

1937-38.

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

---

REPORT

ON THE

ADMINISTRATION

OF

THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

FOR THE

YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 1937.

---

*Presented by Command, 12th May, 1938; ordered to be printed, 22nd June, 1938.*

---

(Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; 730 copies; approximate cost of printing and publishing, £82.)

---

Printed and Published for the GOVERNMENT of the COMMONWEALTH of AUSTRALIA by  
L. F. JOHNSTON, Commonwealth Government Printer, Canberra.

(Printed in Australia.)

No. 58.—F.512.—PRICE 3s. 3d.

# CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Report of the Administrator .. .. .	6
Report of the District Officer .. .. .	19
Aboriginals—	
Legislation .. .. .	23
Aboriginal Welfare .. .. .	23
Reserves .. .. .	23
Patrols .. .. .	24
Daly River Reserve .. .. .	24
Arnhem Land Reserve .. .. .	24
South-West Reserve .. .. .	24
Aboriginal Medical Benefit Fund .. .. .	26
Aboriginal Trust Account, Darwin .. .. .	26
Aboriginal Trust Account, Alice Springs .. .. .	26
Employment .. .. .	26
Aged and Infirm Aboriginals .. .. .	26
Half-caste Employment .. .. .	26
Half-caste Housing Scheme .. .. .	26
Marriages .. .. .	27
Aboriginal Vote, Darwin .. .. .	27
Aboriginal Vote, Alice Springs .. .. .	27
Kahlin Compound, Darwin .. .. .	27
Half-caste Home, Darwin .. .. .	27
Canteen .. .. .	28
Laundry .. .. .	28
Clothing Section .. .. .	28
Transport Section .. .. .	28
Half-caste Home, Alice Springs .. .. .	28
Aboriginal Affairs, Alice Springs .. .. .	28
Health .. .. .	28
Patrol Officer .. .. .	28
List of Convictions recorded against Aboriginals for year ended 30th June, 1937 .. .. .	29
List of Offences committed by Half-castes for year ended 30th June, 1937 .. .. .	29
Native Constabulary .. .. .	29
Aboriginal Census .. .. .	30
Agriculture—	
Climate .. .. .	30
Crops .. .. .	31
Dairying .. .. .	33
Advisory Work .. .. .	33
Prickly Pear .. .. .	33
Forestry .. .. .	33
Botanic and Experimental Gardens .. .. .	33
Courts—	
Darwin .. .. .	36
Alice Springs .. .. .	36
Education—	
Schools and Attendance .. .. .	36
Buildings and Grounds .. .. .	37
Correspondence Schools .. .. .	37
Scholarships .. .. .	37
Visits of Inspection .. .. .	37
Banking .. .. .	37
Staffs .. .. .	37
School Committees .. .. .	38
State Departments .. .. .	38
Children of Foreign Extraction .. .. .	38
Statistics .. .. .	38
Fisheries—	
Pearling .. .. .	39
Fishing .. .. .	40
Salt Production .. .. .	40
Licences .. .. .	40
Exports and Imports .. .. .	41
Lands and Survey—	
General .. .. .	41
Surveys and Drafting .. .. .	43

CONTENTS—*continued.*

	PAGE
Medical Service—	
General .. .. .	44
Darwin Medical District .. .. .	45
Pre-Natal and Infant Welfare Clinic .. .. .	45
Darwin Hospital .. .. .	45
Leper Hospital—Channel Island .. .. .	47
Sanitation .. .. .	47
Housing .. .. .	47
Buildings .. .. .	47
Mosquito Reduction .. .. .	47
Rat Reduction .. .. .	47
Water Supply .. .. .	47
Food Inspection .. .. .	47
Milk Supply .. .. .	48
Meat Inspection .. .. .	48
Alice Springs Medical District .. .. .	48
Katherine Medical District .. .. .	49
Out-patients Clinic .. .. .	49
Katherine Hospital .. .. .	49
Pine Creek Hospital .. .. .	50
Tennant Creek Medical District .. .. .	50
Vital Statistics .. .. .	51
Mines—	
Revenue .. .. .	52
Areas under Occupation .. .. .	52
District " A " .. .. .	52
District " B " .. .. .	52
Metal Prices .. .. .	53
Employment .. .. .	53
Minerals and Base Metals .. .. .	56
Wolfram .. .. .	56
Tin .. .. .	56
Tin Concentrates .. .. .	57
Copper .. .. .	57
Mica .. .. .	57
Tantalite .. .. .	57
Geological and Geophysical Survey .. .. .	57
Diamond Drilling .. .. .	57
Assay Work, Darwin .. .. .	57
Assay Work, Alice Springs and Tennant Creek .. .. .	57
Subsidies .. .. .	58
Assistance to Miners and Prospectors .. .. .	58
Ore Selling .. .. .	58
Explosives .. .. .	58
Mineral, Oil and Coal Licences .. .. .	58
Accidents .. .. .	58
Revision of Mining Legislation .. .. .	58
Warden's Report—	
Tennant Creek .. .. .	59
Alice Springs .. .. .	63
Barrow Creek .. .. .	64
Arltunga .. .. .	63
Maranboy Tinfield .. .. .	65
Maranboy Battery .. .. .	66
Police .. .. .	69
Darwin Gaol and Labour Prison .. .. .	70
Alice Springs Gaol .. .. .	72
Public Trustee .. .. .	72
Registrar-General of Births, Deaths and Marriages .. .. .	72
Shipping—Darwin Harbour .. .. .	73
Stock, Brands and Veterinary Services—	
Brands .. .. .	73
Stock .. .. .	73
Stock Returns .. .. .	74
Hides Exported .. .. .	74
Dipping .. .. .	74
Stock Diseases .. .. .	74
Stock Routes .. .. .	74
Works—Report of Resident Engineer, Alice Springs .. .. .	75

## ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS.

A great deal of attention in the past year has been paid to the welfare of the aboriginals in the Northern Territory. Distributions of food and clothing have been made whenever it was found necessary.

The policy of enforcing inviolateness in regard to Aboriginal Reserves was maintained and prosecutions for trespass were successfully made. It is the intention of the Administration to prevent any unauthorized entry into reserves either by land or sea.

The Mission stations operating in the vicinity of the Arnhem Land Reserve have been periodically inspected by the Chief Protector of Aboriginals (Dr. C. E. Cook) and medical supervision and attention were given.

During the year a Conference regarding aboriginal matters was convened at Canberra by the Minister for the Interior. This was attended by representatives of all the States and by the Chief Protector, and should prove to be a valuable contribution to the welfare of the native.

Doctor Donald Thomson has continued his researches among the Arnhem Land natives, and his interim report has been issued.

Mr. T. G. H. Strehlow has carried out his duties as Patrol Officer in a most satisfactory manner. He is at present hampered to a certain degree by lack of transport, but approval has been given to supply him with a utility car. The value of his work in connexion with the welfare of aboriginals in Central Australia is recognized.

From observations I have been able to make since my arrival I am impelled to the conclusion that there has been a very considerable over-estimate of the number of aboriginals in the Northern Territory. The estimate last year was 17,730, but I am not able to agree with the basis upon which this number rests. Inquiries made by the Police and by the Patrol Officer confirm the doubt that the numbers have been over-estimated.

This conclusion is very strongly supported by the Interim General Report made by Dr. Thomson, D.Sc., on his investigations in Arnhem Land. On page 43 of the Report mentioned he states:—

It is generally assumed that this great territory in Arnhem Land—again, I refer to the area covered in this survey—north of the Roper River, and eastwards of a line drawn from Cape Stewart to the Wilton River—carried a very large native population. On the patrols carried out during the past year I made contact with the whole of the clans of this area, and I am led to the conclusion that the population of this entire area, including Groote and Bickerton Islands, does not exceed some 1,500 natives, including men, women and children.

In June, 1935, there was not a camp of natives between the mouth of the Roper River and Bennet Bay. I estimated the population of this tract of country to be approximately 150, of whom about 90 were in the camp at Bennet Bay at the time of my visit. The natives of Groote and Bickerton Islands who speak one language and who constitute a single tribe, the Ingura, number about 250. There are approximately 225 natives in the Blue Mud Bay area. Most of these natives were living at the big camp at Mutarauwaitj, near the Koolatong River, to which I have referred in the narrative, and from which centre they dispersed to hunt over the surrounding territory. This was much the largest camp that I have encountered anywhere in Northern Australia. I have estimated the total population of the Caledon Bay district, including Trial Bay, and Caledon Bay itself, at more than 200. After leaving Caledon Bay there was only one large group of natives on the northern coastline, east of the Crocodile Islands; most of these people were, at the time of my visit, in the vicinity of the English Company's Islands, and I have assessed their numbers at not more than 150. There are probably about 400 natives in the vicinity of the Crocodile Islands and the Goyder River district, east of Cape Stewart; this figure includes members of numerous small clans from Elcho Island, Buckingham Bay, and the neighbouring areas, who went to Milingimbi when the Methodist Mission was moved there from Elcho Island, some years ago.

There is a small nomadic population, chiefly of the Ritarungo and Wagilluk groups, that wanders from the head of the Goyder River to the head of the Walker, and thence to the Roper River. I have assessed the number of these people at not more than 100.

A summary of these figures is set out below—

Nungubuyu and neighbouring peoples, occupying territory from Phelp River to Bennet Bay ..	150
Ingura of Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island .. .. .	250
Dai'i-speaking peoples of Blue Mud Bay .. .. .	225
Trial and Caledon Bays .. .. .	200
English Company's Islands .. .. .	150
Crocodile Islands and Goyder River district (east of Cape Stewart, including peoples from Elcho Island District, now at Mission) .. .. .	400
Interior groups of Eastern Arnhem Land .. .. .	100
<b>Total figure .. .. .</b>	<b>1,475</b>

While this figure must be regarded as approximate only, as the natives, even at a big camping place, are constantly breaking up into groups that come and go suddenly on nomadic hunting journeys, it gives a fair estimate of the figures, and is obviously very much lower than the estimates hitherto made, and which have been arrived at by guess work.

Doctor Thomson's conclusions cannot be regarded lightly, and they show a very serious depopulation. It would not be surprising to find that the total number of natives in the Territory does not exceed 10,000.

### DETRIBALIZED NATIVES.

One of the difficulties in connexion with the welfare of natives is to deal successfully with the problem of the detribalized native. It must be admitted that once the native comes in contact with civilization and its pleasures, which in his case is the picture theatre at Darwin or Alice Springs, it is very hard to get him to return to his own area, and practically impossible to keep him there.

The avenues by which these natives come into Darwin are varied. They may be brought in by pearling luggers, or by boats calling for supplies for the Mission stations, or they may walk overland. In some cases the natives find work as houseboys and are good workers, and if they evince no desire to return to their areas, beyond the seasonal "walkabout" fever which periodically grips them, it seems hardly just to deprive them of this work and deport them. This latter course is favoured by many of the Missionaries.

In the case of the lazy native, it is not very wise to allow him to remain where he is simply a drone. At the present compound, with its proximity to the town area and its shortcomings in surveillance, it is impossible to maintain adequate control and discipline.

It is expected this will not be the case when the new compound is erected on the selected site four miles out, where there will be proper and adequate supervision.

### NORTHERN TERRITORY PATROL SERVICE.

This Patrol Service, which was commenced in May, 1936, has been carried on throughout this year. Although it was first thought that the main duty of the *Larrakia* would be to stand-by in case of any accident regarding the passage of planes over the Timor Sea, the patrol work was greatly increased by the discovery of very rich and extensive pearling beds in the Arafura Sea and off the coast of Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory.

The discovery of these beds meant that the pearling fleets left Bathurst and Melville Islands in the vicinity of Darwin, where they had been working, and concentrated along Arnhem Land. The number of pearling vessels was greatly increased, particularly in regard to Japanese luggers.

When pearling operations were carried on off the Arnhem Land coast it was found that there was a considerable amount of trespass in that area, which is a huge aboriginal reserve and has been made so by the desire of the Government to have an inviolate sanctuary for the remaining aboriginals. It was necessary, therefore, to increase the patrols of the *Larrakia*, which meant a much greater distance to travel by sea, an average patrol being from 800 to 1,000 sea miles.

There is a general impression that the seas around the North Australian coast are smooth, but this is not at all the case, and nearly always after rounding Cape Don on the outward voyage extremely choppy seas are encountered, rising in some instances to six feet and more.

As the dimensions of the *Larrakia* are: length 45 feet, beam 10 feet, draught 3 ft. 3 in., and there is only sleeping accommodation at most for three, the conditions imposed upon the Patrol Officers were very severe. Captain C. T. G. Haultain has shown remarkable seamanship and resourcefulness, as have also the members of the Patrol Service, in overcoming these difficulties and rendering most valuable service to the Northern Territory and the Commonwealth.

The patrol activities of the *Larrakia* culminated on the 27th March, 1937, when she surprised twelve Japanese pearling vessels within territorial sea limits off Korewa Island and in the vicinity of Mooronga Island. Five of these vessels immediately endeavoured to escape when the *Larrakia* was seen approaching, but Captain Haultain was able to prevent four of the five getting away. He detained the remaining eleven vessels and subsequently added two more, making a total of thirteen. His own complement, including himself, was four, and there were probably 200 men on the pearling vessels. After consideration, the Government decided that a warning would be sufficient as this was the first instance of trespass in territorial waters, but the masters of all luggers were warned that the consequences would be very severe should there be any further acts of trespass. Subsequently the Aboriginals Ordinance was drastically amended by the Government and very severe penalties, including confiscation of vessels, were embodied in the amendment.

I consider that Captain Haultain has shown considerable initiative and courage, and also tact under exceedingly difficult and novel circumstances, and he and his patrol officers are to be very highly commended for the work that they have been carrying on so satisfactorily.

### NORTHERN TERRITORY POLICE FORCE.

Although they are no longer quite the same Northern Territory Mounted Police Force around whom so many romantic tales have been written, the Police have adapted themselves to changed conditions and their spirit and tenacity remain the same.

## ANNUAL REPORT--DISTRICT OFFICER, ALICE SPRINGS.

During the year 1936-37 progress has continued in the various activities in the southern portion of the Territory. The population in Alice Springs, Tennant Creek and various other centres has increased, the total European population at 31st March showing an increase of 165 for the year.

In the town of Alice Springs progress is marked by the erection of additional residences and business premises, the forming of streets and footpaths, tree-planting and the provision of an electricity supply for the town. A commencement has been made on the erection of a modern hospital and a gaol.

Both the hotels have been materially improved by the provision of additional accommodation and modern conveniences and the comfort of travellers is now assured.

Alice Springs and the surrounding district have many natural attractions such as a particularly pleasant winter climate and scenery and beauty spots which it would be difficult to surpass, with the result that a tourist traffic has been in operation for years. The chief obstacle to this traffic in the past has been the lack of good accommodation but this has now been overcome and the traffic is increasing. A considerable number of tourists conducted by the Pioneer Tourist Service passed through the Territory during this year and it is anticipated that this traffic will increase. Amongst those of note who visited Alice Springs were Sir Thomas Bavin, Senator Duncan-Hughes and other Parliamentarians. Parties of school children from various southern church colleges visited the district during the midwinter vacation, under the auspices of the respective church organizations.

A number of Commonwealth officials also visited the Territory during the year in the course of their official business. Amongst these were—

Mr. J. C. Westhoven—Public Service Arbitrator.

Mr. G. A. Gahan—Commonwealth Railways Commissioner.

Mr. P. Kennedy—Deputy Director of Posts and Telegraphs for South Australia.

Mr. P. A. Gourgaud—Assistant Secretary, Works and Services Branch, Department of the Interior.

Mr. H. M. Rolland—Commonwealth Works Director for South Australia.

In February of this year an air service between Adelaide and Darwin, via Alice Springs, was inaugurated by the Guinea Airways and this has proved of great advantage in that it has enabled quick communication with headquarters, resulting in increased co-operation and efficiency. It has also placed Alice Springs in very close touch with Adelaide—the journey occupying only a few hours.

The development of the Northern Territory has received considerable attention during the year. Funds were provided for assisting pastoralists to obtain and equip water supplies; for obtaining fencing material and for the importation of blood stock. The developmental programme also provided for improvements to roads and stock routes and over £34,000 was expended on such works.

An Investigation Committee consisting of Messrs. W. L. Payne (Chairman of the Queensland Lands Administration Board) and J. W. Fletcher was appointed to investigate and report to the Government as to the manner in which the pastoral industry in the Northern Territory could be developed. The Committee spent some weeks in the Territory and travelled several thousands of miles. I accompanied the Committee on its tours of the Territory. The tour consisted of two visits to the Territory—the first being to the southern portion. All available evidence was taken at Alice Springs and an inspection of the country lying to the north-east of Alice Springs was made—a number of settlers who had not been able to visit Alice Springs being interviewed in the course of the inspection. The Committee then proceeded via Tennant Creek across the Barkly Tableland to Mount Isa.

On the second tour the Committee inspected the remainder of the Barkly Tablelands, proceeding to Darwin, thence overland to Wyndham and returning through portion of Western Australia and Wave Hill to Newcastle Waters. A very thorough inspection was made and no opportunity of obtaining first hand information was overlooked.

It is hoped that definite progress in the industry and settlement of the Northern Territory will result from the recommendations of the Committee.

During December, 1936, Lieutenant-Colonel Weddell relinquished his duties as Administrator of the Northern Territory and in April, 1937, the Hon. C. L. A. Abbott took office. Mr. Abbott visited Alice Springs in May, 1937, and his visit so early after his taking office was very greatly appreciated by residents of this district. He was tendered an official welcome by all sections of the community. Mr. Abbott's visit coincided with the arrival of the Payne Committee and he took advantage of the opportunity of inspecting the country and meeting the settlers in the district north-east of Alice Springs.

During the year I visited Darwin on two occasions and the undermentioned Heads of Branches visited Alice Springs :—

Mr. L. H. A. Giles—Chief Clerk and Accountant.

Mr. V. L. Lampe—Supervisor of Schools.

Mr. W. West—Works Supervisor.

Mr. N. C. Bell—Director of Mines.

Mr. F. P. Shepherd—Chief Surveyor.

It is found that these interchanges of visits are of considerable value and result in additional co-operation and efficiency.

## ABORIGINALS.

The care and protection of the aboriginal population have been attended to on an increasing scale during the year. The usual ration depots for the supply of food, clothing and other necessities to the aged and infirm have been maintained and medical attention has been provided where necessary.

The medical hut attached to the aboriginal camping area at Alice Springs has been in regular use. It is staffed by an attendant assisted by an aboriginal messenger. The medical officer visits it when necessary to attend any cases requiring treatment.

The health of the aboriginal population has been reasonably good except for the prevalence of tuberculosis, which it is almost impossible to combat owing to the difficulties of segregation and the living conditions of the aboriginals.

There has been little serious crime amongst the aboriginals, although the usual minor offences have occurred and been dealt with through the courts.

The usual keen interest in aboriginals has been shown by anthropological societies. Miss O. M. Pink was engaged in field work in the Granites district for some weeks in the early portion of the year and Professor J. B. Cleland and party conducted research work amongst the aboriginals during the August vacation in 1936.

Mr. T. G. H. Strehlow commenced duty as a patrol officer during the year. He has been equipped with camels and the necessary gear and has his head-quarters at Jay Creek. During the year he conducted inquiries at the Granites and made patrols into the south-western portion of the Territory and also north-west of Hermannsburg.

In the vicinity of Alice Springs three main camps are now in operation—one on the proclaimed camping ground, one just south of Heavitree Gap and the third on the extended aboriginal reserve north of the town.

On this reserve also, the Roman Catholic Mission has established a school for aboriginal children. The children in addition to being educated are being fed and clothed.

At the Half-caste Institution, the previous Superintendent and Matron (Mr. and Mrs. Jones) have been transferred to another position and have been replaced by Mr. and Mrs. McCoy, who have shown keen interest in their work.

The number of inmates has increased slightly and the general health of the inmates has been good. With so many children living together it is natural that epidemics such as colds add materially to the work of the staff.

Education is imparted by two school-teachers on loan from the South Australian Education Department. The number of pupils in the school is considered, however, to be too great to be adequately handled by this staff and representations have been made in regard to a third teacher and also in regard to a larger and more modern type of school.

Attention has recently been given to the production of vegetables from a garden on the premises and this has met with satisfactory results.

Milk is obtained from a herd of goats which is the property of the Institution.

The Finke River Mission at Hermannsburg has continued its work. In addition to attending to the spiritual welfare of the natives in the immediate vicinity of the Mission, aboriginal preachers are sent amongst the natives in outlying districts and even about Alice Springs with, it is claimed by the authorities, satisfactory results.

The mission maintains a store where natives can obtain supplies and luxuries at reasonable prices and where cash or credit is advanced against dingo scalps. This obviates any necessity for the aboriginals to bring dingo scalps to Alice Springs and tends to keep them in their own district, thereby serving a very useful purpose.

During the year the expenditure on aboriginal affairs with the exception of salaries amounted to approximately £4,200.

#### EDUCATION.

In addition to the school at the Half-caste Institution, which has already been referred to, schools for white children are maintained at Alice Springs and Tennant Creek.

The school at Alice Springs is staffed by two teachers on loan from the South Australian Education Department. The pupils number approximately 60. At Tennant Creek only one teacher is engaged. Children who are not able to attend these schools receive tuition by correspondence from the South Australian Correspondence School—the Administration bearing the cost of this.

The schools are periodically examined by a South Australian Inspector and the South Australian curriculum is in operation.

The Qualifying Examination is held at the close of each school year and a scholarship entitling the winner to higher education in a Southern Secondary School is provided by the Government each year. No pupil who was eligible to sit for the examination obtained sufficient marks to win the scholarship last year and it lapsed so far as this portion of the Territory was concerned.

The previous year's winner (Miss Mona Johannsen) is making very satisfactory progress in her studies at the Immanuel College in Adelaide.

#### GAOL.

The only gaol in this portion of the Territory is that at Alice Springs, although towards the close of the year the police cell at Tennant Creek was proclaimed to be a prison for short term prisoners to obviate the cost and difficulty of transporting them a long distance for the purpose of serving a sentence of a few days.

The average number of prisoners in the Alice Springs Gaol during this year was 8.5.

One prisoner who had been transferred to South Australia to serve his sentence was returned to Alice Springs to be released.

One aboriginal prisoner was transferred from Alice Springs to Darwin for medical attention but died in Darwin.

Funds have now been made available for the provision of a new gaol at Alice Springs and it is anticipated that the work will shortly be put in hand. When the building is completed the necessity for transferring long term white prisoners from Alice Springs to other gaols will disappear.

#### HEALTH.

The Medical Officer reports that the health of the white community in the Alice Springs district has been good and that no serious case of infectious disease has occurred.

Funds have been made available for the building and equipping of a modern type hospital at Alice Springs and a contract has been let.

During the year it has been necessary for some cases to be sent to Adelaide for operations and other treatment due to the lack of facilities in Alice Springs and the cost and inconvenience of this procedure will be overcome by the provision of the Hospital.

During the year improvements have been made to the sanitary depot and it is expected that the new equipment will be put into use in the near future.

Tuberculosis continues to be a menace to the good health of the community. This matter has been mentioned in previous reports but infected persons continue to come to this district to obtain the advantages of the climatic conditions, particularly in the winter months. The lack of any accommodation to enable the segregation of such persons prevents any adequate control and consequently subjects the remainder of the residents to unnecessary risks of infection.

#### LANDS.

Although the administration of lands rests with the Land Board in Darwin, certain duties are performed in this office on behalf of the Board. Rent lists are maintained, rents are collected, applications are received for transmission and information is supplied both to the Board and the public.

During the year a considerable number of applications for various leases and licences were handled. In Alice Springs very few town allotments now remain vacant.

## REPORT OF THE CHIEF PROTECTOR OF ABORIGINALS.

## LEGISLATION.

*Trespass Aboriginal Reserves.*

A new section was embodied in the Aboriginals Ordinance prohibiting unauthorized persons entering territorial waters adjacent to reserves for aboriginals.

This legislation represents a further effort to preserve the sanctity of aboriginal reserves and to safeguard the welfare of the aboriginal population.

*Methylated Spirits Ordinance.*

This new enactment was designed to combat the degrading and pernicious practice of supplying methylated spirits to aboriginals. This legislation renders it an offence punishable by heavy penalty to sell, give or supply, or permit to be sold, given or supplied, any methylated spirits to any aboriginal.

*Intestate Estates of Aboriginals.*

An amendment of the Aboriginals Ordinance was drafted to empower the Chief Protector to administer the estates of aboriginals who had died intestate.

*Compellability of Native Witnesses.*

A further important amendment to the principal Ordinance was contemplated to provide that where any aboriginal is charged before a court with the commission of an offence, whether punishable on indictment or summarily, any aboriginal man or woman who, at the time of the commission of the offence, was living with the aboriginal as the husband, wife or consort of the aboriginal, shall not be compellable to give evidence either for or against the aboriginal charged.

*Exemption from Aboriginals Ordinance.*

Fifteen male half-castes and ten female half-castes were granted total exemption, and nine male half-castes and six female half-castes were granted partial exemption. Adverse police reports received concerning three male half-castes, who were exempted last year, caused the Chief Protector to revoke their exemptions.

## ABORIGINAL WELFARE.

Following a resolution passed at the Premier's Conference held at Adelaide in 1936, an initial conference of Commonwealth and State aboriginal authorities was convened by the Commonwealth Government, and was held at the Parliament House, Canberra, from the 21st to the 23rd April, 1937.

The Minister for the Interior delivered the opening address.

The Secretary of the Department of the Interior and the Chief Protector of Aboriginals of the Northern Territory represented the Commonwealth Government.

As a printed report of the proceedings of the Conference will be circulated, it is not intended to comment herein on the discussions or resolutions other than to mention the representatives' valuable contributions to the discussions, embracing as they did a comprehensive survey of the aboriginal and half-caste question, which will promote a better understanding of the aboriginal and half-caste, and an appreciation of the problems which beset the administration of Aboriginal Affairs in the Northern Territory.

## RESERVES.

A new aboriginal reserve at Jay Creek, Central Australia, was proclaimed, and notice thereof was published in the *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette* No. 38, of 22nd July, 1937.

An area comprising approximately two square miles, situated five miles from Darwin, was acquired and will be proclaimed a reserve early in the next financial year.

The economic development of aboriginal reserves, especially in regard to mining thereon, was discussed at the recent Conference in Canberra on Aboriginal Welfare. Several applications were received by this Branch from persons for permission to enter reserves for the purpose of shooting buffalo, prospecting and grazing cattle. In conformity with existing policy not to permit entry for economic purposes all applications were refused.

Certain cases of trespass by unauthorized persons in the South-West Reserves were subject to court proceedings, resulting in the conviction of the offenders.

The illicit relationships between crews of pearling vessels and aboriginal women on aboriginal reserves and elsewhere were given considerable publicity during the year.

Before the inauguration of the patrol boat service this Branch had adopted a rigid policy which prohibited landing on reserves, and co-habitation with female aboriginals. In the absence of any facility to patrol pearl beds the situation could not be effectively met, and in consequence complaints were numerous.

A further complication which was introduced by alien pearl fishers was met by providing drastic penalties, including confiscation in respect of boats operating in territorial waters adjacent to a reserve.

Early in the year the pearl fishing industry was confined to waters adjacent to Bathurst Island and Melville Island, the latter area not being a reserve. It was then recommended that a portion of this island should be proclaimed an aboriginal reserve, and that Buchanan Island, which is adjacent thereto, should be proclaimed a prohibited area.

It was proposed also to establish a medical aid station in this area and to appoint a medical assistant who would also be a protector of aboriginals as officer in charge.

These recommendations were designed to minimize contact between aboriginals and Japanese, to facilitate the control of the co-habitation problem, to assist the work of the patrol vessel and to provide medical attention to recruits of pearling vessels and to the aboriginal population of both Bathurst and Melville Islands on which there are some 1,000 aboriginals residing.

Unfortunately, before these proposals could be promulgated, the pearling fleets transferred their operations from this vicinity to beds situated in the neighbourhood of Elcho Island, which is included in the Arnhem Land Reserve.

The remote situation of this reserve and its extensive coast line, affording as it does a number of excellent watering places for vessels, rendered the task of effective patrol practically impossible, and it soon became apparent that the situation so created could only be combated by the establishment of control bases at Elcho Island and King River respectively.



It was decided that vessels licenced in Darwin would be compelled to report regularly at these bases and to remain there under supervision for the full idle time during the high tides when it is impossible to conduct fishing operations. To implement this policy detailed procedure was devised which enables a complete check to be kept of the movements of all Australian boats between their departure from Darwin and their return there from the beds. It was considered that these innovations would also facilitate the work of the Patrol Services. Alien vessels were denied all concessions.

The selection of these locations was determined after prolonged inquiry and mature consideration of representations made by various interested bodies.

Several conferences were convened by the Chief Protector of Aborigines, which were attended by representatives of the Australian pearling interests, the officers in charge of the Patrol Service, and the Inspector of Fisheries.

The establishment of these depots will constitute a progressive step towards the complete enforcement of the law in regard to trespass and co-habitation. In addition, it is intended that the control officers will exercise supervision of aborigines signed on to pearling boats, and the control of recruitment of aboriginal pearling crews. These bases will also serve as outlying medical aid posts for the aborigines in the reserves.

The patrol boat service, which rendered efficient service during the year, was responsible for the arrest of two alien luggers—one of which was confiscated—and the conviction of Japanese members of crews of Australian owned luggers for breaches of the Co-habitation Clause of the Ordinance.

#### PATROLS.

Although in past years frequent patrols were made by police officers in the Arnhem Land, South-West and Daly River Aboriginal Reserves, little has been chronicled of interest to the Aboriginal Branch, as comment in most part was confined to the official business of the expeditions—namely the apprehension of aboriginal fugitives who were being sought in connexion with cattle killing and murder charges.

Patrols undertaken during the year differed entirely from former expeditions, as in few cases was the arrest of an aboriginal the prompting factor. Thus man hunts were replaced by educational missions, which sought to establish friendly relations with the uncivilized and semi-civilized aborigines in reserves and sparsely settled areas, to inculcate in them confidence in the Administration, and concurrently, by peaceful gesture, to intimate to them the seriousness of crime against the common law and the penalties which follow such offences.

#### *Daly River Reserve.*

Two successful patrols were made by Protectors overland from Timber Creek to Point Pearce and Port Keats in the Daly River Reserve. The reports on the patrols furnished this Branch were both interesting and informative. The Protectors made friendly contact with a large number of bush natives encountered during the course of the patrol, and issued medicines and food from supplies specially carried for the purpose. Four aborigines, who were afflicted with a contagious disease, voluntarily accompanied the patrol to the Port Keats Mission, where treatment was commenced by the Superintendent.

Mention was made of several incidents which served to illustrate the complete confidence the native population had in the Protectors.

Opportunity was taken at the Port Keats Mission to assemble all the aborigines and to address them through an interpreter on the seriousness of crime which involved murder and wounding.

Both Protectors paid tribute to the work being performed by the Port Keats Mission Staff.

These patrols enabled a more accurate estimate of the aboriginal population in these areas to be ascertained, and it is regretted that the number of nomadic aborigines previously thought to roam this area was considerably over-estimated.

The reports conclude with the following description of the natural resources of the area traversed:—

“The country teems with native food and I would state that the country generally is some of the best I have patrolled in the Territory.

Various grasses of good quality exist in abundance, whilst top feed such as mimosa trees, camel bush and salt bush were plentiful together with other excellent varieties.

Native food and game were plentiful, especially kangaroos, emus, wallabies, yams, bush plums, sugarbag, lilies, fish, shellfish, ducks, wild geese and spoonbill.”

Brother Quinn, of the Port Keats Mission staff, who had conducted several extensive journeys in the Daly River Reserve, furnished the Aboriginal Branch with a report which contains valuable information concerning the health and distribution of the population and aboriginal customs.

It is proposed to collate the information contained in the three reports referred to for the official archives, and to prepare a map of the area which will have indicated thereon the routes taken by the various expeditions.

#### *Arnhem Land Reserve.*

Dr. Donald Thomson, who is conducting investigations in this area on behalf of the Commonwealth Government, continued his patrols.

It is understood that Dr. Thomson will complete his inquiries early next year and will then prepare his main report for submission to the Honorable the Minister.

Three aborigines from the Reserve who were serving life sentences at Fanny Bay Gaol were liberated and were returned to Caledon Bay by Dr. Thomson.

#### *South-West Reserve.*

Patrol Officer Strehlow, who had been commissioned by the Commonwealth Government to investigate certain alleged cases of shooting of aborigines in the South-West Reserve, completed his investigations.

Concurrent with this inquiry he investigated on behalf of the Aboriginal Branch recommendations made by the Board of Inquiry into the alleged ill-treatment of aborigines in Central Australia relating to—

- (a) the handling of dingo scalps tendered by aborigines;
- (b) the proposal that a Government Aboriginal Station should be established in South-West Reserve. In this connexion a survey was to be made of the country concerned; and
- (c) a proposal that the contiguous reserves in the Northern Territory, South Australia and Western Australia, should be administered as one entity by one competent authority.

In accordance with this direction the Patrol Officer furnished his comments in a report on the South-Western Native Reserve, its peoples and its problems.

The travel section of the document contained lengthy and instructive descriptions of the country through which he passed and incidents of his itinerary.

Approval was obtained to release this portion of the report for publication in the press to accord the Patrol Officer the recognition which the arduous nature of his work warranted, and also for the instruction of persons who may contemplate making journeys in this area where great difficulty is experienced in obtaining water for travellers and camels over many miles of the route.

The following extract from the report describes the physical features and game of the reserve and an indication of its aboriginal population :—

*Physical Features and Game.*—I have purposely devoted a very large portion of my travel account to descriptive passages, in order to show the real nature of the South-Western Native Reserve. At the moment it is uninviting and almost empty. It contains some of the most desolate country that I have yet seen in Central Australia. Perhaps 60 to 75 per cent. of the total area is uninhabitable sandhill country, into which natives can venture only after a copious fall of rain has filled up the isolated clay-pans and the little temporary rock holes. The remaining part of the country consists of hills and ranges; here natives are able to subsist in a fair measure of comfort.

Even in the range country, however, the problem of water arises continually. The Petermann Ranges—which constitute by far the best land in the Reserve—are much more barren than the McDonnell Ranges. The latter are cut up by broad gum creeks, abounding in gorges and waterholes; and the valleys between their tall ridges are fertile mulga flats, rich in game and vegetable foods. The Petermann creeks, on the other hand, are broad, sandy, and short courses. Water can be expected in them only for a few months after a flood. My two Petermann guides smiled at my ignorance when I suggested that we should have no more trouble for water in the Petermann Ranges because of the many gum creeks which flowed out of them. They maintained that their creeks were useless for water except just after a rain: the only sure waters were the 'deep' soaks and 'huge' rockholes, on which they and their forefathers had always depended. These soaks and rockholes may be satisfactory enough to roaming natives but they are quite insufficient from a white man's point of view. The native never stays at a place for long because he must keep moving with the game which he hunts; and hence a rock hole containing a few hundred gallons of water seems an unlimited supply to him. Before coming to Mount Olga, for instance, I asked one of my guides if we should find enough water there for ourselves and for the camels. He smiled at my stupid doubts—'My country has got water everywhere; there is too much water about altogether'. Our camels and canteens, however, drained one of these 'huge' rockholes completely; another rockhole—misnamed 'Felix Springs' on the maps—went down several inches after we had taken out about 100 gallons.

However, I need not enlarge upon the scarcity of water in the Reserve: my one line of march, both to Mount Bowley and thence back to Angas Downs, lay through the most fertile and best-watered portions of the Reserve.

Game was notable for its general absence. I had been promised huge feasts of native game in the Reserve, but three rabbits were all the fresh meat that my wife and I enjoyed for over a month, while our men, who were always on the look-out for game, managed to bag only a tiny euro and two kangaroos during the same time. I must admit, however, that although game is by no means plentiful in the Reserve, probably a sufficient amount could be obtained in the heart of the Petermann Ranges proper, i.e., in that part which was too mountainous for us to traverse by camels. Those Petermann Range natives whom we saw seemed to be satisfied with the supply of game that was offering to them. The main trouble seemed to be that much native game lived in waterless range country. If rockholes and soaks were more plentiful, the hunters could go much further into the game-country during the summer months and the drought seasons.

The sandhill areas have suffered most in the last big drought. Years ago sandhill wallabies and kangaroo rats used to be plentiful in the sandhill deserts; today they seem to be almost extinct.

These remarks apply to the territory inhabited by the Pitjantara tribe, which is subdivided into several smaller groups. The Pitjantara territory extends over the south-western portion of the Reserve, and includes the Petermann and Mann Ranges, the high chain of crags from Stevenson's Peak to the Kelly Hills, Mount Olga, Ayer's Rock and Lake Amadeus.

The northern portion of the reserve used to be the old barren tribal territory of the Pintubi people. I have described this northern part fully in an earlier report submitted to the Chief Protector, Darwin; and it will not be necessary to repeat my remarks here.

Between the northern and southern inhabited portions of the Reserve lies a great desert of gleaming mountainous sandhills, which is shunned by all the nomad tribes.

*Native Tribes.*—It is very difficult to give an accurate estimate of the present population of the Reserve. The northern part of the reserve—the old territory of the Pintubi—seems to be quite empty: I have discussed this in the earlier report to the Chief Protector. The southern portion is rapidly approaching the same state of depletion. I saw less than 30 natives in all on my last trip; and all but three of these were dingo-scalp hunters, who were firmly resolved to spend the remainder of their days near the camps or stations of white men. Apparently a few native camps in the westernmost Petermann Ranges, near the Western Australian border, contain most or all of the remaining permanent inhabitants of the reserve; the total number may be only 200 or much less.

This is a shocking state of affairs. Only ten years ago there were said to be large hordes of natives living in the Reserve. Parties which went out into the Reserve as late as 1927 and 1929 (W. Liddle and R. Buck) reported that they had seen assemblies of natives, up to 300 in number, gathered together at various spots in the Petermann Ranges. How can this sudden falling-off in numbers be explained?

The answer lies in the rapid and continuous drift of the natives from the Reserve within the last few years. One might be tempted to label it a flight or a rout rather than mere drift. As a result of this general exodus Pitjantara natives may be seen today in large camps wherever stations or doggers' camps dot the map in Central Australia. Middleton Ponds, Charlotte Waters, Hamilton Bore, to name only a few places, have long since ceased to be Aranda or Loritja settlements, the original Aranda and Loritja folk are almost extinct, and today Pitjantara is the tongue which is spoken wherever natives gather together. Ernabella, Lind Vale and the doggers' camps account for many more. Macumba and Oodnadatta have both seen Pitjantara beggars arriving in order to plead for tea and food. If one were to ask every man in southern Central Australia where his birthplace was, in seven or eight cases out of ten the reply would probably name some water in the Reserve. The total number of the derelict emigrants from the Reserve must run into many hundreds of men, women and children. The faithful few, who are left behind in the lone wilds of the western Petermanns, will probably emigrate also within the next few years if left alone."

## ABORIGINAL MEDICAL BENEFIT FUND.

Employers' contributions amounted to £776 13s. 9d. Medical chests were supplied free to station managements and other employers of aboriginals in rural districts.

Hospital facilities for aboriginals were provided at Darwin, Katherine, Pine Creek and Tennant Creek. A number of aboriginals from districts adjacent to the borders of Queensland and Western Australia were treated at the Camooweal, Mount Isa and Wyndham Hospitals. Fees for these cases were defrayed by the Administration.

The Alice Springs Hospital, at present under construction, has been designed to provide modern wards and equipment for the treatment of aboriginals. In the new Aboriginal Compound at Darwin, plans for which were approved during the year, provision has been made for a modern clinic block and hospital wards. On the completion of these new works the aboriginal population will be served by a chain of efficient and modern hospital units extending from Alice Springs to Darwin.

Regular inspections of Mission Stations and aboriginals residing on pastoral holdings and in rural centres were conducted throughout the year by Medical Officers and a trained Medical Assistant. Aboriginals employed in town centres were subject to regular examination.

All cases of leprosy and venereal disease detected by these medical surveys were detained and removed to treatment centres.

Boat, rail, motor and aerial transport was utilized to convey aboriginals from remote districts to hospital.

Aboriginals suffering from minor ailments were treated at all police stations.

Stocks of medicines, dressings and appliances held at these depots were regularly replenished throughout the year.

A temporary Lock Hospital was established at the Quarantine Station, where female half-castes were detained for treatment.

Aboriginal venereal disease cases were treated at the Kahlin Compound Clinic, the Aboriginal Clinic Alice Springs and the Katherine Hospital. A number of male patients received treatment at police stations.

## ABORIGINAL TRUST ACCOUNT, DARWIN.

	£	s.	d.
Credit balance as at 1st July, 1936 .. .. .	4,204	6	3
Credit balance as at 30th June, 1937 .. .. .	4,115	7	8

Cash Orders numbering 2,943 to a total value of £2,779 18s. 11d. were issued. Orders for goods to the number of 1,341 were issued for a total sum of £2,982 1s. 1d. These figures do not include remuneration paid in kind to aboriginals employed by contract drovers.

Disbursements increased by £886 6s. 5d.

An additional 172 identity discs were issued during the year. These discs again proved a valuable aid to identification.

## ABORIGINAL TRUST ACCOUNT, ALICE SPRINGS.

	£	s.	d.
Credit balance as at 1st July, 1936 .. .. .	775	1	11
Receipts during the year 1936-37 .. .. .	663	12	11
Withdrawals during the year 1936-37 .. .. .	699	12	0
Credit balance as at 30th June, 1937 .. .. .	739	2	10

## EMPLOYMENT.

During the year 178 licences and 361 country licences were issued. Two hundred and ten agreements were entered into by employers of aboriginals and half-castes.

## AGED AND INFIRM ABORIGINALS.

Two new rationing depots were established.

There was a slight increase in the number of indigent natives rationed throughout the year. Increased supplies of foodstuffs, clothing and blankets were distributed.

The Patrol Officer and Deputy Chief Protector of Aboriginals, who were instructed to report on conditions under which aboriginals resided in the Alice Springs Town Centre, reported adversely on the existing aboriginal reserve and the native camps situated in the neighbourhood of the town.

Resulting from this investigation it was proposed to close the Alice Springs rationing depot and transfer it and indigent natives, who received assistance there, to the Jay Creek Aboriginal Reserve.

## HALF-CASTE EMPLOYMENT.

The number of half-castes inmates in Government institutions at 30th June, 1937, was 111 males and 168 females—a total of 279 as compared with 254 at the 30th June, 1936.

Twenty-five female half-castes were employed in Government institutions and hospitals.

Twenty-three female half-castes were employed by approved European employers.

The demand for domestic labour could not be met by institutions.

Seven half-caste youths were apprenticed to the cattle-raising industry.

Twelve male half-castes were provided with employment in the Kahlin Compound and Sanitation Section.

## HALF-CASTE HOUSING SCHEME.

Of the eight houses erected in 1933, three have already been fully paid for by the half-caste occupiers. Of the remaining five, the following amounts of principal are still due :—

	£	s.	d.
House No. 1 .. .. .	20	11	10
House No. 2 .. .. .	85	16	10
House No. 3 .. .. .	85	16	10
House No. 5 .. .. .	75	16	10
House No. 6 .. .. .	45	16	10

The original scheme contemplated complete repayment within fifteen years, so the position revealed in the above statement is very satisfactory.

As the provision of additional houses was a matter of urgency it was decided to extend the scheme by the erection of a further four houses.

These new dwellings will represent an improvement on the old type of home. They have been planned in accordance with modern designs and will include all the conveniences of a standard home.

#### MARRIAGES.

Permission was granted by the Chief Protector of Aborigines for the marriage of four female half-castes with Europeans.

One application received from a European to marry a female aboriginal was refused.

#### ABORIGINAL VOTE.

The net expenditure as per appropriation was—

	£	s.	d.
Darwin .. .. .	5,607	11	8
Alice Springs .. .. .	4,216	13	3

Subsidies to Missions, salaries of staff, costs of new works, repairs and maintenance and hospitalization of aborigines are not included in these figures.

#### KAHLIN COMPOUND, DARWIN.

The average number of aborigines and half-castes maintained at the Compound during the year was 236. Lodging was provided for aborigines lawfully employed in the town district of Darwin.

The cyclonic disturbance of March last caused considerable damage at the Compound, when some fifteen huts and several outbuildings were demolished. Fortunately none of the inmates sustained injury.

The transfer of the Compound from its present site to a more suitable neighbourhood was advanced a further step during the year when a freehold property of 369 acres was acquired by the Administration.

It was decided also to combine this area with the adjoining Ludmulla reserve as the new aboriginal reservation.

The selected site is considered to be eminently suitable as it is comparatively well timbered, contains ideal building situations, and considerable areas which have been favorably reported upon by the Supervisor of Agriculture and a visiting expert as suitable for cultivation.

Four existing wells on the property promise an adequate supply of water for domestic and agricultural purposes.

Portion of the area has a sea frontage of over half a mile with a good sandy beach and extensive deposits of gravel exist for building and road construction purposes.

Certain preliminary work including road making, fencing and clearing of areas for buildings and cultivation plots was carried out on the property by a number of half-castes and aborigines under the direction of a white supervisor.

The Chief Protector of Aborigines conferred with the Senior Architect of the Works and Services Branch regarding details of the building programme, which will involve an expenditure of £38,000. Plans of the buildings were subsequently received and approved.

The administrative section will include an office, canteen, stores, and the Superintendent's house. Buildings to house a sawbench and plant, a garage and workshops will comprise the industrial block.

Aboriginal patients will be provided for by separate blocks, including kitchen and dining rooms for male and female isolation cases, and a modern surgery and consulting rooms for other cases.

The residential section will include separate quarters for single men and women and specially designed dwellings for married aborigines.

The commissariat section will comprise a modern bakery, dining room and kitchens.

Other buildings provided for are a school to accommodate 60 pupils, barracks to house twenty native police, cells, a laundry and other essential outbuildings.

It is anticipated that tenders will be called for the erection of main buildings early in the new financial year.

The completion of this building programme will facilitate the execution of the Department's policy in respect of detribalized aborigines in the town district of Darwin, reference to which was made in last year's report.

#### HALF-CASTE HOME—DARWIN.

The number of inmates in the Half-caste Home, Darwin, at 30th June, 1937, was as follows :—

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Half-caste children .. .. .	19	61	80
Adult half-castes .. .. .	13	36 (a)	49
Nurselings living with aboriginal mothers .. .. .	1	1	2
Half-castes residing with employers .. .. .	..	18	18
	<b>33</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>149</b>

(a) Includes half-caste inmates detained in Isolation Hospital.

All children of school age received the statutory public school education. Girls who left school during the year commenced training in the sewing, laundry and kitchen sections of the institution.

A library comprising 220 volumes was inaugurated for the use of inmates.

Consideration was given to a proposal to erect a new half-caste home on another site and plans of suggested new buildings were drafted.

*Canteen.*

The canteen had a credit balance of £610 13s.

*Laundry.*

Profits from this enterprise amounting to £298 6s. 4d. were shared by the laundresses.

*Clothing Section.*

Six girls were employed in the manufacture of clothing requirements for aboriginals and half-castes inmates of the gaol and other Government institutions.

*Transport Section.*

Two Chevrolet 30 cwt. motor trucks staffed by half-caste drivers were fully employed.

There was a considerable increase in the work of this section and additional trucks will be required to cope with haulage work which through lack of facilities could not be satisfactorily performed during the year.

## HALF-CASTE HOME—ALICE SPRINGS.

The total number of inmates at 30th June, 1937, was 130 comprising 78 males and 52 females.

Female inmates received a sound training in all phases of domestic crafts, including cooking, breadmaking and dressmaking.

Male inmates were trained in gardening pursuits.

Qualified teachers loaned to the Administration by the South Australian Government conducted the school at the institution. As it was reported the accommodation was inadequate, the erection of a new school house was recommended.

Seven half-caste boys were found employment in the cattle raising industry.

Twelve half-caste girls were employed as domestic workers.

## ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS—ALICE SPRINGS.

The number of Town Licences issued was twenty-seven, and the number of Country Licences issued was seventy-five.

The average number rationed was 130 in the Alice Springs District and 140 in country districts.

There has been a considerably increased number of far western natives coming into Alice Springs. For this the influence of semi-civilized natives travelling about the South-western Reserve collecting dingo scalps for white employers, and disseminating among the inhabitants glowing stories of the attractions of the settled areas, is held to blame. The result is that the Reserve is quickly becoming seriously depleted of its nomadic inhabitants, while Alice Springs has as many aboriginals as previously or more. There is of course no real increase in the true natives of such settled areas as Alice Springs: on the contrary, a survey of the camps has shown that less than a dozen original Alice Springs natives remain. Unless some means are adopted of attracting these visitors to settled areas back to their own districts it appears probable that they too will disappear after a few years of contact with white civilization.

A well ordered camp for working aboriginals is now available on the newly proclaimed reserve just north of the town. The missionaries of the Sacred Heart have erected a school on this land, and are catering for the elementary education of about thirty aboriginal children. Owing to a hitch in the expected arrival of a community of teaching nuns to take over this work, it has not yet been established on a satisfactory basis as the one worker has to act as teacher (for which he has no training), rationer, healer, and general supervisor of the camp. The general scope and facilities of this settlement may be expected to improve considerably during the coming year.

The work of the Finke River Mission at Hermannsburg has been continued on the lines of previous years.

*Health.*

The most serious menace to the health of aboriginals in this area is the dissemination of tuberculosis among them. This probably has been spread by sufferers from Hermannsburg to aboriginals in other centres. A definite isolation camping area for sufferers with adequate supervision is required.

The work of the Aboriginal Clinic has been carried out as in previous years, but there has been a considerable falling-off in the number of patients treated there. Presumably patients prefer to seek attention through the Sacred Heart Mission, whence they are referred to the medical officer.

## PATROL OFFICER.

Mr. T. G. H. Strehlow was appointed Patrol Officer in the Aboriginal Branch on 1st October, 1936. In March of this year the Patrol Officer visited Darwin to consult the Chief Protector in regard to his duties, and the policy of the Aboriginal Branch.

Following upon this conference, instructions were issued to Protectors that the Patrol Officer was authorized to carry out the duties of a Protector in all districts; to inspect all books, records and documents relating to aboriginal affairs held at any Police Station; to give instructions and advice on matters relating to aboriginal policy, and to report to the Chief Protector of Aboriginals upon the manner in which the affairs of the Aboriginal Branch were being conducted in any district.

The most important duties of the Patrol Officer were defined as follows:—

- (i) To assist the Deputy Chief Protector of Aboriginals, Alice Springs, and to exercise under the direction of the Chief Protector of Aboriginals a general supervision and care over all matters affecting the welfare of aboriginals and half-castes in that part of the Northern Territory situated south of the 20th parallel, and including Tennant Creek.
- (ii) To undertake any duty in any other district in the Northern Territory when directed by the Chief Protector of Aboriginals to do so, and be responsible for the enforcement of the Aboriginals Ordinance and Regulations thereunder, in all such districts.
- (iii) To undertake regular patrols of the South-west Reserve and other unsettled districts as indicated by the Chief Protector of Aboriginals approved in itineraries as prepared from time to time, and to conduct regular patrols of settled areas notwithstanding the presence of a resident Protector in those areas.

- (iv) To collaborate with the resident Protector in all matters relating to the enforcement of the Aboriginals Ordinance and Regulations in those particular districts.
- (v) To investigate cases of ill-treatment of aboriginals and to investigate complaints against aboriginals when tribal laws are involved.
- (vi) To appear, when directed by the Chief Protector of Aboriginals or the Deputy Chief Protector, for aboriginals in the Police Court, Alice Springs, and when deemed necessary give expert evidence at sittings of the Supreme Court when aboriginals are involved.

The Patrol Officer established his headquarters at Jay Creek near the site of the proposed new aboriginal settlement.

He was supplied with essential equipment including camels, camel gear and camping equipment for use on patrols in desert areas.

Provision was made in the estimates to provide him with a portable wireless transmitting set. Approval was also obtained to provide him with a specially equipped utility truck.

Special inquiries conducted by the Patrol Officer during the year included the patrol in the South-west Reserve, mentioned previously in this report, and patrols to the Granites and Anningie mining fields, and other remote districts to investigate employment matters and alleged cases of Europeans cohabiting with female aboriginals. In these inquiries he was assisted by the Deputy Chief Protector of Aboriginals and a police officer.

#### LIST OF CONVICTIONS RECORDED AGAINST ABORIGINALS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 1937.

Aboriginal Ordinance .. .. .	3
Assault .. .. .	7
Breaking and entering .. .. .	1
Dangerous Drugs Ordinance .. .. .	28
Drinking liquor .. .. .	55
Disorderly conduct on Reserve.. .. .	1
Drunkenness .. .. .	12
Escape from custody .. .. .	1
Indecent language .. .. .	1
Larceny .. .. .	2
Lunacy .. .. .	2
Murder .. .. .	1
Murder (attempt to) .. .. .	4
Methylated Spirits Ordinance .. .. .	11
Prohibited area .. .. .	27
Riotious behaviour .. .. .	4
Receiving .. .. .	1
Resisting Police .. .. .	2
Unlawful possession .. .. .	14
Unlawfully on premises .. .. .	2
V.D. Ordinance .. .. .	1
	130

There was a considerable decrease in the number of major crimes committed during the year.

Most of the petty misdemeanours constituted breaches of the Aboriginals Ordinance and Liquor Laws, and were perpetrated by aboriginals residing in town centres. A marked decrease in offences committed in rural districts was noticeable.

The drinking of methylated spirits by aboriginals caused the Department grave concern. Although assisted by new and drastic legislation and increased police vigilance, complete control of the traffic has not yet been effected.

A recent decision to remove all addicts to the new Compound area and prevent their further employment in the Town Area will accomplish much to abolish the evil.

#### LIST OF OFFENCES COMMITTED BY HALF-CASTES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 1937.

Assault .. .. .	2
Drinking liquor .. .. .	23
Disorderly conduct on Reserves .. .. .	1
Drunkenness .. .. .	11
Larceny .. .. .	1
Motor Vehicle Ordinance .. .. .	4
Offensive behaviour .. .. .	1
Unlawfully on premises .. .. .	2
Utter cheque .. .. .	1
	46

#### NATIVE CONSTABULARY.

Ten aboriginals were selected as recruits for the Native Constabulary. Their activities were confined solely to policing the old Compound area, where they were responsible for the detection of a number of cases involving assault, drinking methylated spirits and drunkenness.

A draft Native Constabulary Ordinance was submitted for approval. Active training of the corps and further enlistments have been curtailed pending the promulgation of this necessary legislation and the erection of Police Barracks in the new Compound. It was considered inadvisable to pursue the experiment further without proper facilities which do not exist at the old Compound.

C. E. COOK,  
Chief Protector of Aboriginals.

**ABORIGINAL CENSUS.**  
**YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 1937.**  
*Summary.*

District.	Full Bloods.				Half-cestes.				Total.
	Adults.		Children.		Adults.		Children.		
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	
Alice Springs .. .. .	165	230	46	43	20	18	70	78	670
Arltunga .. .. .	235	291	60	51	2	5	..	2	646
Anthony Lagoon .. .. .	70	54	14	16	2	3	2	1	162
Barrow Creek .. .. .	192	139	40	53	40	19	5	6	494
Borrooloola .. .. .	275	249	113	122	6	7	9	7	788
Brooks Creek .. .. .	86	42	20	18	11	7	..	..	184
Charlotte Waters .. .. .	306	358	107	107	11	7	2	1	899
Daly River .. .. .	640	315	120	70	4	2	1	2	1,154
Darwin .. .. .	1,460	1,095	300	310	62	114	65	90	3,496
Katherine .. .. .	121	96	45	31	4	4	2	8	311
Lake Nash .. .. .	54	23	16	15	5	..	..	..	113
Maranboy .. .. .	230	211	36	43	8	3	..	..	531
North-West Patrol .. .. .	441	469	148	135	9	1	1	..	1,204
Newcastle Waters .. .. .	136	145	49	33	11	8	4	6	392
Pine Creek .. .. .	68	50	10	8	4	6	5	3	154
Rankine River .. .. .	78	38	16	19	10	4	2	4	171
Roper River .. .. .	683	647	300	303	12	8	16	11	1,980
South-West Patrol .. .. .	428	447	170	163	15	10	5	9	1,247
Timber Creek .. .. .	734	317	159	151	30	1	4	..	1,396
Wave Hill .. .. .	445	340	55	50	2	1	2	..	895
	6,847	5,556	1,824	1,741	268	228	195	228	16,887

District.	Nomadic.		In Regular Employment in Supervised Camps.		In Regular Employment not in Supervised Camps.		In Supervised Camps.		Others.		Total.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
Alice Springs .. .. .	80	170	80	48	..	..	106	111	35	40	301	369
Arltunga .. .. .	235	334	2	..	60	12	..	3	..	..	297	349
Anthony Lagoon .. .. .	17	26	53	15	..	..	18	33	..	..	88	74
Barrow Creek .. .. .	81	74	82	10	45	15	69	118	..	..	277	217
Borrooloola .. .. .	242	230	86	8	..	..	75	147	..	..	403	385
Brooks Creek .. .. .	67	44	..	..	50	23	..	..	..	..	117	67
Charlotte Waters .. .. .	199	261	33	14	..	..	114	96	80	102	426	473
Daly River .. .. .	480	215	94	22	..	..	191	152	..	..	765	389
Darwin .. .. .	750	540	492	336	180	83	435	585	30	65	1,887	1,609
Katherine .. .. .	51	42	..	..	72	52	12	10	37	35	172	139
Lake Nash .. .. .	26	28	8	4	37	..	4	6	..	..	75	38
Maranboy .. .. .	100	122	68	15	20	..	71	101	15	19	274	257
North-West Patrol .. .. .	290	310	77	16	..	..	232	279	..	..	599	605
Newcastle Waters .. .. .	4	4	46	9	11	8	135	165	4	6	200	192
Pine Creek .. .. .	35	31	10	10	26	19	16	7	..	..	87	67
Rankine River .. .. .	..	..	68	22	..	..	38	43	..	..	106	65
Roper River .. .. .	795	790	84	43	..	..	132	136	..	..	1,011	969
South-West Patrol .. .. .	306	332	127	78	..	..	185	219	..	..	618	629
Timber Creek .. .. .	620	338	280	114	..	..	27	17	..	..	927	469
Wave Hill .. .. .	255	210	132	50	..	..	117	131	..	..	504	391
	4,633	4,101	1,822	814	501	212	1,977	2,359	201	267	9,134	7,753

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CURATOR  
OF THE BOTANIC GARDENS.**

(a) AGRICULTURE.

*General.*

No distinct advance has been made in agricultural undertakings throughout the season.

Peanut production remains the only crop sold outside the Territory. Twenty-seven settlers cultivate this crop, seventeen occupying land on the Katherine settlement, eight on the Daly River settlement, one mid-way between the Katherine and Daly settlements and one at Point Charles, the western point to Darwin Harbour.

One settler on the Daly River produced a small crop of tobacco which he manufactures into dark plug for use by the local natives.

One settler carries on a combined orchard and market garden, and brings the products to the Darwin market weekly.

One settler has a limited area in a valley which is supplied with a natural spring; on this he grows market garden produce, supplying Pine Creek and part of the Darwin market weekly.

The various mission stations grow a number of crops such as peanuts, sweet potatoes, yams, bananas and mangoes, mainly for their own use.

CLIMATE.

The remarks under this heading are to be confined to that portion of the Territory, lying north of the 15th parallel of south latitude, as potential agricultural development is restricted to land lying within this area. For simplicity the term "Territory" will be used in place of the longer and more ambiguous "Potential Agricultural Area of the Northern Territory."