C.	Total.
January	179	16	195	89	13	102	22	51	73	93	Nil	93
February	183	16	199	87	13	100	24	42	66	98	Nil	98
March	191	9	200	86	14	100	26	57	83	100	Nil	100
April	191	10	201	92	12	104	28	82	110	96	Nil	96
May	204	11	215	91	12	103	28	74	102	95	Nil	95
June	210	10	220	85	9	94	27	57	84	95	Nil	95
July	210	10	220	88	9	97	27	40	67	95	Nil	95
August	210	12	222	85	6	91	27	33	60	96	Nil	96
September	212	10	222	87	7	94	27	47	74	96	Nil	96
October	250	10	260	88	9	97	27	53	80	96	Nil	96
November	267	10	277	92	3	100	27	54	81	96	Nil	96
December	267	10	277	93	11	104	27	40	67	96	Nil	96

Two of the Northern mainland mission stations (Yarrabah and Mapoon), are already proclaimed reformatories under the "*Industrial and Reformatory Schools Act of 1865*," which empowers justices to send into custody there any child under fifteen years of age, born of an aboriginal or half-caste mother. Considering that children are thus ordered for detention under the authority of an Act passed long previous to, and totally independent of, either of the Aboriginal Acts, I note with great concern that payment for children sent under these conditions to (mission station) reformatories, is made from the aboriginal vote. I have accordingly suggested that these payments be in future, as in the case of other reformatories, made a charge on the Home Secretary's vote.

In direct proportion as the mission stations are gradually becoming to be more and more recognised as asylums and refuges for unprotected young women and children—and in this aspect these institutions are annually saving the State a heavy item of expenditure—the number of such cases sent to them is gradually increasing, and the consequent total annual cost of removal and maintenance becoming greater.

Financial assistance has been promised to two new mission stations which it is proposed to open next year along the Gulf coast, on the Archer and Mitchell Rivers, under control of the Presbyterian and Anglican Churches respectively. The amount promised for the Archer River settlement is £150 per annum, and £200 for building purposes; that for the Mitchell is £100 to £150 for rations, and £100 per annum for a teacher.

The next table will give an idea of the attendances, &c., at the schools established in connection with the Northern aboriginal mission stations on the mainland, the salary of the teacher being paid out of the aboriginal vote in addition to the mission subsidy:—

ABORIGINAL SCHOOL RETURNS (MAINLAND)—1903.

Situation and Teacher's Salary.	Quarter Ending.	ENROLMENT.			CLASSIFICATION—BOYS.			CLASSIFICATION—GIRLS.			No. of Days School Open.	ATTENDANCE.			
		Boys.	Girls.	Total.	I.	II.	III.	I.	II.	III.		Total Attendance.		Average Attendance.	
												Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.
Cape Bedford, £60	31 March ...	28	15	43	28	...	...	15	...	...	42	1,100	613	26	15
	30 June ...	25	14	39	25	...	...	14	...	...	61	1,473	854	24	14
	30 September ...	24	14	38	24	...	...	14	...	...	65	1,541	909	24	14
	31 December ...	26	14	40	26	...	...	14	...	...	54	1,368	756	25	14
Mapoon, £100	31 March ...	26	44	70	20	6	...	27	17	...	50	949	1,843	18	36
	30 June ...	34	45	79	28	6	...	23	17	5	50	1,172	2,059	23	41
	30 September ...	36	52	88	30	6	...	30	17	5	52	1,302	2,133	25	41
	31 December ...	32	53	85	26	6	...	31	17	5	48	1,201	2,288	25	47
Yarrabah, £70	31 March ...	54	40	94	54	...	...	40	...	...	46	1,871	1,363	40	21*
	30 June ...	55	42	97	55	...	...	42	...	...	44	1,800	1,487	42	33
	30 September ...	56	44	100	56	...	...	44	...	...	48	2,131	1,753	44	36
	31 December ...	60	50	110	60	...	...	50	...	...	44	2,145	1,753	48	39
Weipa, £80	31 March ...	30	27	57	30	...	...	27	...	...	48	950	1,110	20	23
	30 June ...	39	28	67	39	...	...	28	...	...	48†	1,399	1,311	28	26
	30 September ...	32	28	60	32	...	...	28	...	...	42‡	757	1,054	18	25
	31 December ...	43	33	76	43	...	...	33	...	...	47	1,130	1,289	24	30

* Epidemic of influenza affected attendance. † Estimated. Exact number not given.
‡ School closed for eight days owing to sickness of missionaries.

Although within my jurisdiction, more important duties on the mainland preclude my visiting the schools connected with certain of the Torres Strait islands. However, the Government Resident, Thursday Island, regularly visits and reports on them. The teachers of these island schools are also paid out of the aboriginal vote. I have compiled the next table from papers now at my disposal, but regret that it is incomplete:—

ABORIGINAL SCHOOL RETURNS (TORRES STRAIT ISLANDS)—1903.

Situation and Teacher's Salary.	Quarter Ending.	ENROLMENT.			CLASSIFICATION—BOYS.			CLASSIFICATION—GIRLS.			No. of Days School Open.	ATTENDANCE.			
		Boys.	Girls.	Total.	I.	II.	III.	I.	II.	III.		Total Attendance.		Average Attendance.	
												Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.
Murray Island, £200	31 March ...	39	63	102	17	12	10	28	18	7	45	1,332	2,136	21	48
	30 June ...	41	62	103	20	11	10	29	20	13	62	1,916	2,999	31	48
	30 September ...	43	63	106	21	12	10	30	19	14	58	1,966	2,869	34	50
	31 December ...	44	60	104	23	12	9	27	20	13	55	1,758	2,389	32	43
Darnley Island, £100	31 March ...	37	31	60	37	...	...	31	...	...	68	2,002	1,911	33	32
	30 June ...	30	31	61	30	...	...	31	...	...	35	916	953	26	27
	30 September* ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	31 December ...	37	34	71	37	...	...	34	...	...	49	1,932	1,798	30	37
Maubiag Island, £156†	31 March ...	38	44	82	38	...	...	44	...	...	40	1,510	1,740	38	44
	30 June‡ ...	39	41	80	39	...	...	41	...	...	50	1,618	2,007	32	40
	30 September ...	34	40	74	34	...	...	40	...	...	64	2,121	2,504	33	39
	31 December ...	39	40	79	39	...	...	40	...	...	50	1,739	1,959	35	39
Balu Island, £84	31 March ...	22	20	42	22	...	...	20	...	...	37	800	726	22	20
	30 June ...	21	17	38	21	...	...	17	...	...	58	1,203	933	21	16
	30 Sep'tember ...	23	20	43	23	...	...	20	...	...	65	1,430	1,275	22	20
	31 December§ ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
York Island, £72	31 March ...	7	10	17	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	30 June ...	5	6	11	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Saibai Island, £84	30 September ...	25	29	54	25	...	...	29	...	...	48	1,156	1,178	24	25
	31 December ...	32	34	66	32	...	...	34	...	...	61	1,784	1,899	29	31

* School closed owing to absence of teacher on sick leave. No returns amongst the papers.
† Two teachers; one receiving £93, the other £60.
‡ School closed for three weeks in April owing to sickness.
§ Returns not yet to hand.
} Returns not properly filed in; teacher died in August.

Thus, in North Queensland alone, over £1,000 is spent out of the aboriginal vote in extending the benefits of a provisional school education to over 700 children. So far as the island schools are concerned, all of which are independent of mission influences, I can recognise no valid reason why they should not be paid for out of the Education vote. If the State demands an income tax from these islanders, I consider they have the right to demand education from the State.

The following are reports, already forwarded to the Minister, dealing with my annual visits of inspection to the Northern mission stations. These reports have been revised up to 31st December, 1903:—

Hope Valley (Cape Bedford, Cooktown).—A twelvemonth has passed since my last visit here, and marked improvements are everywhere visible, both in the gardens and at the settlement. During the course of my inspection of the former, I learnt that three acres had been prepared for rice cultivation. The missionaries had a lot of trouble in getting the seed, and when it was finally obtainable the time of year was apparently unsuitable for planting. At any rate, exceptional rains came along, with the result that the land destined for it was some feet under water, both during and subsequent to the usual wet season. As soon as the water had gone down, and the ground was got at, as much rice seed was planted as was possible, but by this time the cold had set in, and this fact, coupled with the soil having been rendered too sour with the unprecedented previous soakage, led to the young plants developing only in patches. However, since this cereal has been grown in previous years on the other side of the Cape with fair success, Rev. Mr. Schwarz hopes to show better results next season, especially as he intends draining the ground even more than at present. Portions of this rice-field were subsequently used for sugar-cane, which is apparently doing well. With regard to sweet potatoes, a good two acres were secured. In another of the gardens, half an acre of sugar-cane has shown excellent results; the same may be said of the sisal-hemp originally planted some three years ago. During the year, sufficient land has been cleared to allow of another 500 cocoanuts being planted, making altogether a total of about 1,300 on the station. These palms are doing splendidly, and the Superintendent recognises that upon their proper cultivation will depend in very large measure the future success of the institution, these trees being the only produce possible on this particular soil from which fair returns can be reasonably expected. It is with this object in view that nuts will be regularly planted now in comparatively large numbers. The great majority of the trees are cultivated on the northern shores of Cape Bedford, in shallow sand overlying rich mangrove swamps. To show the adaptability of the ground here for cocoanut-growing, I might mention that more than 400 nuts, in varying stages of development, have on one occasion been counted on the one palm.

Great havoc has been caused amongst the stock by ticks, at least three-quarters of the herd having been lost since the invasion of the pest. At the present time, the station owns only about ninety head, and even these do not appear to thrive too well; about fifteen beasts are killed annually for food. Some sixteen swine, herded on the north side of the Cape, are being fed, with very good results, on cocoanuts, and are fattening well; practically all the wild pigs have been destroyed. About a score of horses are found sufficient to work the station.

Since the occasion of my last visit both the mission-houses (occupied by Revs. Schwarz and Poland) have been enlarged, while the following new buildings have been erected, all with aboriginal labour only:—A beautiful little church, on high ground, overlooking the settlement, a school-house, boys' dormitory, a store-room, and quarters for four married native couples. These alterations and additions were rendered possible only by the fact that Mr. Foxton had made a present to the missionaries of the timber from the dismantled buildings of the Bloomfield River Mission, now defunct.

The mission boat, the "Wabul" (Torres Strait pigeon), a small craft capable of carrying 1½ tons, and purchased by the Government some four years ago, is beyond repair; she has sunk several times, and can now no longer be employed with safety. As mentioned in my last Annual Report, the Minister instructed me to consult with the superintendent as to the requirements and probable cost of a vessel suitable for the special work required of her. This has been done, and it is only fair that I should mention the different considerations that prompted me to come to a decision in the matter. What with the large number of individuals—close upon a hundred—permanently residing here now, and no returns in the way of home-produce owing to the barrenness of the soil—(it will take some years before the cocoanuts will repay the labour spent on them, while the rice is as yet only in an experimental stage)—all supplies have to be obtained from Cooktown, and then only by boat. Such communication is very uncertain on account of the paucity of vessels now available for the purpose at that port, and because of the inability of any large-sized craft to land stores on the southern (mission station) side of the Cape for practically nine months out of the twelve; in the latter case, the cargo has to be dumped down on the northern coast line and carried some four or five miles by the natives, with the result that, during the wet, it is often damaged. Were this the only trouble, there would be some chance of solving the difficulty, but there is the heavy expenditure for the hiring of a vessel to be reckoned with; this means from £3 to £5 a trip, or a total of between £30 and £40 per annum. The average amount of cargo brought over at a time is about 2½ tons; experience has shown that it is inadvisable to bring over any larger quantities, owing to the risks of damage by water and the flour becoming weevilly. Flour costs £15 10s. per ton up here, a terrible price to pay when it is borne in mind that something like 17 or 18 tons are annually consumed on the station; a second-grade article could, of course, be procured, but it would prove worse to conserve even than the better quality. For a change, rice has been substituted at intervals, but this is far more expensive. All farinaceous food has thus to be bought at Cooktown, and its freight across paid for. The claims for the necessity of a boat do not, however, terminate with the requisite transport of food supplies, for it has more than once happened, when overland communication with Cooktown has been stopped by floods, that one or other of the missionaries, owing to serious illness, has been forced to come into town for assistance and advice. It is with full deliberation that I accordingly concur with the superintendent in the urgency of supplying the institution with a craft that will carry anything up to 5 tons, a size convenient for conveying, with safety, a passenger or two when necessary. There are probably people who might ask the question: "Why does not the Mission Society supply its station with such a vessel out of its own funds?" To all such, let me make answer to the effect that the moneys collected by a small mission society in Bavaria, supporting similar institutions elsewhere throughout the world, cannot do more than find the necessary wherewithal for the bare sustenance of the missionaries themselves. I purposely point out, as I have already done in a previous report, that the Hope Valley Mission, Cape Bedford, unlike all our other Northern mainland mission stations, receives no regular private Australian subscriptions whatsoever. The cost of a suitable vessel I would put down at between £70 and £80.

School continues its progress satisfactorily; thirty-nine children are in attendance, and no trouble is experienced in maintaining discipline. Each child has three and a-half hours' schooling daily, and I am glad to find that their hard-working teacher, Mrs. Schwarz, spares no pains, on every possible opportunity, in inculcating habits of attention, obedience, and cleanliness. With the present prices ruling for flour, &c., the Government grant of £250 is spent wholly and solely on necessary rations, so that any bought clothing is out of the question. Common decency, however, required that the children should have a covering of some sort, a difficulty which Mrs. Schwarz overcame by cutting up calico flour-bags, piecing them together, and herself doing all the sewing; during the past two years she has thus made some fifty pairs of trousers for the boys attending school, and several dresses for the girls. (It is true that the Lutheran committee, responsible for the late Marie Yamba Mission, have recently sent up a few bags of clothes, some of them secondhand; the latter, while very acceptable, cannot, however, be expected to last long). The children are, of course, learning their three R's, and getting along capitally, but I cannot help, at the same time, recognising that the strain, coupled with all her other work, is becoming too great for their teacher to bear single-handed. Mrs. Schwarz's salary as provisional school-mistress is being raised from £60 to £100 per annum (the same as that granted at Mapoon), so as to enable her to obtain certain help which she already has in view.

In the course of a conversation with the superintendent as to the limits to the school subjects that should be taught to our Australian natives, I learn that he is in agreement with me in the view that no practically useful results can possibly accrue by teaching our mainland blacks composition, fractions, decimals, or any other subjects that will in any way enable them to come into competition with Europeans. Of course, here and there a more intelligent child may be met with, whose mental powers it might, perhaps, be worth while cultivating for future utilisation in infants' classes, &c. A not unusual source of trouble, fortunately now, I believe, nipped in the bud, has been letter-writing by more enlightened blacks to mission inmates, with ill-concealed attempts at making them dissatisfied with their lot, as compared with the apparent freedom of the outside world. When the blacks, on the closure of the Marie Yamba Mission, were first sent to Hope Valley, they were very anxious to continue their practice of getting up cricket matches with the whites, and were continually asking Rev. Mr. Schwarz to arrange for one with a Cooktown team. While giving them every opportunity for playing amongst themselves, he, however, remained firm in his resolve to put down any attempt at competition with Europeans, or in any way to make a "show" of their performances. After seventeen years' continuous residence amongst the Cape Bedford blacks, whom he loves so well and knows so thoroughly, the superintendent recognises that the two main factors in preserving the aboriginal—if he is to be preserved at all—lie in giving him every legal protection when living in contact with the European, but making the isolation complete when once removed from it.

During the past twelvemonth it was discovered that the curse of opium had been introduced into the mission reserve from Cooktown, through local blacks. The Rev. Mr. Schwarz made an example of the individual primarily responsible for bringing it in, by hunting him permanently off the station boundaries, and warning the other participants with similar penalties on the very next occasion that he finds the drug in any of the local camps. I am also instructing the local Protector at Cooktown to make an example before the Court of any aboriginal found with opium in his possession. I am convinced from private sources that the heavy death-rate which has undoubtedly taken place amongst the blacks in the vicinity of this township during the past two years, is due to the prevalence of the opium-habit.

Since a married aboriginal couple have been permanently residing on the northern side of the Cape, with a view to watching the main coconut plantation, no further complaints have come to hand concerning any unauthorised persons landing there. The Rev. Mr. Schwarz, in addition to his strictly mission duties, kindly supervises the monthly distribution of aboriginal relief to the McIvor River blacks, about ninety of them, a very large number of whom have thus no longer any cause for coming as vagrants into Cooktown, and loafing round the wharves and public-houses.

I must not, of course, omit mention of the work carried on by Rev. Mr. Poland and Mrs. Poland, but as it is so intimately shared and carried on concurrently with that of his fellow-missioner and Mrs. Schwarz, any comparisons would be invidious. Isolated from the outside world, these good people are carrying on a work of charity and mercy of which the State can well be proud. I sincerely trust that the Minister may see his way to visiting this station next year.

Mapoon (Batavia River).—The general behaviour of the inmates continues good, and the seventeen reformatory children are, on the whole, doing well, though some of them require constant watching and careful supervision. I took the opportunity of attending school, where as many as eighty-five children, under the kindly care of Mrs. Ward, are receiving instruction which will be useful to them in their future lives. It is unnecessary to reiterate the Rev. J. B. Russell's and Bishop White's high opinion of the work which this lady is so conscientiously and satisfactorily carrying on. As the superintendent expresses it:—"The school seems to be the most important branch of work among the aboriginals; it is not only that many of the pupils become Christians, but they also learn gentleness, order, obedience, diligence, which is more than unnatural to them." In connection with the day school, a large weekly sewing-class meets for the instruction of all the girls and women in the village. The Government grant of £250 is spent wholly and solely on the maintenance of these school children. Additional payment at the usual rates is, of course, received from the Department for the reformatory children.

At the present time the station finds permanent employment for twenty-one adult males, who, in view of the recruiting taking place here for the *bêche-de-mer*, &c., boats, have to be paid, in common fairness, in addition to their clothes and maintenance, a similar monthly wage of 10s. It is needless to say that many more could be, and already have been, so employed at the mission; but owing to the want of funds and the gradually increasing price of flour (from 5s. 6d. to 8s. per 50-lb. bag) the station work has been greatly curtailed. As an unfortunate result of this state of affairs, I may mention that some ten or twelve boys, who would have preferred the employment on shore, have been tempted to accept service on the boats. During the year there were recruited for the *bêche-de-mer* boats 133 boys, an increase of ten over the number recruited during 1902. The acting superintendent writes:—"Although the change of life might do them good sometimes, very often they return with broken health, or they may

be bitten with a shark. One boy was sent off from the boat after five months working. His lungs seemed to be injured very much. Some days afterwards he died here suddenly of hæmorrhage. Another was killed by a shark. . . . On the whole the recruiting seems to do more harm than good." Mr. Richter also had some trouble with boats that landed without permission. In connection with the wages, I audited the books of the Mapoon Natives' Store Account (*i.e.*, moneys derived from mission boys employed on the boats), and found everything satisfactory, with a balance in hand of over £15.

I regret having to report that thirteen deaths of women and girls, mostly of syphilis and consumption, have taken place at the station; nine others died on the reserve. This is a rate of mortality which, in spite of the unvarying attention given by the missionaries to all matters of general sanitation, it would seem impossible to cope with. Mapoon, for some years past, appears to have been especially afflicted with consumption. During April there was plenty of malaria of a peculiar type, *i.e.*, accompanied with vomiting and dysentery, similar to that drawn attention to by Protector Bennett, at Red Island and Cape York.

Amongst improvements in the village, the single men's dormitory, built on high piles with iron walls and roof, is now almost the first structure to command attention when, passing round Cullen Point into the bay, the settlement comes into view. Furthermore, three cottages have been entirely rebuilt, and six repaired. With regard to the latter, an excellent sign of social progression lies in the fact that the owners undertook the work entirely on their own initiative, and carried it through without assistance. Facing the whole front of the village street there is an avenue of cocoanut palms, two of which are assigned to every cottage. Attached to these thirty-one cottages are their own gardens, in which are here and there to be seen growing cocoanuts, pawpaws, sweet potatoes, rosellas, watermelons, pumpkins, beans, even bananas and pineapples. Unfortunately, the owners are not as a rule too keen on keeping them well watered.

Coming to the mission garden, I learn that many pineapples, mangoes, custard-apples, dates, and about 300 cocoanuts have recently been planted. With regard to the last-mentioned fruit, it has been found that, for reasons not well understood, these trees require watering and often manuring (with sea weed) during the first two years of their growth. The total supply of cocoanut is, however, even at present, sufficient to supply all the children once a week with sufficient rations.

On the reserve there are four miles of fencing in course of erection. The cattle (about 140 head) are all doing well, and the dairy cows give milk enough to supply daily the wants of all the infants; the remaining live stock consists of eight horses, twenty goats, and one hundred fowls. Some divers, having illegally landed on the reserve at the beginning of May, the natives seized five of their dingies, which they found on the outer beach, and refused to give up delivery unless paid for at the rate of about two bags of flour for each boat; the Malay, etc., boatmen, who are alleged to have been shooting over the lagoons, paid the fines demanded of them. The reserve has been extended southwards, so that it is now contiguous with that of Weipa. (*See Reserves.*)

The Rev. Mr. Richter is acting as superintendent of the mission during the absence in Europe of the Rev. N. Hey; it is very pleasant to see the cordial relations already existing between him and the aboriginals, and to realise that both he and his wife have, within the course of so short a period, made themselves quite at home with the general routine and spirit of the work carried on here. The Presbyterian Heathen Missions Committee are to be certainly congratulated on their choice of a new missionary.

As has been usual on the occasion of my annual visit of inspection, the settlement was given a day's holiday, when games and sports were provided for all, and a distribution made of the toys and gifts so thoughtfully forwarded by the Hon. J. F. G. Foxton.

During August, the Rev. Mr. Richter, with a view to examining the country and natives of the proposed new mission station which, after Rev. N. Hey's return from Europe, he will be superintending, took a trip to the mouth of the Archer River. He found the blacks very friendly, as they understood the purpose of his coming.

Yarrabah (Cape Grafton, Cairns).—Among Queensland mission stations, Yarrabah holds the record for the largest number of permanent inmates—a total of 267 being now resident on the settlement. Since January of the present year there have been four marriages, five births, and six deaths; of those deceased, the majority were newcomers, all who had been living more or less with Europeans.

Many improvements and signs of steady progress are visible since my last visit of inspection. The enlargement of the girls' home, the conversion of the old school building into a cottage for Mr. and Mrs. Reeves (two of the missionary assistants), the erection of a new fruit-storage house, and a two-roomed cottage for the head boy of the boys' dormitory. Most important of all, and significant of Rev. Mr. Gribble's determination to utilise the land comprised in the mission reserve, are the formation of settlements at Reeves and Karpa Creeks, distant two and a-half and three miles respectively from Yarrabah. At Reeves Creek I saw three buildings up, as well as another and a chapel in course of erection; here also are to be seen thirty acres, of what was once heavy scrub, now cleared and planted with corn and bananas, while the yield of vegetables at this settlement during the past season has been a very good one. At Karpa Creek are two homes for married couples. The men residing here have charge of all the fishing operations, and in addition daily supply Yarrabah with mangrove firewood, which is brought over by boat.

New and expensive fishing-nets have been obtained, and traps erected, so that the mission is able to dispose of fish at least twice weekly at Cairns. The 4½-horsepower oil launch, the "Yarrabah," has proved very useful in this respect, often bringing to market fruit and eggs in addition.

A start has been made with angora goats, the superintendent having secured a purebred buck and six half-bred nannies. The horses now number seventeen, and they, as well as several pony mares, are doing well; having lately obtained a pony stallion, the authorities intend to go in for breeding.

The produce this year in the shape of fruits, yams, taro, &c., has been very good; about 100 tons of sweet potatoes have been raised and consumed, while during January and February last the value of the corn raised was estimated at £27.

An innovation, since my last visit, is the installation of an acetylene gas plant by Mr. Field, another of the mission assistants, as a gift to the station. The result is that 2,000 feet of galvanised iron piping have been laid down, so that the church, schoolhouse, Mr. Reeves' cottage, and both dormitories are all lighted with gas.

With regard to the instruction and general education given to the children and adults, I have, as usual, to speak in terms of the highest praise. I do not recognise anything that could be improved upon. For the first time in my life, I have heard little aboriginal children, boys and girls, doing part-singing. The band consists of a drum, four cornets, a tenor horn, and bass; lack of funds alone prevents more instruments being added. A most successful concert was lately given in Cairns in aid of the mission expenses.

The aboriginal inmates, besides learning to take an interest in themselves, have lately given proof of their appreciation of mission work to other Queensland natives, by donating the whole of one of their offertories for the benefit of the new mission on the Mitchell River Reserve. It is here where the Rev. Mr. Gribble proposes devoting three or four months next year in assisting the Bishop of Carpentaria. During his absence from Yarrabah it is proposed that the Rev. E. S. Chase, a son of Canon Chase—connected with Victorian aboriginal mission work in the early days—will act as superintendent.

With the beginning of the new year it is hoped that a start will be made with a third settlement, further to the south of the reserve.

Notwithstanding the strain upon the mission funds, consequent on the large influx of people during the past seven or eight months, I am indeed pleased to be able to report that the Rev. Mr. Gribble has decided to admit to Yarrabah all or any blacks who wish to come or that can be sent to him.

Weipa (Embley River).—I extremely regretted my inability to visit this settlement, and accordingly furnish the following extracts from Rev. E. Brown's, the superintendent's, annual report, which he presents to the Moravian Mission Board:—

On the whole, I think it may be said that during the year our people have been more inclined to settle here, even when not being fed by us. The daily average of those fed by us, according to our monthly returns furnished to the Government, was seventy-six, the same as the previous year, made up as follows:—Children, 52; adults, 24. We were disappointed in not being able to feed more, at our garden produce was much greater than the previous year, but flour and rice were much dearer, and consequently the quantity we were able to purchase with our Government grant was nearly a third less. Thus it will be seen that things beyond our control regulate the number who can reside with us. It is only a question of providing for them to enable us to have a much higher number. The largest number fed on any one day was 194, though that does not represent the number who have been here, as some are coming and others going constantly.

The training we received for the medical part of our work has still continued to prove itself useful. For our people, who are of course our first care, a dispensary was opened in July, and we are thereby able to attend to their various ailments much more cleanly and expeditiously. It has a room attached, which can be used as a dressing-room, or in case of necessity a sick person might be taken in there for more constant attention instead of in the toolhouse as has been done formerly. In May, influenza again visited us, and, as nearly every man, woman, and child went down with it, we were kept busy for about a month attending to them. Seven cases terminated fatally.

The great event of the year, to the children, was the tea party, which took place on New Year's Day. Although it was in the middle of their Christmas holidays, when they might have been enjoying themselves in the bush, fifty put in an attendance, and did justice to the good things provided. A week later, school reopened with forty-eight pupils. The daily average attendance at school for the year was forty-nine. The total of names on the register was seventy-nine, but several of them are quite bushmen, whose parents belong to districts 30 to 60 miles away, and, consequently, do not come very often to the station. Seven new girls came to reside in the dormitory, bringing the number up to twenty-four. Part of the year the children have been working under more favourable conditions, through the introduction of home-made desks and benches. Having the former, they have been able to write in copybooks, in which they are making fair progress, and the latter enables them to keep their books cleaner than was possible when they had to sit on the floor. The lower classes are advancing toward the higher classes, and the highest class has made progress in the way of reading louder and clearer and with more expression. We have recently received a new set of more advanced reading books from the Government, which will be used when the school reopens after the Christmas holidays. During the latter part of the year, the school teacher has been absent on furlough, and Mrs. Brown and myself have carried on the school.

Adult classes have been reorganised: Mrs. Brown has one evening a week for women; Miss Schick another for the young men who know a little and the kanaka assistants; and I another for any men who care to receive religious instruction.

Manual labour has occupied again a great deal of time and attention, it being the chief means of keeping the people on the station. Our gardens gave us a return of about 5 tons of sweet potatoes besides other things. One garden of about $7\frac{1}{2}$ acres requires a great amount of labour. Up till near the end of the year everything was done by the hoe, but latterly we have used a cultivator, a tooth-harrow, and a clod-crusher, with gangs of men or children pulling. We had hoped to employ horses at this, but owing to inability to finish fencing our paddock could not keep the horses near for the purpose. About two miles of post and rail fencing was erected around the paddock, and there, owing to shortage of rations, we had to call a halt for the present. Water-carrying from the lagoons to the station, about three-quarters of a mile, takes a lot of labour all through the wet season, and at the end there is nothing but living people to show for it. Much more improvement on the station might be done if we had a sufficient supply of food for more workers. The increased number of regular school children, together with the higher price of provisions, already mentioned, left us with an even smaller supply for workers than we have had previously. In the early part of the year we planted half an acre of coffee close to the house, trusting that water in a well dug near at hand would do for irrigating it, and thus make it a source of income for the station. But we were disappointed to learn from the analyst's report thereon that the water found in this well, at a depth of 30 feet, was too salt for either human consumption or irrigation, and consequently the coffee had to be allowed to die. The bottom 10 feet of the well, where the salt water came in, was filled up, and the upper part enlarged and timbered out to about 6 feet in diameter, to form a catchment for a few months' general

use. Two new houses were built in the camp, and a kitchen added on to the boys' dormitory, where they may cook their food in the wet weather. The Weipa Reserve has been extended southwards as far as the Archer River. (See "Reserves.")

Twice again, about the middle and at the end of the year, our kind friends in the South remembered us and our people with splendid boxes of clothing, &c. The health of the Mission staff, especially in the case of Miss Schick, has not been as good as formerly, though, apart from Miss Schick, there has been nothing serious.

RESERVES.

Reserves.—By proclamation in the *Government Gazette* (13-6-3), the area of the reserve for the Aboriginal Mission Station, Mapoon, has been extended to the northern coast line of Albatross Bay, with the result that Mapoon and Weipa are now contiguous.

The area of the Weipa Reserve has also been extended (*Government Gazette*, —8-3) to a point about thirty miles south of the Archer River. It is on a site near the mouth of this river, visited by the Revs. Hey and Brown last August, that the Presbyterians propose opening a third aboriginal mission station.

Another aboriginal reserve, to be connected with a mission under the auspices of the Anglican body, was proclaimed (*Government Gazette*, 10-1-3), on the coast line between the Mitchell River and Topsy's Creek. Owing to objections being taken to its enclosing certain lands under occupation license, action was taken to determine the licenses, and the boundaries of the reserve are now being reproclaimed. A report was forwarded dealing with a visit undertaken by the Bishop of Carpentaria, Inspector Galbraith, and myself to this Mitchell River reserve, the acting master of the Melbird making surveys of the three mouths of the river, and of the next creek (Topsy's Creek), a little over 10 miles to the south of it. It was thus discovered that we could sail up to within at least 25 miles of Rutland Plains station, so far the furthest north settlement on this portion of the Gulf coast.

Applications for reserves in the Camooweal and surrounding districts have been received from the local police and certain station-managers interested. Inquiries are still being instituted as to the most suitable locations for these reserves.

SCIENTIFIC.

Scientific.—Two more bulletins of the North Queensland Ethnography Series have been published. No. 5 deals with "Superstition, Magic, and Medicine"; No. 6, revised and edited by me, was "An Elementary Grammar of the Ngerikudi Language," written by Rev. N. Hey, the superintendent of the Mapoon Mission on the Batavia River. The issue of these publications year by year continues to receive favourable criticism from all parts of the world.

During December I made a donation of 177 objects of ethnological interest to the Brisbane Museum. With two lots previously forwarded, this completes a total of over 300 specimens already presented to this institution.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Unwilling Witnesses.—In not a few cases, during the past six years, I have had reason to believe that, for the convenience of the Crown, the practice is in vogue of putting aboriginals into gaol, or rather keeping them under constraint, without any warrant or other legal authority, as alleged "unwilling witnesses." To my mind, the West Australian law on this matter of aboriginal evidence (4 and 5 Vic. No. 22) might well be followed:—(Section 1.) Any J.P. may receive the information of an aboriginal native on his affirmation, without administering the usual form of oath. (Section 2.) On the inquiry or trial, the evidence of any of the aborigines may similarly be received on affirmation. . . . Such evidence at any preliminary stage to be reduced to writing, signed by a mark, and verified by the justice. (Section 3.) If at the appointed time of inquiry or hearing, the person who gave the information does not appear, then such information or evidence, so written and signed and verified, may be read in evidence. The degree of credibility to be attached to such information or evidence shall be entirely left to the decision of the justices, or the court and jury.

Blacks' Dogs.—Especially in the outside districts, where the complaints relative to the damage done to stock consequent on the excessive number of dogs owned by aboriginals are just and reasonable, the power to destroy these animals is badly required. It seems to me to be generally a fight between the local police and the divisional board as to who is going to take the responsibility of putting the suggestion into effect. A West Australian Act (49 Vic. No. 10, sec. 5) provides for this as follows:—"It shall be lawful for any aboriginal native to keep one unregistered dog: Provided always that whenever the number of unregistered dogs found in the possession of one or more natives shall be in excess of the number of the party of such natives, including men, women, and children, such dog or dogs in excess shall be liable to be destroyed, and all constables are hereby authorised to destroy the same."

The Right of the Aboriginal to Hunt for Food.—Notwithstanding the efforts of myself and other Protectors to combat it, the assumption continues to prevail that because a large area of land is held from the Crown on lease, license, or other tenure, the lessee has the legal right to prevent aboriginals roaming or hunting over it; even living on it. Independently of any alleged spearing or killing, complaints continue to be received that blacks are "frightening" the cattle, or else are camping at the waterholes. While, therefore, the Executive is exerting its utmost to make provision for aboriginal reserves wherever practicable, the principle must be rigidly instilled that the aboriginals have as much a right to exist as the Europeans, and certainly a greater right, not only to collect the native fruits, but also to hunt and dispose of the game upon which they have been vitally dependent from time immemorial. Were the assumption just mentioned to be carried to its logical conclusion, and all available country leased or licensed, we should have a condition of affairs represented by a general starvation of all the aboriginals and their concurrent expulsion from the State.

More Police Protection Required Along Western Border.—Advices were received last September for the closure of the South Australian Customs and Police Office at Camooweal. This means that along the Western side of the border, right up to the Gulf coast, unscrupulous individuals will have unbridled license in their treatment of the blacks, who are practically as much connected with Queensland as they are with the Northern Territory, living, as they do, as much in one State as the other. The nearest South Australian police station to Camooweal is at Anthony Lagoon, about 265 miles distant. The various intermediate homesteads on the stock-route connecting them, and their approximate distances from Camooweal, are as follows:—Avon Downs 50, Alexandria 150, Brunette 210, and Corella 240 miles. Further North, close to the border, and on the South Australian side of it, is Wollogorang, on another stock-route. A complaint also came to hand concerning aboriginals in connection with the contract for 50 miles of rabbit-proof fencing along the Western border, south of Camooweal. The Minister minuted the papers reporting the circumstances, as follows (12-9-3):—"There is clearly a necessity for definite steps to be taken to protect the aboriginals on the Western border in the Camooweal district. This can, I think, only be done by strengthening the police out there, as desired by Dr. Roth."

More Police Protection Required in the Torres Strait, &c.—Protector Bennett reports that:—"The most regrettable feature in connection with offences by aboriginals is the apparent inability of the authorities to detect or arrest offenders. The police, however, are not to blame, and the defect will continue so long as the Peninsula (*i.e.*, the Northern part of it), and the Torres Strait are policed as at present. A few (four) native policemen, stationed at Thursday Island, supplied with a 22-foot half-decked boat, in not too good condition, and required to do all boat-work in connection with the harbour, Friday Island Leper Asylum, health officer, &c., cannot be expected to maintain order and uphold authority over the whole of the Somerset police district, outside Thursday Island. I fear that a heavy responsibility will some day fall on those responsible for allowing such a state of affairs to continue."

Licensed Vessels of Torres Strait Islanders.—The Hon. the Treasurer (10-12-3) approved of Protector Bennett's recommendation that vessels belonging to the Torres Strait islanders be permitted to work at "swimming-diving" and "bêche-de-mer" by special authority obtained from the Inspector of Pearl-shell and Bêche-de-mer Fisheries, on the recommendation of the Government Resident and Protector of Aboriginals. The only conditions—to prevent abuse of this concession—are that no island is to be allowed to acquire more than one vessel for each hundred native inhabitants, and that such license or authority shall cease if at any time the vessel passes from the ownership of the natives, or if any person other than a native acquires any interest in the vessel or her earnings.

Trafficking in Aboriginals.—"A large number of individuals have an idea that they can trade an aboriginal as they would a horse or bullock. Some of these people are good church-goers. One lady informed me that an aboriginal had been left to her by will. She did not, however, mention if probate had been granted."—(Protector Galbraith, Normanton.) The trafficking of boys for the bêche-de-mer fisheries has already been referred to.

So again, in the Geraldton district, women are actually bought and sold to the kanakas. I have been furnished with full particulars of many of these cases.

Aboriginals and Income Tax.—Protector Bennett, having brought under my notice the fact of certain aboriginals being charged income tax, representations were made to the Commissioner of Income Tax, with the result that he is prepared to exempt all aboriginal natives whose earnings are less than £1 per month and "found," and is giving instructions to that effect. Females and males under 21 years of age are, of course, already exempt under section 8 of the Income Tax Act.

State Expenditure on Aboriginals.—The following table shows the comparative expenditure by the various States on the welfare and protection of the aboriginals, according to the latest returns available:—

State.	Year.	Estimated Native Population.	Expenditure.
Queensland	1903	25,000	£ 9,293
South Australia	1901	3,888	4,412
Victoria	1903	382	4,810
Western Australia	1902	30,000	10,687
New South Wales	1902	6,828	18,824

EXECUTIVE.

Executive.—The administration of the Aboriginals Act has been transferred from the Hon. the Home Secretary to the Hon. the Secretary for Public Lands.

Sergeant James King, of Cooktown, has been gazetted a Protector for the Petty Sessions Districts of Cook and Palmer. Sub-Inspector McNamara, of Charters Towers, has been gazetted for that of Ravenswood.

I again take this opportunity of thanking the various Protectors, police clerks, and other sub-officers of the Police Department for their earnest co-operation in making the working of the Aboriginals Protection Acts a success. In the case of the police clerks especially, I propose recommending a small honorarium. As Protector Galbraith points out:—"Aboriginal work and correspondence has very much increased, and I reluctantly state that if this increase continues, extra clerical assistance will be required. I again gladly draw your attention to the very valuable assistance my clerk, First-class Constable O'Shea, has given me. The work done by the police at the outside stations has been heavy, long distances having

to be travelled over, and their methods have in all cases been accompanied with tact and judgment. Many of these sub-officers I would like to mention, but fear it would be invidious to single out individuals." I have reason to believe that the above sentiments are echoed by all the Protectors.

ABORIGINALS PROTECTION PROPERTY ACCOUNT.

Unclaimed Moneys.—Last February the Minister instructed that moneys for deserters and deceased natives, and moneys otherwise unclaimed, were to be placed to a trust account to be used by me for the benefit of the aborigines generally. The account has been audited, and at the present time amounts to £137 11s. 7d. The importance of having a fund like this to draw upon is well exemplified in a case reported by me last May:—

The Murray Islanders purchased the lugger "William" from T. J. Farquhar about three months ago. The purchase money was £100, payable in twelve months, bearing interest at 10 per cent., the vendor undertaking to waive all interest if the purchase price were paid within six months. The fitting-out of the boat, her insurance, &c., cost an additional £30. The Murray Islanders have now brought in *bêche-de-mer* and black-lip pearlshell, estimated to realise about £125; but they require new sails and other gear, which will cost another £25 or £30. Protector Bennett, who, with Mr. John Douglas, personally arranged the purchase and conducted the sale of the *bêche-de-mer* and shell, desired to have the boat free from debt as soon as possible, so far as the vendor and interest were concerned, and asked me if I could advance them £30 for the purpose. I have accordingly done so, and loaned them the money from the Aborigines Protection Property Account (Q. N. Bank, Cooktown), the amount to be repaid me from the next sale of produce brought in. This deal will serve as a good object-lesson, Protector Bennett thus showing the islanders what money will really buy, and teaching them how to rid themselves, not only of the middleman, but of the exorbitant prices ordinarily charged to them by the local storekeepers. Seeing the way in which the Maubiag natives have been treated by the local European traders in dealing on the truck system, Protector Bennett has adopted this method of dealing a blow at it; needless to say, I was only too glad to render him the pecuniary assistance necessary.

The loan has since been repaid.

ITINERARY.

Itinerary.—I left Brisbane on 5th May for Thursday Island, arriving there on the 12th. Owing to the illness of the master of the "Melbidir," I was unexpectedly detained here until the 21st, but took the opportunity, in conjunction with Protector Bennett, of visiting Red Island and the mainland. This long delay prevented me visiting Weipa, the inspection of which, together with the journey up and down from Duyphen Point, would have occupied five or six days; furthermore, had we stuck anywhere on the shoals or mud-banks (the skipper being a stranger to this coast), I should certainly have upset all the arrangements which the Hon. the Premier had kindly promised to make *re* Inspector Galbraith meeting me at the beginning of June at Normanton, with a view to accompanying me to the Wellesley Islands. Again, all idea of visiting Moreton (and so, Mein and McDonnell), had to be abandoned, on account of the Moreton office (from which I have hitherto got horses to meet me at Weipa), being temporarily closed, and only a caretaker in charge. I reached Mapoon on the 23rd, and left it on the 30th for the Norman River. The greater portion of June was spent in an examination of the Wellesley Islands, with special reference to Mornington. The general and scientific results of this trip, whereon a Sydney naturalist, Mr. Ch. Hedley, F.L.S., accompanied me, were embodied in a special report. On my return to Normanton, on 30th June, I found that I should be out of communication with the local Protector, Inspector Galbraith, for upwards of a week, and could make no definite arrangements with Bishop White *re* visiting the Mitchell reserve. I accordingly sent the "Melbidir" up the coast to make a marine survey, with latitudes, &c., of the three mouths of the Mitchell River, and the uncharted stream about 12 miles to the south of it, where, in the neighbourhood of some fresh-water lagoons, it is proposed to fix the site for the new mission station. I left Normanton again on 8th July, by buggy, with Mr. Frank Bowman, of Rutland Plains, and travelling *via* Maggieville, Midlothian, Delta, Gun-Hole (Wambi's station on the Staaten), arrived at Rutland on the 15th, where the Bishop and Inspector Galbraith joined us the following day. We spent five and a-half days riding over the reserve, his lordship returning in the "Melbidir," and I, with the inspector, by buggy, arriving in Normanton on the 27th. Leaving once more on the 4th August, I got to Burketown on the 9th, reached Camooweal on the 17th, Urandangie on the 27th, and went on the same day to Carrandotta. During September I spent a few days at Glenormiston, and then went on to Boulia, where I saw Protector O'Connor. Receiving instructions here to come to Brisbane over the Estimates, I travelled *via* Winton, Charters Towers, and Townsville, which afforded me the opportunity of consulting with Protectors Brosnan, McNamara, and Quilter, and arrived in the capital on the 24th. I left Brisbane again on the 20th October, and arrived at Townsville on the 23rd, where I consulted with Protectors Graham and Quilter on aboriginal matters. On the 24th I arrived in Cooktown, sailed over to Cape Bedford, to inspect the Hope Valley Mission Station, rode overland to Cooktown, where I had a long consultation with Protector King, and left on the 30th for Cairns. From Cairns I went to Kuranda and Atherton, making inquiries as to the necessity for these centres of aboriginal relief. I sailed from Cairns to Mackay in the "Melbidir," calling on the way for aboriginal matters at Clump Point, Dunk Island, Cardwell, Lucinda Point, Palm Islands, Townsville, and Whitsunday Island. With Sub-inspector Martin, of Mackay, my work of consulting personally with all my ten local Protectors, at least once during the year, came to a close.

OPINIONS ON THE WORKING OF THE ACT.

Working of the Act.—The following opinions on the working of the Aborigines Acts for the year just closed are worth recording:—

"I have had no complaints about the agreements and the Act, with the exception of the wages due to aborigines employed in pearl-shelling, and about which I had some doubt, had not been paid regularly.

In consequence, I ordered that payment in such cases be made to me. Some of the employers at first demurred, but eventually agreed. Otherwise, the Act seems to work admirably here." (Protector Quilter, Townsville.)

"On the whole, the Act is working admirably in this district for the past year." (Protector King, Cooktown.)

"There were no prosecutions under the Act, which works smoothly in this district." (Protector O'Connor, Boulia.)

"I consider the Act is administered well." (Protector McNamara, Charters Towers.)

"The Act is apparently working smoothly." (Protector Marrett, Cairns.)

"The general working of the Act in this district during the year has been satisfactory." (Protector Brosnan, Winton.)

In the Gulf and surrounding districts, Protector Galbraith furnishes me with the following excerpts from police reports:—"Act working well"—(Sergeant Doherty, Normanton). "The Aboriginal Act seems to give general satisfaction, a few are dissatisfied, owing to having to pay wages"—(Acting Sergeant Behan, Burketown). "The Act works well, but station people do not like the idea of paying wages for females to Protectors"—(Acting Sergeant Fitzgerald, Cloncurry). "The Act is working well throughout the district"—(Acting Sergeant Old, Georgetown). . . . "the surrounding cattle-stations have practically no grounds for complaint"—(Constable Dwyer, Turn-off Lagoons).

OFFICE WORK.

Office Work.—The past year continues to show an increase in my correspondence, which came to a total of 2,390 communications—1,133 inward, and 1,257 outward. I am afraid I shall be obliged to apply for clerical assistance.

I have, &c.,

WALTER E. ROTH,
Northern Protector of Aboriginals.

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