

1904.
—
WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

ABORIGINES DEPARTMENT.

R E P O R T

FOR

FINANCIAL YEAR

ENDING

30TH JUNE, 1904.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by His Excellency's Command.

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ABORIGINES DEPARTMENT.

Report for Financial Year ending 30th June, 1904.

THE HON. THE COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,

Perth, 31st August, 1904.

I beg to submit my report on the working of the Aborigines Department for the year ended 30th June, 1904, and on the general condition of the aborigines throughout the State as far as civilisation exists.

The transactions of the Department have necessitated a larger expenditure than in previous years; this not only owing to the higher charges that have been made by those who supply relief to the destitute and aged, but also by the increased number of those who require it; the expenditure on the Police Station at La Grange Bay for the year, and some part of the previous year, also swelled the amount.

In addition to the statutory vote of £5,000, Parliament last session voted a sum of £6,500, which was £1,500 more than had been voted the previous year. I have, however, found it necessary to ask for an additional sum, during the last months of the year, of £1,465 to enable me to meet all the claims which have been made against me, and which from their nature have been certified to as necessary by my agents throughout the State.

In forming my estimates, I can only judge of the various items by the circumstances of the past; but each year my experience has shown me that the demands on my vote are always increasing, and I have therefore allowed for this in my estimates for the coming year; and as it not only hampers the Department to have to approach the Government for excess funds at the close of the year, but also tends to upset the calculations of the Treasury Department, I have thought it wise to ask for such a sum for the coming year as may, perhaps, leave a margin, which by the Act will revert into the Treasury chest at the end of the year. I am, therefore, asking for a grant of £10,000 in addition to the £5,000 voted by statute.

The general condition of the aborigines has been on the whole better during the past year than formerly, and the improvement is noticeable more in the Northern districts, where the energy of those constables who have been set apart of late for the closer patrol of the Northern coast has, I believe, checked a good deal of the immorality and drunkenness which has done so much harm to the native race.

By my remarks on the districts, and by reports in the appendices, this will be seen. There does not seem to have been so much crime, and the health has been better. Considerable attention seems to have been called to the native question latterly by the attacks which have been made in the English Press, and sometimes in the local Press, upon the community and the Department as to the treatment of the natives by white employers. Although all the investigation which it has been possible to make quite exonerates the great body of settlers from these charges, there is no doubt that the ventilation of the question will bring about a great many reforms, which anyone conversant with the subject can see are required; and these reforms are more in the direction of closer administration of the law so as to be able to put a stop to many little injustices now possible by whites against blacks, and also to regulate the conduct of the blacks themselves so as to prevent them becoming willing victims of debauchery and a menace to law and order.

It is now four years since first I put forward a proposed Bill to correct the vagueness of the existing laws, and to deal with many points on which they were altogether silent, but through various causes the consideration of my Bill has been postponed. I have now to thank the Government for their decision to bring the matter up this session, and the Crown Law Department for the great assistance they have given me in framing the present amended Bill.

While on this subject, perhaps it would be as well if I should explain some of its various sections, and how they are intended to benefit the community—blacks and whites alike.

Section 6 (sum to be placed at disposal of Department).—For the reasons given above, an increased sum is recommended. The sums hitherto voted do little more than distribute alms to the needy, as will be seen by the balance sheet; but there are many ways in which money should be spent for the protection and improvement of natives which have now to be neglected, such as paid protectors, visiting medical men, and dispensaries, teachers, etc.

Section 11 (Chief Protector to be guardian of children).—This is a very important matter. By my report of last year I showed that there were now growing up in the State probably more than 515 half-caste children under the age of 16; very few of these are being taught in any way, and, unless action is taken, will grow up to be as wild, lazy, and dirty, and probably more criminal, than the aborigines hitherto dealt with.

There is no law at present to enable me to withdraw them from the black race, and in nearly all cases persuasion fails to obtain the mothers' consent. By the power which the new Bill will give me I shall be able to do so, but you may rest assured that it will be done gradually and with as much kindness as possible.

Section 15 (aborigines may be removed to Reserves).—This gives a power which will only be resorted to in cases where care of natives necessitates their collection together, or where large areas of country have been set apart for their use, and it is not advisable for them to frequent white communities around.

Section 24 (agreements).—This is a modification of the existing laws dealing with contracts for labour. It will be seen that in this Bill the provisions are all in favour of the native, and leaving the white employer to the protection of the Masters and Servants Act; nor do I think that as now put any charge of slavery can possibly be made, not that I think such charges can reasonably be made under the present system, it is only under the abuse of it.

Sections 29 and 30 (supervision of aborigines in employment).—By these any abuse of the present labour provisions is guarded against.

Section 39 (prohibition against whites from frequenting native camps).—By this it is hoped to put a check on that immorality which is doing so much harm to the native race.

Section 40 (removal of camps near townships).—By this it is still further aimed at, and the nuisance so frequently complained of on the goldfields may be abated.

Section 41 (Justices may order natives out of towns) also bears in this direction.

Section 42 (prohibited areas) is a very important one. There is every proof that in many of the scattered communities to the Northward the liberty that the natives have of settling in the vicinity of townships leads to wholesale immorality and drunkenness. This is not only promoting a great spread of disease, but is quite spoiling the natives from being useful labourers; consequently they become criminals, and are a great expense to the State.

Sections 43 and 44 (females and children not to be at creeks at night) have been found absolutely necessary from the existing state of things in the pearling creeks on the Northern coast. It will be seen that no power is sought for to prevent the natives, both male and female, who are able to work, getting a living by providing wood and water for ships; but they must not give themselves up to immorality at night; they will probably be under supervision during the day. Female children of tender years, I have good reason for saying, have till now been subject to seduction; it is proposed to forbid their presence near the creeks altogether.

Section 46 (cohabitation with aborigines) is found necessary on account of the friction caused with the male aborigines when their wives are taken from them, and the many cases of desertion of the runaway female which come to my knowledge.

It will be seen that the Bill is in a great degree a consolidation of the existing Acts, and many of the most important clauses are simply transferred from the Acts which are proposed to be repealed. I have not made any remarks upon such clauses, as the existence of them has been found to work well and are well known.

During this year I have turned my attention to the case of discharged prisoners. In the East Kimberley district, especially, some of these have to travel a great many miles to reach their own country, and it has been represented to me that they suffer a good deal during the rainy or winter months of the year; consequently a system is being established to provide blankets at the various police stations along the roads, and supplies of medicines for those who may require it. This is done more to satisfy the recommendations of the magistrate, but the following extract from the evidence of a police witness will show the true position:—"In the bush they (the natives) use no blankets, and are actually better off when under escort than when in the bush." However, as a native, when away from his own country, may possibly be under some disadvantage as to the comforts and shelter which he has learned to provide for himself in his own district, I have made the above arrangements.

With regard to State employment of natives, which in the coming years will require consideration if the squatters (as many foretell) cease to require their labour, there are two outlets which have been suggested to me, in addition to that of rabbit-killing, of which I have spoken before. These are the eradication of noxious weeds and the collection of mallet bark. I have been in communication, in a preliminary sort of way, with the Agricultural Department, and I think it would be quite possible to form parties of unemployed natives under white gangers to undertake the eradication of noxious weeds from specific patches of country where they are becoming too prevalent. The sharp eyesight and deft fingers of the natives make them worth far more in this sort of work than white labour; and, in addition to the rations and tobacco given to them daily, they might get a bonus on every cwt. of green weed collected. When the natives learn that they may not roam about certain parts of the country with impunity, a good many of them will see the benefit of joining such parties.

The mallett-bark industry is a new one, and there is an immense area covered with this scrub, and, without interfering at all with the industry of the whites, reserves might be made where natives could be collected to pay for their keep by collection of this valuable product. I do trust that I shall be encouraged to institute these industries, which I foresee will do much to lessen the burden on the State which the natives are sure to become.

The supply of blankets issued this year will be seen by Table C. By a decision of the Cabinet our contract with an English manufacturing firm was discontinued, and tenders were called for locally. The price was slightly higher, being 7s. 5d. against 6s. 10d. last year per blanket; but the quality is as good, and the facilities for despatching the blankets almost better, as the contractors have been most obliging and most prompt in forwarding the parcels to their many destinations as per requisition. There was one drawback, however, that in making the change there was some delay caused in the arrival of the blankets in the State, and complaints were received from some places that the cold weather had come on before the blankets were given out. The delay was unavoidable on the part of the Department, and can easily be prevented in future. It must be also remembered that the natives to whom the blankets are given need not be in such straits as is represented in some of these complaints, as they have blankets given to them in previous years which were good to last much more than a year; in fact, at Welshpool and elsewhere I have seen them in use for three years and more.

Applications for permission to employ aborigines on licensed premises, under the provisions of 2 Edw. VII., No. 44, Sec. 6, have been received from the proprietors of twenty licensed houses. In each case assent was given for not more than 12 months, on condition that the Resident Magistrate or chief police officer in the locality gave a favourable recommendation, and that the native was engaged according to the law.

EAST KIMBERLEY.

Relief has been administered at Wyndham, Argyle Police Station, Turkey Creek, and Hall's Creek. Prices have been high in this locality, and are likely to remain so on account of the distance and difficulties of transit. At Wyndham, though there are not many natives on relief, and in fact not a great many belonging to that place, there is considerable expenditure owing to the calls on the Department for food and blankets issued to discharged prisoners, most of whom come from the far back under sentences of a year or more, for killing cattle. Dr. Belgrave, the Resident Magistrate, who took a great interest in the native question, and with large philanthropic views—which I regret to say I have not yet been able to carry out, or even to commence, owing to want of means or legal authority—left Wyndham for Sharks Bay in October, 1903; and was succeeded by Dr. Dodwell Browne, who, I am glad to say, also takes the greatest interest in the native question, whose suggestions are very valuable, and whose actions assist me much. I trust in the near future that the views of these gentlemen will, in a great measure, be carried out, now that we are on the eve of closer legislation, and so much attention has been called to the necessity of preserving such a valuable source of labour for the future, looking at the question in a practical manner, aside from its humane aspect.

At Turkey Creek and Argyle my agents, Constables Wall and MacKellar respectively, are vigilant, and keep me well informed and well advised on all matters. The latter has written me a useful memorandum as to proposed reservations, giving me a description of the various tribes.

The most distant station is Hall's Creek, from whence relief is administered and information obtained of the stations to the southward, on the verge of civilisation. The epidemic at Flora Valley, which was raging at the time of last report, was quelled by September. A quantity of drugs asked for was sent, and Constable Wilson reported in September that no deaths had occurred since June.

In April, however, Constable Caldow reported a fresh epidemic of both fever and ague throughout the district, and four natives died in March and April. Mr. W. H. Stretch, of Sturt's Creek and Margaret River stations, advised me of three half-caste children who, he suggests, should be reclaimed, and I have authorised the Resident Magistrate at Wyndham, on their arrival there, to send them to the South. Two are orphans, and the mother of the other assents.

WEST KIMBERLEY.

Relief has been administered at Derby, Broome, Fitzroy, Oobagoona, Sunday Island, and La Grange. At Derby the Resident Magistrate, Dr. Wace, takes a lively interest in the natives in every aspect, and keeps me well advised. Influenza has been prevalent among the blacks, but it appears to be more from season than neglect. At Myrada, where it chiefly raged, he reports that the natives were well clothed and had sufficient blankets. He says:—"It is impossible to clothe blacks as one wishes. For any trifling consideration, or as frequently as anything else from natural generosity and the pleasure of giving, a native will part with new and comparatively comfortable clothes and spend the night without even a blanket. The black will wear clothes (partly because he is expected to and partly from vanity) all day long, and then at night will throw off everything and go in for violent exercise, dancing half the night, and when

tired out will throw himself down to sleep for the coldest hours of the twenty-four. That colds are prevalent under the circumstances is intelligible, and that they are the most fatal during winter is inevitable."

Dr. Wace has made several visits up the Fitzroy River, and has also paid a visit to Sunday Island Mission, but pressure of work in hospital prevented him from going to Oobagoona Station, Robinson River. He reports that all along the Fitzroy the natives are well looked after on the stations, and there is not as much disease as he had expected to find; they all look well fed and are generally well clad. A native, Paddy, who is blind, and for whose recovery Dr. Wace does not give much hope, has earnestly begged to be treated in a hospital under a specialist, and Mr. Thurkle, J.P., has interested himself in the man, and, in case anything may be done for the poor fellow, I have sent for him and, through the kindness of Messrs. Emanuel, have obtained for him a free passage to Fremantle in a cattle-steamer.

At Fitzroy, Mr. Annear, telegraph master, reported in January that, on the whole, the natives were in a very good state of health. A few cases of fever and influenza occurred in the cold weather, and there has been some cattle-killing in his vicinity, and in the new country over the Leopold Ranges. He says this is the best wet season for bush-feed that the natives have had for many years. About 20 adults and 6 to 8 children are regularly relieved at Fitzroy. I have just received a report that a few weeks ago fever was raging a good deal both among blacks and whites, though the natives are now pretty well.

Sunday Island.—This mission is still carried on by Mr. Sydney Hadley, and apparently in a most satisfactory manner. Not only have I received regular reports from him, but also from the Resident Magistrate at Derby, who lately paid a visit to the island. These reports are attached hereto. (*Vide* Appendices 1 and 2.)

At the beginning of the financial year, the Hon. the Colonial Secretary had an opportunity of making inquiries during his visit to Derby, and I was glad to hear from him that he considered it advisable to subsidise this mission, and cordially seconded his decision to devote £100 per annum for that purpose. Mr. Hadley has expressed his great pleasure and thanks for the consideration and recognition thus given to him, confessing that it was a great relief to him in the harassing struggle that he had had to find ways and means of supporting the members of the mission and the natives, and that it would leave him much freer to give more undivided attention to the work, and more power to develop it to a larger extent.

Mr. Hadley has also been provided with drugs to deal with any sickness which arises; he reported in October that he had succeeded in stamping out the skin disease which was so much trouble this time last year. In the latter part of 1903 he still had a good deal of trouble with Asiatics on the luggers engaged in the pearlshell fisheries. This was abated by periodical visits of the police, in consequence of our representations to that department.

Mr. W. H. Bird, who has been assisting Mr. Hadley in the education of the native children, wrote me in December, reporting fair progress in reading, writing, and arithmetic, and that the children were particularly clever in mental arithmetic and singing. He enclosed some specimens of their writing which were very creditable indeed. He regretted being compelled to leave the island for a few months on private business, but looks forward to returning there permanently, being so interested in the work.

Among other things that Mr. Hadley recommends are the registration of persons empowered to employ natives, and the declaration of special ports for the use of ships taking in wood and water, and the control of such ports. The first of these has been attended to in the Bill prepared for Parliament, the second will require consideration after the passing of the Bill.

I regret to say that in January I heard from Mr. Hadley that his own health was failing from having been in the North-West district since 1877, and that he felt the need of a change very much. Mr. Bird had promised to return at the new year to carry on matters should Mr. Hadley have to leave for a while; but as yet I do not hear that Mr. Hadley has secured anyone's assistance, though two or three have offered themselves.

In April Mr. Hadley reports a much better state of things with regard to the pearlers, the islands not having been visited by the luggers. There were 23 in constant attendance at the schools, making very fair progress. The girls have become sufficiently good at sewing to make their own dresses. The general tone has much improved; the children are more tractable and obedient, and the adults industrious and respectful. This improvement as regards the adults Mr. Hadley credited to the very efficient way in which Constable Napier, on the mainland, had bestirred himself to stop the lugger traffic between Asiatics and natives. The health had been very good for the past quarter, only one old woman being on relief with an obstinate sore.

One hundred banana trees had been planted, and a few pounds' worth of fruit had been sold to the schooners in Cygnet Bay. It appears there is a great demand for their bananas, both in the fleet

and in Derby; and a good-sized trade is expected. There are 80 or 90 natives on the island. The weather had been too treacherous to do anything in mother-of-pearl shell or trepang, their boat having been too small; but he was having his cutter repaired, and expected better luck in future. He found that timber was not much use for buildings, the white ants being so bad; and masonry and iron are necessary.

Dr. Wace, R.M., Derby, visited the island, as promised, in June, and has written a most interesting and favourable report thereon, which I attach. (*Vide* Appendix 2.) He has since sent me some photographs illustrative of his remarks, which are reproduced herein.

Broome.—Matters here have been very quiet, and along the coast to the Eastward, chiefly from the patrols of Constable Cunningham. In a report which was sent me by the Police Department, I find continual reference made to his having found luggers in the creeks, where the Manillamen and others had been looking for native women, and giving them food and tobacco, and taking them on board the boats. Constable Cunningham made full inquiries, and did all he could to repress this intercourse; and one of his entries, dated 18th February, 1904, reports that there were not nearly so many natives then about Beagle Bay at the beginning of the lay-up season. When they found they would not be allowed to hang about the boats, a number of them had gone into the bush and to different places along the coast. The evil, however, had not by any means been stopped, as his subsequent notes testify. He visited Sunday Island itself on the 22nd February, and reported that all the natives he saw there were neatly dressed and well cared for, most of them attending school. Later on he arrested certain Asiatics for supplying liquor to aborigines. I heard subsequently, on the 5th April, from Sub-inspector Duncan, of Derby, that three of these men pleaded guilty, and each were fined £20 and costs or three months' imprisonment. Constable Jenkins, who was sent out to collect evidence, was, in Mr. Duncan's opinion, worthy of commendation for his energy in bringing these cases together under the most adverse circumstances, most of the pearlers being repugnant to his inquiries.

A later diary of Constable Cunningham on patrol in March and April shows a great improvement in the morality of the natives on the coast Northward from Broome since the police commenced their supervision of it.

Since the departure of the Resident Magistrate (Mr. Warton), Dr. Blick (the Resident Medical Officer) has been acting for him, and has sent me a very well considered report. (*Vide* Appendix 4). It is gratifying to see that the remedies he recommends have already been attended to in the draft-Bill prepared for Parliament; he also speaks very strongly as to the prospects of the aborigines if improper intercourse with whites can be checked; he also speaks very highly of the self-sacrificing work of Father Nicholas in attending to the sick and destitute. I regret very much that the want of legal authority and shortness of funds have as yet prevented me taking measures to make this good man's efforts more easy and successful.

Dr. Blick is fully assured that the allegations of physical cruelty to the aborigines and their slavery are absolutely false; at any rate, when applied to the Broome District.

The most serious alarm has been caused quite recently by the presence of small-pox on the steamers calling from Singapore. One native has been attacked. Prompt measures were taken by the authorities, and in response to telegrams which were sent to him, I begged the Resident Magistrate to do whatever he possibly could to prevent any intercourse between the natives on the coast with the natives in the interior.

La Grange Bay.—At La Grange Bay, where Mr. Tuckett is the distributor, a great improvement has taken place since the establishment of a police station. The friction existing at the time of my last report between the natives and the pastoral lessee of the country around Peeah Spring has subsided; nevertheless I obtained an opinion from the Hon. the Minister for Lands favourable to the establishment of a reserve there for the use of aborigines. I have not, however, as yet heard from the Lands Department what action has been taken. However, I trust the time is near at hand when considerable area will be specially devoted for the protection of aborigines, and I am content to wait. Mr. Tuckett feeds a large number of natives, and attends to their ailments and diseases in a most efficient and clever manner, and he is kept supplied with drugs. Constable Kuhlmann is continually patrolling the coast, and has succeeded at last in establishing quite a system by which he controls the intercourse between the crews of the luggers coming in for wood and water, or laying up, and the natives who hang about either for work or alms. He does all he can to repress improper intimacies with the women, preventing them from going on to the luggers as far as he can, and the Asiatics from hunting for them on the shore; but, being single-handed, and only having horses and no boat as yet, he is frequently frustrated, and should he at any time be compelled to absent himself on official duties of other sorts, such as carrying ballot boxes to Broome, which entails two or three weeks' absence, of course the natives soon find it out, and he finds things as bad as ever when he gets back. I must recommend that if police supervision is supplied it should be adequate, and that not only should there be another constable employed to do the ordinary police duties, but that "our" constable, as we call him,

should be provided with a boat and pay for a native crew. (I call him "our" constable, as the department pays for the upkeep of the station.) A great many luggers come into La Grange Bay and its adjacent creeks, and there are two or three stations not many miles away, so that there is plenty of work with regard to the natives to occupy the sole attention of one man. I mention the boat as a very necessary expense, and the following remarks by Constable Kuhlmann on his patrol of the 2nd April will bear out my argument:—"I patrolled to Whistler's Creek in morning. Two luggers there, and I tried to get the natives out; they got on the islands again, and two Malays with them. I went over again at night and got 40 of them, and chained up the Malays and put them back near to their boats. I nearly got drowned, as the quicksands are very bad in this creek. I also went to Middle Creek, at 12 a.m., and found five Malays sleeping with gins in the sandhills. These men were over two miles away from their boats. I put them back and brought the natives up to the police camp. Unfortunately, I have no means of getting on board the luggers. I am nearly certain that there are a lot of them that have women on board at night."

There is no doubt that it requires a great deal of firmness and courage on the part of a single constable in such a district, and I feel that we have a good officer in Constable Kuhlmann. Extracts from his reports, and also from Sub-inspector Duncan, at Derby, will be found in Appendices 5 and 6.

Constable Kuhlmann reports later on that not only do the Asiatics suffer from venereal diseases, but that they are afflicted with Beri-Beri. As to the recent danger of small-pox, as much protection as possible is being given, and the whole coast (including La Grange) will be placed under the same regulations as at Broome.

Oobagoona.—This is the most inaccessible station at which I am asked to authorise relief. It lies on the Robinson River, on the East side of King Sound, and imported food is consequently expensive. The Resident Magistrate at Derby proposes to visit the station, and has written to me that he will make what arrangements he can, and if possible have the relief administered nearer in.

THE NORTH-WEST DISTRICT.

There are about 14 relieving stations in this district, particulars of which will be found in Table A. The health has generally been good, and matters quiet. My particular attention this year has been directed to the condition of natives on the Pilbarra tinfields, and to those on the distant stations in the Upper Fortescue.

The Resident Magistrate at Marble Bar has forwarded a short but favourable report dealing with his district (*vide* Appendix 7), but I have not been able to get a general report from the Resident Magistrate at Roebourne, and draw my information from the officers of the Police Department.

A considerable number of natives appear to be engaged obtaining tin on the Cooglegon and Old Shaw tinfields. They work principally for the storekeepers, and in all but one case seem to be pretty fairly dealt with, sometimes getting wages and sometimes being paid by results. At Cooglegon, from one store, they received £2 16s. 6d. per bag, and got plenty of tucker in addition. The storeman keeps a store account book for these natives, and the tin they sell at the store is credited to each native, and the amount of stores they require debited, the natives being treated on equal terms as to the price of tin and rations as white men, namely, £45 per ton for tin, and rations at Marble Bar prices. At the other store they are not so lucky, and are leaving it in consequence of the exorbitant price charged and the low price given for tin. One native only at this place works for wages (10s. per week and tucker). Only nine natives were reported as working at Cooglegon. On the other hand, at Old Shaw there are about 70 natives, including women and children; they are treated fairly well, receiving £6 per month, or £2 per month and tucker when employed by stores; and when working on their own they get £3 per bag for their tin. One storekeeper gives them 6d. per lb. for tin, and keeps regular accounts with each native, and charges them for rations the same as white men. The general opinion is that there is only one dealer on these fields who attempts to get an unfair advantage in his transactions with the natives. Some while ago complaint was made that natives were allowed to purchase guns on those tinfields, and I communicated with the Resident Magistrate; but for some time past no more complaints have reached me, nor have any reports of the ill use of the guns been made by the police, so that there does not seem much reason to interfere. I have pointed out that the gun license is in force, so that the matter is under the control of the local authorities. But there is one aspect in which these tinfields are a source of trouble: The natives who have worked quietly and morally on many of the stations are now being attracted by the greater freedom and more ephemeral benefits of these tinfields, and are getting unsteady. While on the station they have the probability of quiet employment for their lives; that on the tinfields may be only temporary, and will leave them spoilt and immoral, and probably diseased. They have at present no restraining or corrective influence, and trouble may arise and, perhaps, menace to the adjoining country. One correspondent informs me that already there are more than 100 blacks on the fields from different stations, and he classed some of them as outlaws. He gives the following reasons for their number being continually added to:—First, they are absolutely under no control; second, that they can trade their

women for sufficient food without working; third, that they prefer to work for the lower class of whites who give them drink, and often drink with them, enabling them to steal; and fourth, that the more intelligent natives seeking for tin themselves are able to buy liquor from unscrupulous whites or half-castes. This may be an *ex parte* statement by a squatter, but I have no reason to doubt the veracity of it, as far as it goes.

A new relief station has been opened at Mosquito Creek, to which natives from the interior—the sand ridges on the Upper Oakover—resort, some of them in a very crippled and destitute condition. Blankets and medicine were sent for their relief, and instructions given for the issue of flour and tobacco. It appears that some of the natives there have procured guns, and the proprietors of the station consider that there is danger in this, and it is a matter to which I am giving my attention.

Matters at the other relieving stations do not require any comment. From Tableland Police Station a half-caste girl was reported to be quite blind, and living uncared for with the natives. I made arrangements for her transit *via* Roebourne and from thence by sea to Perth. I have obtained her admission to the Blind Asylum at Maylands, on condition that they are able to keep her. Whether surgical aid will be of any use remains to be seen. She is a strong, able girl, and might be made something of.

THE ASHBURTON DISTRICT.

Reports arrive most regularly from Constable Hulme, whose police station has been recently removed from Mount Mortimer to the Gorge. With the exception of the trouble caused by venereal disease—which seems very rife in this part—the natives seem to be in a tolerably good condition as regards employment and food. There is occasional trouble with drovers who bring natives along, and either desert them or allow them to abscond and become a charge to the State for a time. Until the provisions found in the new Bill become law, we are almost powerless to deal with matters of this sort. Supplies of medicine have been sent, and I am trying to obtain the services of a medical man now travelling in the district. It redounds to the credit of the settlers on the Ashburton River that, with hardly any exceptions, they relieve the old and destitute without asking the Government to contribute.

An application was made to me by the directors of the Monte Bello Islands Company, who are breeding mother-of-pearl shell, to obtain the services of old natives, and others who could only do light work, to examine shells, etc., in their breeding pans; and they were willing to take off my hands any who were able to do such work. But on examination it was found there were very few capable, and I had to leave the company to make the best arrangements they could with natives who were not upon my relief lists and otherwise unemployed. But I think if it were possible to employ some of those now obtaining relief in work of this sort it would be a wise move. The difficulty would be in collecting them in twos and threes from spots widely distant. If in the future natives are collected in large reserves, as some have suggested, we may possibly be able to do something in this way.

GASCOYNE DISTRICT.

There are 15 or 16 relieving stations in this part of the State, and a considerable correspondence is continually going on with many of them. The largest number are dealt with at the police station near the junction of the Lyons and Gascoyne Rivers, where Constable Spry attends to their wants. A parcel of clothing has been sent up here, as it is on the main road to the upper part of the rivers, and the natives are continually seen by travellers. From this station patrols visit all the upper parts of the Lyons and Gascoyne Rivers as far as Mount Augustus, namely, Congo Creek, Dairee Creek, Glenburg, Upper Clifton Downs, Errivilla, Bangemall, Onslow Creek, and Mount Augustus. At the last-named place as many as 76 natives were seen, and are reported to look well, and have abundance of bush food, a great contrast to last year. No complaints were made, and those on the relief list say they got their rations correctly. At the other stations mentioned the police found everything correct. At Bangemall Mr. Ayliffe reported a dry season in May, but he looks after his natives well. It is a lonely place, and a good many destitute are obliged to congregate there. Mr. Ayliffe reports that at about 15 miles from Bangemall the country which he has taken up is very suitable for a mission, and should he abandon it he will inform the department in case they desire to reserve it.

At Sharks Bay, Dr. Belgrave (late of Wyndham) is now stationed, and takes a great interest in native welfare. Natives find plenty of employment in the fisheries, and get good pay, working steadily and readily, living near their work, and seem very contented.

At Minilya Mr. and Mrs. McLeod are still doing their best for the improvement of the natives and the education of the children. In December they were supporting 26 native and half-caste children on this station, and the number was likely to increase. They have applications to take more children, but think it hard to run them in from hundreds of miles and support, train, and educate them at their own expense while there is a department to do so.

Some little discussion arose from a case in which a native was sentenced to one month's imprisonment, apparently for taking his wife from the station; but it was a misunderstanding which arose from an error in the depositions. These should have stated that the punishment was given for insubordination. The facts are as follows:—A rule is in vogue at Minilya Station that when natives are sent to work anywhere on the run where white men are employed in erecting pumps, or other such improvements, that no women are sent with them, but are retained at the household camp, and generally given work about the house or garden. The native in question was sent for a few days only to help at erecting a pumping station, but objected to go without his woman. Mr. McLeod would not relax the rule, so the native took away his woman by compulsion, and having thus broken the rule of the station was brought before a neighbouring Justice.

I think Mr. McLeod's regulation was perfectly correct and wise, although the error in the depositions might have appeared as if an injustice had been done, and I refer to the case as a suggestion for other station owners to take note of.

Two stations, Weenamia and Mungra, on the Upper Gascoyne, were closed down, and the Inspector of Police warned me that about 50 natives would be thrown out of employment, and I feared a large increase in expenditure for food, but I am glad to say these natives appear to have found work on the neighbouring stations. This little matter keeps constantly before me the fact that, as the runs are getting supplied with windmills and tanks in greater numbers each year, there will be less employment to be found for the natives, and consequently more demands on the State for their maintenance.

A short general report has been received from the Resident Magistrate at Carnarvon. (*Vide Appendix 8.*)

VICTORIA AND MURCHISON DISTRICTS.

The condition of the natives here in the old settled districts requires no special remarks, but my attention has been called to their wants towards the interior portions, where settlement is spreading, both in pastoral and mining pursuits, more especially at Black Range, situate about half-way between Mount Magnet diggings and Lawlers. I have had to make a new relieving station here. About 40 natives belong to that particular locality, with several invalids among them. A large parcel of blankets was sent up, and instructions given for necessary relief. The natives are reported to be a very quiet tribe, and have never misconducted themselves. They find their food there and to the North, for about 60 miles—emus and other game.

At Peak Hill and Eastward a good deal of new work has been done. One or two bad cases of injury and disease have come to my knowledge, and have been dealt with at the hospital. A new station has been made at "Star of the East." At Byro Plains, on the Upper Wooramel River, Messrs. Nairn attend to the needs of the natives, of whom there are a good many, but very few are on the relief list. There are about 20 relieving stations in these two districts, and no complaints have been made nor any serious matters reported.

THE CENTRAL DISTRICT.

Here there are about 20 relieving stations, but, except at Perth and Guildford, the numbers are few. Most of the natives are in employment, and pretty well civilised. I await eagerly the power that it is proposed the new Act shall give of collecting the natives on reserves. It is especially in these old settlements that it is advisable to do so on comparatively small reserves. The great difficulty which is now experienced in supplying relief and medical attention to old natives who live here, there, and everywhere, just as their fancy dictates, will be much obviated, and their misery will be much alleviated by the sheds and small houses which will be erected for them on these reserves. The power of supervision also will be much easier, and arrangements can be made with medical officers for frequent periodical visits. At the same time there are many little ways in which the natives could do something, either to enable them to purchase small comforts for themselves, or to recoup the State in some way for their expenditure. The troublesome way in which they persist in hanging about the towns, especially at Perth and Guildford, quite prevents any efforts to keep down drunkenness and immorality.

One or two new relievers have been appointed, but, on the whole, there is little change. I have not been able to give much personal inspection, as the natives are so very scattered and difficult to find when wanted. I have, however, continual reports from the police.

THE SOUTH-WESTERN DISTRICT.

There are about 15 relievers in this part, and the same may be said as of the Central District. There is plenty of work in the agricultural and pastoral portions, but the natives are gradually getting less in number. There are very few but what are civilised, and their wants are well attended to. During this late cold season, a few have dropped off from the inevitable colds which their mode of living brings on—among others, a native named Billy Kickett, who formerly gave much assistance to the explorers under Mr. (now Sir) John Forrest; he and his wife were in receipt of a special dole for his past services.

At Pinjarra a very old native, not only blind but very much diseased, has given much trouble and expense. It is impossible to move him, and I have had to build a large shelter for him, and to employ a cottager's wife to look after his wants and his warmth—a most unpleasant duty, for which I have to pay at a higher rate than elsewhere.

At Katanning and Guildford the urgency of having special camping places for the natives has been approved, and the selection of spots seems to have been a success.

SOUTH-EASTERN DISTRICT.

There are about 10 relievers in this district, and I have every reason to believe that the relieving is carried on properly at all of them.

All along the coast Eastward from Esperance is a very lonely country, inhabited chiefly by kangaroo-hunters, and there is some fear that the supply of kangaroo, the natural food of the natives, may be reduced too much. The rabbits are there, of course, in thousands, but the natives do not seem to care for them much; but possibly the kangaroos may last as long as the natives. I have been told by Mr. Castilla, who has been down there for many months in charge of the water-boring party, that the awful mutilations of the generative organs of both man and woman which are in vogue in that district militate much against the continuance of the race. The kangaroo hunters keep large camps of native assistants, and Mr. Castilla reports that they are really very kind to them—feed and clothe them well. On the one hand, should the kangaroos decline, there would be a scarcity of natural feed; on the other hand, should these kangaroo-hunters' camps cease to exist, the natives would lose many benefits. There is very little sickness among them, and very little crime is heard of, but still I cannot say that it does not exist. Mr. Ryan, J.P., my agent at Eucla, is most pressing for more police, but so far that department does not see its way to granting the request. Dr. Harrison, Resident Magistrate at Esperance, is a useful and energetic agent, keeping me well informed and closely scrutinising expenditure. He has sent me a very interesting report upon the suitability of Middle Island, which he strongly recommends as a native reserve. His report appears in Appendix 9.

I also append extracts from the report of a police patrol recently made in the district between Eucla and Eyre Telegraph Station. (Appendix 10.)

EASTERN GOLDFIELDS.

In this district, although there are not many actual relieving stations such as are found in other districts, a good deal of expense is incurred in paying for water and medical attentions. Thanks to the charity of the mining community generally, the State has not yet been called upon to incur the expenditure which I foresee it will have to face before very long. There are several hundred natives roaming about, rarely more than a few days in one place, during which time they beg and tire out the patience of the whites without doing much work for them, and I have received several letters complaining of the burden and nuisance which they are to the community. This cannot last long, and though I recommended last year the formation of rabbit destroying parties, I have not seen my way to carry out my ideas, nor has anyone approached me on the subject.

The recent wet seasons in the interior have given a great fillip to pastoral pursuits, and no doubt a good many of the natives on the goldfields are at present finding employment as horse boys, herdsmen, and camp attendants; but it is well known how these parts are visited frequently by long periods of drought, and no sooner will a dry season prevail than all the natives will probably become entirely dependent upon State aid.

The Coolgardie police report that in their camps they appear to have abundance of clothing, which they collect from residents in the town and suburbs; and plenty of food, as they are great scavengers, and are always very well treated in Coolgardie. As a rule they are very peaceful and give very little trouble.

From Kalgoorlie the Secretary of the Progress Committee has written to me, by instruction, with reference to prices of food, and complains that when in the town the natives become a general nuisance.

From Bulong I have received a similar letter, and hope that the proposed legislation will enable me to relieve these townships of this trouble. The Bulong Town Clerk also writes recommending action to be taken to keep the natives out of the towns. He says:—"No one wants to be harsh towards the unfortunate race, but for the sake of the natives themselves, and for the sake of the white population, some clearly defined line of demarcation must be adhered to, and my council look to your Board (Department) to take some steps which will show some tangible and practical results."

Such remarks as these make me earnestly hope for the increased power which the law should give me to deal decisively for the alleviation of the evils complained of.

At Menzies the cold has been very great recently, but plenty of blankets have been given out. They are reported not to be in want of food.

I give these few instances of my correspondence with residents on the goldfields.

MISSIONS.

These are the same as mentioned in my last Report, namely, Beagle Bay with branch at Disaster Bay, Sunday Island, New Norcia, and Middle Swan. Beagle Bay is under the management of the Rev. Father Walter, and a large number of natives are under his control. The sum of £250 a year has been given for some time past as a grant-in-aid; but recently, consequent upon Bishop Gibney's appeal to the Premier, the Cabinet have decided to substitute a capitation grant of 1s. per head per day on all children taken into this mission for training, and that 9d. per day be allowed for destitutes, etc., in place of 6d. as heretofore. From the accounts which come to me, the number is very variable, but the new system will no doubt show a much larger item in my annual expenditure. In such close proximity as this place is to Broome and the various pearling creeks, no doubt there will be a good deal of difficulty in keeping up any standard of morality; but this mission has so many difficulties to contend with, from its distance and the uncivilised nature of the country, that I look upon it at present as quite in its infancy. The country is a good one for cattle, I am told, and no doubt the herds, which I hear are now very considerable, will be a source of great profit before long, and possibly enable the mission to do without Government aid. In my opinion, if missions after a time find they cannot be self-supporting, it is better that an institution entirely under Government auspices should replace them.

The Sunday Island mission is also a young mission, and can never be very extensive, as the real population of the island does not exceed 100; but, possibly, the compactness of the property and the limited number of natives may be conducive to success. So far reports are most encouraging, and considering how few are the opportunities of self-support a great deal has been done. True, the manager expends his own income, in addition to what can be made by *bêche-de-mer*, etc., but the decision to grant him £100 a year out of Departmental funds was most gratefully accepted. A report by Dr. Wace, R.M., will be found in Appendix 2.

The New Norcia mission is now a very old institution, and seems really to be in its old age. From all accounts a great many of the natives are leaving this institution to find work elsewhere, or to take up land and make their living. I have had to do with a good many of these "off shoots" during the past year, and, as far as the half-castes are concerned, my opinion of their character is not at all a good one; they seem to me to be a great deal worse than full-blooded natives in the matter of drink and immorality.

The Anglican Mission at Middle Swan is carried on in conjunction with the Anglican Orphanage. There are a good many girls, but only a few boys, who are kept entirely separate. This is an old institution, and its system is quite crystallized. The girls are well taught in many of the branches required to make them good servants or good housekeepers. The boys are taught farm labour and elementary schooling. I have not had much experience among those who have been sent out into the world from this institution, but I have seen a few who have turned out well.

I think it will be a very good thing if all the schools in these institutions were made thoroughly subject to the Education Department, so that the training would assimilate somewhat to that in the Government school. If we are to bring up these children and let them loose as members of the community, they should be brought up to the satisfaction of those whose duty it is to supervise public instruction.

The small home at Ellensbrook for waifs and strays, who for various reasons cannot be received into the other institutions, is carried on in a practical manner, partly as a nursery for the little ones, and as a temporary refuge against evil influences for the bigger ones; their training is very practical and just that of most small farmers' children.

A new mission is in contemplation by the Presbyterian Church, and they are looking towards the south coast, somewhere in the neighbourhood of Esperance, as the locality for their experiment; but the matter is as yet in its early stages.

In consequence of a letter from a Mr. Malcolmson, which appeared in the London *Times* of 6th May, 1904, I required of the Inspector of Police at Roebourne a report, which will be found in Appendix No. 11.

I have, etc.,

HENRY C. PRINSEP,
Chief Protector of Aborigines.

ABORIGINES DEPARTMENT.

TABLE A.

Details of Relief to Aborigines and Half-castes in Western Australia, not including those in Institutions.

District.	Reliever and Station.	Blind.		Aged, Crippled, Diseased.		Destitute.		Total Natives. Station.		Total Natives. District.	
		M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
EAST KIMBERLEY ...	Thomson, J. C., Argyle Station ...	1	2	3	5	1	2	5	9	15	27
	Buchanan, Gordon Bros., Flora Valley ...	1	2	2	1	...	...	3	3
	Skinner, H. M., Wyndham ...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...
	Flinders, C. E., Hall's Cleek ...	1	1	2	5	...	...	3	6
	Green, D. W., Turkey Creek ...	1	5	1	3	1	1	3	9		
WEST KIMBERLEY ...	Park, Chas., Broome	2	2	4	2	6	56	74
	Tuckett, F. W., La Grange Bay ...	...	10	15	5	2	9	17	24	
	Filstead, C. E., Wallal ...	...	...	7	9	...	...	7	9
	Annear, C. J., Fitzroy ...	3	9	3	2	2	1	8	12		
	Hadley, F. S., Sunday Island ...	2	2	1	4	...	...	3	6
	Edgar and Biddles, Yurdagurra ...	...	1	1	4	4	...	5	5	
	Groves, F., Derby ...	...	...	...	...	3	4	3	4
	Beagle Bay Mission ...	6	1	2	2	...	1	8	4		
Roe, G. H., Thangoo ...	1	3	2	...	...	1	3	4	
NORTH-WEST ...	Byron, F. W., Balla Balla	3	7	3	7	38	69
	McRae, Straker, Croydon ...	...	3	2	4	...	...	2	7
	Padbury & Loton, Millstream ...	...	3	1	4	...	...	1	7
	Blythe (P. C.), Tableland ...	3	7	4	...	...	...	7	7
	Meares, J. G., Sherlock ...	...	...	2	3	...	...	2	3
	Gellam, A. C., Chiritta ...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	2
	Church, J. H., Mt. Florence ...	2	...	...	...	...	...	2	...
	Pead, W. J., Woodstock ...	...	...	2	2	...	...	2	2
	N.W. Mercantile Co., Coesack ...	...	...	3	2	...	...	3	2
	Watson, H. J., Cossack ...	...	...	3	2	...	...	3	2
	Edwards, G., Port Hedland ...	2	3	...	3	...	...	2	6
	Anderson, R., Marble Bar ...	1	2	3	6	...	...	4	8
	Hall, H. A. ...	...	...	3	2	...	...	3	2
Walshe, R. J., Mosquito Creek ...	...	7	4	2	...	...	4	9	
Wilding, Anderson, Mosquito Creek ...	...	5	...	...	...	...	...	5	
ASHBURTON and GASCORNE	Edgar, A. W., De Grey	25	25	25	25	108	135
	Hulme, G. W., Gorge ...	1	...	3	2	...	...	4	2
	Radley (P. C.), Onslow ...	2	1	5	6	1	...	8	7		
	Carter, Thos., Pt. Cloates ...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	2
	Ayliffe, St. Barbe, Bangemall ...	...	...	9	10	...	...	9	10
	Masters, D., Wooramal ...	...	...	3	5	...	...	3	5
	Lefroy, G. and W., Yanyeariddy ...	...	...	3	1	...	...	3	1
	Martin, J. H., Hamelin ...	...	...	1	3	...	...	1	3
	Hearman, J., Middilya ...	...	1	2	2	...	...	2	3
	McLeod, D. N., Minilya ...	...	...	...	13	...	...	...	13
	Campbell, R., Booloogoorra ...	...	...	3	1	...	...	3	1
	Munro and Hogarth, Doorawarra ...	...	...	2	1	...	...	2	1
	Binning, Thos., Mooka ...	...	...	1	3	1	1	2	4
	Spry (P.C.), Junction Station ...	...	...	7	20	...	...	7	20
	Hatch, W., Onslow Creek ...	...	...	1	3	...	...	1	3
	Fitzpatrick, R. E., Dairy Creek ...	...	...	2	5	...	...	2	5
	Bush, R. E., Clifton Downs ...	1	...	9	5	...	...	10	5
	Stanley & Francis, Denham, Sharks Bay ...	...	...	4	1	...	...	4	1
Baston, G., Carnarvon ...	...	...	11	12	...	...	11	12	
Gooch, G., Wandagee ...	...	...	2	6	...	...	2	6	
Phillips, S. J., & Co., Mt. Augustus ...	...	...	6	4	...	...	6	4	
Bunbury, M. C. R., Williambury ...	...	...	3	2	...	...	3	2	
MURCHISON AND VICTORIA	Wittenoom, F., Boolardy ...	1	1	1	1	108	135
	Nairn Bros., Byro ...	...	4	3	1	...	...	3	5
	Turner (P.C.), Mt. Wittenoom ...	...	...	6	9	...	...	6	9
	Sharpe, J., Wooleen ...	...	1	2	1	...	1	2	3	
	Ogilvie, A. J., Murchison House ...	2	...	...	3	...	...	2	3
	Anderson, H., Meka ...	...	...	1	3	...	...	1	3
	Dixon, E. M., Nannine ...	...	...	3	1	...	...	3	1
	Bell, W., Namorotharra ...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	2
	Cordell, P. C., Peak Hill ...	1	...	1	1	...	...	2	1
	Carlyon, R. J., Yuin ...	...	1	2	3	...	...	2	4
	Pollard, P. C., Yalgoo ...	1	2	2	7	...	1	3	10		
	Walse & Sons, Mileura ...	...	...	1	2	...	...	1	2
	McCarthy, Pinda ...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	2
Shiel, J., Gullewa ...	...	1	2	5	...	...	2	6	

TABLE A—continued.

District.	Reliever and Station.	Blind.		Aged, Crippled, Diseased.		Destitute.		Total Natives. Station.		Total Natives. District.	
		M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
MURCHISON AND VICTORIA—continued.	Mitchell, S., Geraldine...	2	2	40	27
	McGuiness (P. C.), Field's Find ...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	2
	Woolf, J., Northampton ...	...	...	4	5	4	3	8	8
	Stone, H. E., Geraldton ...	...	...	3	2	1	...	4	2
	Clinch, G., Field's Find ...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	2
	Broad, R., Wydgee ...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1
	Mitchell, S., Yallong ...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1
Brand, A., Lynton ...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	2	
EASTERN GOLDFIELDS	Cable, Lardner, Jones, Kurnalpi	15	...	15	25	48
	Braddock & Co., Kookynie ...	...	...	...	...	10	10	10	10
	Counsel & Co., Coolgardie ...	...	...	...	...	...	4	...	4
	Child, W. M., Mulline ...	...	...	...	...	2	2	2	2
	McAlpine, D., Mulwarrie ...	...	...	5	5	...	...	5	5
	Cadey Bros., Mulwarrie ...	...	...	...	...	4	6	4	6
	Smith, H. G. S., Wiluna ...	...	2	4	4	...	...	4	6
CENTRAL DISTRICT...	Walton, A. G., Wogalong	2	3	2	3	50	58
	Drummond, J., Yeri Yeri ...	...	...	1	1	1	...	2	1
	Smith, C. C., Beambine ...	1	1	2	3	...	...	3	4
	Edwards, C., York ...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	2
	Chitty, C., Badbatting ...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	...
	Leak Bros., Mooroonoppin ...	...	...	...	...	4	2	4	2
	Wells, E., Bindoon ...	...	...	...	...	1	1	1	1
	Heal, C. & J., Carolin ...	1	1	1	1	...	...	2	2
	Munyard & Kenworthy and Phillips & Co., Perth	...	...	...	...	9	8	9	8
	New Norcia ...	...	...	...	...	...	7	...	7
	Taylor, C. L., Mt. Stirling ...	...	...	...	...	1	3	1	3
	Ryan, M., Badgin ...	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	3
	Tuckey, C., Mandurah ...	...	...	4	3	...	...	4	3
	Adams, J., Mangowine ...	...	...	2	3	...	...	2	3
	Padbury, Wm., Guildford ...	...	...	6	2	4	5	10	7
	Clarkson, B. D., Newcastle ...	...	...	1	1	...	...	1	1
	Sewell, C. M., Mt. Caroline ...	...	...	1	1	...	...	1	1
	Molyneux, C., Northam ...	...	...	3	2	...	...	3	2
	Moore, S. F., Minginew ...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	2
	Gillett, M. A., Dingup ...	...	...	2	1	...	...	2	1
Kelly, B., Worramal ...	...	...	1	1	...	...	1	1	
Bull and Stevens, Newcastle	...	...	1	1	...	...	1	1	
SOUTH WESTERN ...	Brockman, F. L., Burnside	1	1	1	1	32	44
	Barnett, E. D., Albany ...	...	...	3	3	...	...	3	3
	Haley, A. G., Moodiarrup ...	...	...	1	3	...	...	1	3
	Lockhart, R., Busselton ...	...	...	3	1	...	...	3	1
	Jones, W. T., jun., Kojonup ...	1	3	...	2	...	...	1	5
	Muir, T., Deeside ...	...	...	1	3	...	...	1	3
	Brown, C. F., Arthur River ...	...	...	3	2	...	...	3	2
	Guerin, E., Busselton ...	...	...	1	...	1	1	2	1
	Rogers, W. T., Katanning ...	1	...	3	10	...	...	4	10
	Spratt, M. A., Arthur River ...	...	...	5	5	...	...	5	5
	Urquhart, T., Pinjarra ...	1	...	...	...	1	5	2	5
	Lowe, S., Busselton ...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...
	Adams, J. E., Mount Kokeby ...	...	...	...	...	1	1	1	1
	Parke, W. B., Mount Sterling ...	...	...	4	4	...	...	4	4
SOUTH-EASTERN ...	Ponton Bros. & Sharpe, Balladonna	3	5	3	5	43	41
	Gorman, P., Bremer Bay ...	...	...	...	...	9	5	9	5
	Moir, J., Cape Riche ...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...
	Dimer, H., Israelite Bay ...	1	3	...	...	...	...	1	3
	Lee Steere, —, Lynburn ...	...	...	1	3	2	2	3	5
	Dempster Bros., Esperance...	...	...	1	1	3	4	4	5
	Do. Fraser Range ...	...	...	1	1	4	1	5	2
	Tablot, Bridge, and Anderson	...	...	...	...	15	7	15	7
	Dunn Bros., Coconup ...	...	...	...	...	...	5	...	5
	Hassell, J., Jerrinunup ...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	2
McNamara, —, Mount Barker ...	...	...	2	2	...	...	2	2	
		39	91	272	352	96	125	407	568		
		975						975			

TABLE B.
Convictions of Aborigines, 1903-4.

Offence.	No. of Cases.	No. in 1902-3.
Killing cattle and taking flesh	34	61
Stealing, larceny, etc.	20	18
Assault, threatening, etc.	7	6
Manslaughter ... ..	...	1
Absconding from custody	7	27
Absconding from service	7	4
Drunkenness	23	11
Killing horses and injuring property	3	...
Supplying liquor to other aborigines	2	...
Murder	1	...
Total	104	128

TABLE C.
Distribution of Blankets.

Kimberley, East	81
Kimberley, West	268
North-West	183
Ashburton	70
Gascoyne	180
Victoria (including Murchison)	344
Eastern Goldfields	575
South-East	132
Central	179
Southern	208
Total	2,220

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TO

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Appendix 1.

Report by Manager, Sunday Island Mission.

To the Chief Protector of Aborigines.

SIR,

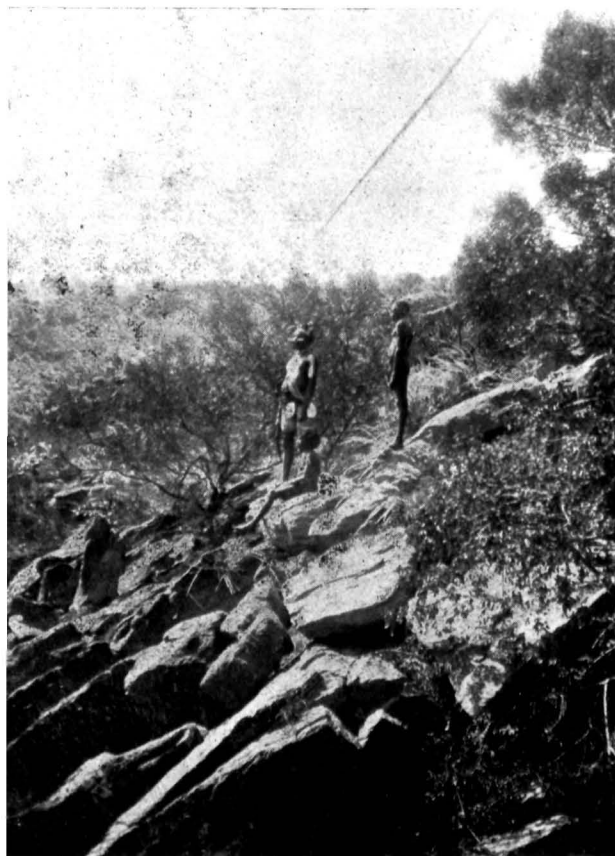
Sunday Island, 19th July, 1904.

I beg to report to you our half-yearly account of our progress here. During the whole of the half-year we have had 23 children at school—13 girls and 10 boys—and I am very pleased to be able to say that their progress has been very fair indeed, and their general behaviour also has much improved; also their attendance has been constant, with very few exceptions. The most of the teaching this last quarter has fallen on Mr. Bird, as I have been away two months off and on in Derby, doing work for our support. You will see by my balance to what we are indebted to that two months' work, and it was much needed, as the low price of mother o' pearl shell and the scarcity of trepang would have left us much behindhand this year. I used 10 of the young men from our mission to do the work in carrying the cargo from Derby to the Robinson River by boat, and we did the whole working eight weeks, and the sum mentioned in the balance sheet is the net return of that two months' work. Our health during the whole half-year has been very good, with very little sickness, and I am glad to say that we have no deaths to report. There have been more natives at our mission this half-year than ever before, and the increase is mostly children from the mainland. We have had no interference this last six months with any of our natives from the pearling labour, and I am glad to say that Dr. Wace is very much interested in perfecting some better way by which Cygnet Bay may be thoroughly supervised during the whole of the lay-up season. The general behaviour of the whole of the natives has been good, more especially since Dr. Wace's visit, as I brought him here, and he remained with us from Friday until Monday. I think that he will report to you of his visit. We have drawn out the plans of a new building, to be a place of worship as well as a school, and we are at present cutting the blocks to build it on and have already ordered the timber for its erection, and I hope, with economy, to be able to afford the iron, doors, windows, etc., before the end of the year. We are also getting a small organ from Nicholson's, of Perth, and I thank the Lord that we are at last able to afford it. We are extending our banana plantation all the time, and I think that it will be a great help to us in the future, as well as a great attraction to children, for we use a great many amongst them. Our cows are now calving, and we are able during this cold weather to make butter. We have not heard a word from Mr. Bradburn, and, although we are greatly in need of another assistant, it would be a very heavy burden with wife, mother-in-law, and children, and I feel sure they can have no idea of the life they are willing to embrace, though Dr. Wace is, I believe, reporting to you his opinion of the island as a residence for ladies. You will notice the heavy expenditure that we have had to incur in repairs to our cutter; but she much needed it, as she has done nearly six years' work for us without anything being done to her. We shall try and send some trepang away between this and the commencement of the rains, as, by leaving it alone for the last seven or eight months, it has started to increase again. The children are having their summer holidays now, since the first of the month, and we do not commence school until the 15th of next month. Taken as a whole, I think I can say that these last six months show a more decided advance than before, more especially in the general conduct of the natives, both as regards us and also socially amongst themselves; less quarrels, and I think that their whole social life has been much purer, and the general outlook is much brighter, and our scope of usefulness seems to be much wider, though we begin to feel that we require more help as the work is becoming far too heavy for Mr. Bird and me, and we should welcome assistance heartily, as I think that very soon we shall number considerably more than 30 on our school books when we get our new building finished. It becomes very anxious work to make both ends meet. As we begin to extend our operations, the expenses seem to advance by leaps and bounds. I am very glad to say that my health has much improved since the cold weather set in.

Now, I think I have given you a summary of everything, and thanking you for the continued interest that you are showing us in our work,

I am, etc.,

SYDNEY HADLEY.



**ABORIGINES OF SUNDAY ISLAND. SUNDAY ISLAND
MISSION.**

(From Photo by R. H. Wace, Esq., Resident Magistrate, Derby.)

The blacks themselves are a fine healthy lot of men of good physique. They made in the past the finest divers on the coast, and the tales, authentic enough, of their powers of endurance in the water, and the immense distances that they have swum, sound almost fabulous.

Apart from the house and kitchen and store, there are two buildings, one for the men on one side, and another for the girls on the opposite side.

There is also a general encampment composed of the shelters of the married blacks. The whole place is clean and comfortable.

The garden is a great success, the banana plantation having been a source of considerable income during the past year.

I would here point out to you the one militating evil. It has been the custom of the owners of pearling boats to encamp on the mainland just opposite the island at Cygnet Bay. This laying up place is situated between the three missions of Beagle Bay, Disaster Bay, and Sunday Island, and has been the constant source of trouble to Sunday Island Mission, as doubtless (though I do not know from information from themselves) to Beagle Bay and Disaster Bay Missions. Young girls are claimed by husbands to whom they have been promised, taken from school, and then prostituted in exchange for liquor among the brown crews of the luggers, coming back, when they do return, suffering from contagious diseases.

I would strongly urge that something be done in the matter, if the landing of crews is legal or unavoidable, to render this traffic impossible. I do not wish to hamper you with suggestions, but I would impress the fact that one constable, as sent last season, is wholly inadequate to meet the trouble, as he spends most of his time bringing prisoners down for trial. The missions themselves could, doubtless, place suggestions before you.

When I have been to the Robinson River I will send you a report in continuation.

I have, etc.,

RICHARD H. WACE,
Resident Magistrate.

Appendix 3.

Report by R.M., Derby, on condition of Aborigines in West Kimberley District.

From the Resident Magistrate, Derby, to H. Prinsep, Esq., Chief Protector of Aborigines.

SIR,

14th June, 1904.

In compliance with your request, I have the honour to report to you that I have made several visits up the Fitzroy River, and made personal inquiry into the condition of the blacks. I have also paid a visit to Sunday Island, and inspected the station under Mr. Hadley's care. I had purposed also going to see those at Robinson River, with the intention of informing you regarding the actual condition of those aboriginals for whom rations were asked. I was, however, prevented by a pressure of work in the hospital at the time when I could have gone in a lugger that was calling there.

I propose, however, going there in about two months' time, when I think I can get a passage in the "Elsie" cutter.

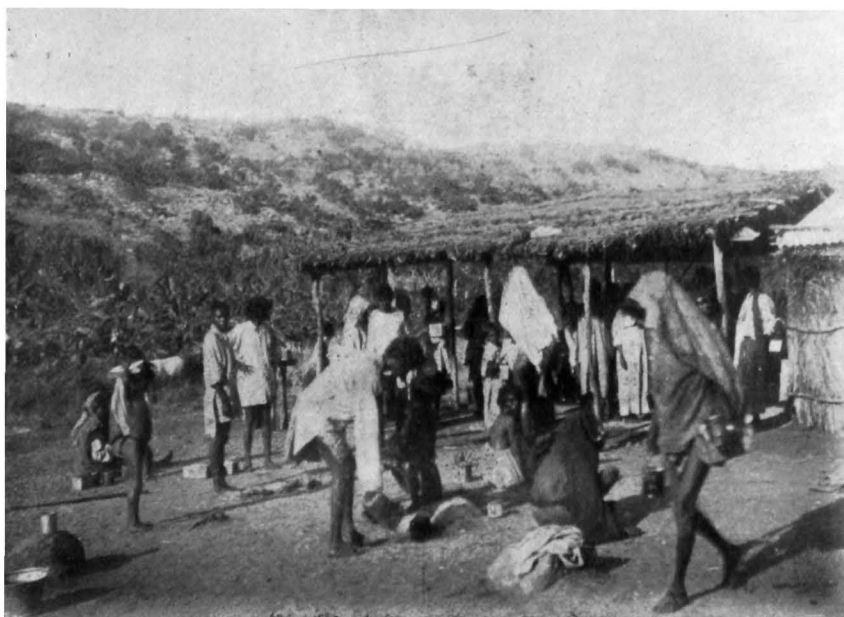
I have found in the case of the aboriginals of the Fitzroy River that they are well looked after on the station, and that there is not as much disease as I had expected among them. They all look well fed, and they are mostly well clad.

I have, etc.,

RICHARD H. WACE,
Resident Magistrate.



GENERAL VIEW OF MISSION.



ABORIGINES AT MISSION. VIEWS AT SUNDAY ISLAND MISSION.
(From Photographs by R. H. Wace, Esq., Resident Magistrate, Derby.)

Appendix 4

*Report by Dr. Blick, Acting Resident Magistrate, Broome, on the Condition of Aborigines in District.**From the Resident Magistrate, Broome, to the Chief Protector of Aborigines, Perth.*

Sir,

16th July, 1904.

I have been making inquiries and personally inquiring into the state of the aborigines in my district. So far as I can ascertain, their condition is as good as could be expected of such a race in touch with civilisation. Drink and prostitution are the chief evils from which the natives here suffer. Of the first of these I feel confident to say it has of late decreased owing to efforts of police and magistracy. The second is, however, a problem of far greater difficulty to deal with, and I must confess to seeing but one solution, and that the strictest confining aboriginals to reserves. As to cases of physical cruelty, I have never heard of one in Broome District during the four years I have been here. Apart from those suffering from syphilis and allied diseases, there is not a happier people living than the aborigines here.

I enclose reports from Father Nicholas, who probably knows more of the natives than any man in the North here, also from the police sergeant, bush policemen, and others, who have opportunities of seeing and knowing the condition of aborigines. With regard to the indenturing and signing on of natives, they are always pleased to do so, and had such a thing as pressure to do so, or unjust treatment followed signing on; the R.M. here, Mr. Warton, would have certainly been appealed to at once, for I know he had the fullest confidence of the aboriginals, and since I have been doing his work I have striven to maintain that feeling and protect them as much as lay in my power.

With regard to the work and compensation of Father Nicholas I have nothing to do beyond the fact that I recognise in him a hard and, I believe, a disinterested worker among the aborigines all round here. I hardly know the connection between him and the Beagle Bay Mission, but think he has done a great deal here entirely on his own initiative. I agree entirely with what you say *re* the mission in your letter dated 17th June, 1904, as to promises referred to in that letter. Mr. Warton was then here as R.M. and I can say nothing as to what took place between him and Father Nicholas, or again with Mr. Olivey. With regard to the native referred to in your letter, "Hector," I had him for a long time as patient in Broome Hospital some two years ago, and he was discharged as incurable; still Father Nicholas has been told both by myself as R.M.O. and by my assistant that anything in way of medicine he may want he can have from us. The case is a very severe case of syphilis, and treatment, even prolonged in hospital has had little effect. The case came to us too late to do more than attempt to palliate. You will notice that in his letter Father Nicholas complains of the prostitution of aboriginal women by Asiatics. I am sorry to say that that is true, not only of Asiatics, but also of whites. Father Walton, the head of the Beagle Bay Mission, has offered to collect and train, both in elementary and technical education, the fatherless half-castes and other aboriginal children who are destitute in Broome, and I have given him my consent to take them, subject to your approval. I can only add to this my full assurance that the allegations of physical cruelty and slavery are absolutely false when applied to Broome district.

I have, etc.,

G. W. BLICK,
Acting R.M.

Appendix 5.

Extract from P.C. Kuhlmann's Patrol Report, January and February, 1904.

LA GRANGE BAY.

1-1-04.— * * I saw a good number of empty liquor bottles in their camps at Cape Bossut, and I am certain that some of them had had grog given them during my absence to Broome, and they had also plenty of flour, rice, tobacco, etc., also new clothes, which the Asiatics had given them for the use of their women.

2-1-04.—(MIDDLE CREEK.)— * * I found four natives drunk, and about a quarter of a bottle of gin in one of their camps. * *

3-1-04.— * * I visited Peear and Cowan Creeks; some natives had been drunk there.

7-1-04.—(COWAN CREEK) * * "Secured four gins sleeping with Malays, took them all with me to telegraph station and let them go. * * * A white man here, made a great deal of fuss because I took the gins out of his camp * * * as a matter of fact this man is procuring the gins for his crew (he has a boat), and keeps a number round his house for that purpose, presumably on the pretence that they are his working natives, and the diver and some of the crew sometimes sleep at the house. I took some of them away, but he will try and bully them back again if I have to leave here for a few days. * * *

16-1-04.—There were 14 boats in Bossut, and four off Middle Creek, and six in Cowan Creek. I hunted all natives out, there were about 150 altogether in the three creeks. The white man before-mentioned had a good lot of gins around his crew's camp, and his house gins were there also; I hunted them away again, and he got very nasty and said he would report me for taking his niggers for my own purpose." * * *

1-2-04.—* * * At Angostinia I found that two young gins had gone into Bossut Creek the previous night and returned in the morning with two bags of flour and some rice and clothes, and left at midday, and were going into Whistler's Creek, where there were two luggers going for water; I followed them up and took the things from them and distributed it amongst the old ones, also tobacco.

2-2-04.—* * * Visited Middle Creek; eight boats in there. Upon arrival at camp I ascertained that Frank, native, with his five gins had gone into Creek previous night during my absence, also native Joe and one gin, and received two bags flour and rice. I made them bring it to camp, and gave it out to old natives. * * *

9-2-04.—* * * I visited the native camp at Pudnapper Creek and saw 20 of them, and ascertained that three Malays came ashore in dinghy the previous night and camped with three gins. I hunted the natives out to the bush. This creek is 20 miles from the police camp by land direct, and only six or seven miles by water, and therefore cannot go there very often, especially as rains have made travelling heavy. * * *

14-2-04.—* * * During patrol around creeks I saw two gins in mangroves, having sneaked away from main camp, and had evidently been with Asiatics as they left their swag behind, and there were 28 sticks of tobacco and singlets and sarongs. I took them to police camp, and will share it out with natives. * * *

22-2-04.—* * * I removed several women from Cowan Creek, and there were two women camped with a man named * * * who has been camped near the creek spelling his horses; I took them up to Telegraph Station, and Mr. Tuckett took particulars from them *re* living with man named, and I put them out to main camp. * * *

29-2-04.—* * * returned by way of Cape Frazier, and saw some natives there and four luggers close in shore. (*See Special Report.*) I went to Bossut on account of seeing native tracks that way, and after some trouble I found the camp and eight Malays in their camps. I sent them on in charge of native assistants, and the Malays got quite nasty and said I had no right to interfere with them as there was no law to prevent them, and they started to follow the gins, but I got four of them handcuffed together and put them right back to their dinghy. The camp was nearly two miles from their boats.

Appendix 6.

Extracts from Patrol Reports of P.C. Kuhlmann, and remarks by Sub-Inspector Duncan, April, 1904.

Special Report relative to Natives at Whistler's Creek.

I have to report that, on the 15th April, I went to Whistlers and took all the natives in that I could gather, about 120, and, between the 15th and 21st, they filled 38 luggers with water, and I received on behalf of natives 87 bags rice and flour from the crews of luggers. I had the natives camped near my camp, and warned the coloured men that if they came into the camps I would chain them up, and have to state that I chained up 14 altogether; and I have to look round the camps every hour or so. The natives get fed whilst carrying water, and when the boats are all finished and away out of the creek they carry rations to my camp, and they come for it when they want it, which is practically every day.

It was my intention to keep them altogether, and have them cutting firewood for sale to the boats; and must state that I could dispose of tons of firewood, which is easily cut by the natives, had I means of doing so. *Tomahawks and boat are required* and several other things. However, on the 21st April, I had the rations taken to my camp, and told them to stay about until my return, and told my native assistant to feed them.

I had to go to Broome on police business, and did not return until the 29th, and found that the natives had all gone down to Cape Joubert, all but about 20, and next day I went with them to Whistler's Creek, and there were plenty boats there for water, and I could not get at the other natives as they were on the islands in Joubert Creek. The 20 natives I had in Whistler's Creek filled up 10 boats and received 10 bags flour and rice.

If I, therefore, could keep the natives cutting firewood during the neap tides, when the springs come on they can carry water and they have not to work very hard when there is such a lot. They can earn enough food carrying water to last whilst cutting firewood, and if this scheme is approved of the wood could be paid for in cash, which would purchase tobacco for them, and perhaps clothes, and it would also stop this immorality which takes place during Saturday and Sunday when the crews come ashore. I have been here over 12 months and have long ago come to the conclusion that it would take a regiment of soldiers to keep them away from the boats unless they are kept together, but it is of no use trying this, and when the natives are together let them go, as now I have to keep going to get them together again on account of my week's absence to Broome. Most of the pearlers that come into the

creek speak very highly of the present scheme of carrying water, and would be glad to purchase firewood also, as it means a lot to them, as the quicker they get wood and water the better for them, and the crews are not so anxious to remain when I am there, as they cannot get women, and I trust that this meets with approval.

B. H. KUHLMANN,
Constable No. 550.

La Grange Bay, 2-5-04.

The Commissioner of Police.

The system adopted by Kuhlmann in collecting the natives together and making them work for the rations is a very good one, although at present open to abuse, as there is no means—other than relying on the honesty of the constable—in checking the receipt and issues.

I have had conversations with some of the pearlers, and I believe the majority of them are in favour of the wood and water being supplied to them in the way suggested, and are willing to pay cash for same, provided the charges are reasonable. This, they say, would prevent their crews from landing, and would also be a saving of several days ashore, as against their present method of getting wood and water.

I would suggest that a supply of tomahawks and a small dinghy be sent to Kuhlmann, and he be instructed to keep those natives who are willing to work together, in a camp close to the principal watering place, and make them cut wood and carry water as required. A charge could be made, and those of the pearlers who wished to avail themselves of this could come in, load up, and go out again the same day without allowing their crews to land and come in contact with the females as at present.

The constable could be provided with the necessary books for keeping an account of the wood and water supplied, and the amount received for same.

The amount realised in this way would provide sufficient food, etc., for the natives, and would also go a long way in paying the cost of keeping the constable stationed there.

Some such scheme is worthy of consideration.

P. J. DUNCAN,
Sub-Inspector.

20/5/04

Appendix 7.

Report from Resident Magistrate, Marble Bar, re conditions of Natives.

From the Resident Magistrate, Pilbara, to the Chief Protector of Aborigines, Perth.

There is nothing of importance to report in connection with the natives for the half year; everything appears to be going smoothly between employer and employee, judging from the report of the police officers patrolling the country.

The natives are reported as generally being well fed, clothed, and cared for. Very few offences by the natives have come under my notice in the Court, and each case dealt with has been reported to you separately.

The blankets, I am informed, arrived just in time for the cold weather, and have been distributed in the usual way by the police.

Marble Bar, 1st July, 1904.

AXEL OSTLUND,
Resident Magistrate.

Appendix 8.

Report from Resident Magistrate, Gascoyne, re condition of Natives.

From Resident Magistrate to Chief Protector of Aborigines.

Carnarvon, 7th June, 1904.

In reply to your wire asking for a report on the condition of the aborigines in this district, I have the honour to inform you that the relations between the aborigines and their employers are in a most satisfactory state. Only two complaints from employers since last year. No crimes of any sort have been committed by aboriginals within the last three months. Their health has been fairly good; one or two old natives have died from colds, and lately a good many have had bad colds, but they are now getting better. The medical officer has been attending to the sick. In conclusion I may state that in future I will report at the end of each quarter.

C. D. V. FOSS,
Resident Magistrate.

Appendix 9.

Report by Resident Magistrate, Esperance, on Suitability of Middle Island for a Native Reserve.

From the Resident Magistrate, Esperance, to Chief Protector of Aborigines, Perth.

SIR,

19th April, 1904.

In accordance with my previous letter, I took advantage of a special trip which was being made by the s.s. "Dawn" (an opportunity which very seldom occurs) and proceeded to Middle Island on Friday, returning here on Sunday. We had a phenomenally rough trip, and as I had been ill I would have chosen any other time had such been possible. I found the island very much as I expected from reports of those who had visited it—an ideal segregation camp for natives. Being over four miles long by about two wide (in the widest part), they would not feel imprisoned there, the surface being so diversified as to give the impression of a larger area than the 3,000 acres the chart states it to contain. The western end rises as a rounded cone of bare granite to a height of about 600ft. But the northern side varies from gently undulating to flat land, and is composed of detritus from red granite, carrying innumerable minute shells. All this part has probably been formerly a rookery for muttonbirds (sooty petrel), which were apparently, as is their custom, "fallowing" it, meanwhile breeding on Goose Island, which is separated by a channel of not more than half-a-mile in width; consequently the soil is rich and has been proved to grow potatoes and onions to perfection. Thirty acres were cleared and fenced by Messrs. Sandford, of Adelaide, two or three years ago, but at such a distance they could not get value for their expenditure or supervise their men, so they have, I understand, relinquished their lease and abandoned their idea of growing potatoes for the goldfields. Being insular, the climate is free from the winds so objectionally prevalent on the mainland bays and so destructive to fruit trees. These, I believe, would do well on Middle Island, as part of it has a clay subsoil. The scrub is mostly light, and could be easily and cheaply cleared. A good deal could be rolled down by a mallee roller and burnt. There are patches of heavier timber, including yates, and plenty of spars suitable for building and masts for boats; in fact, with the timber available, the granite slabs, and the excellent mortar lime on the ground, any building necessary for your overseer could be very cheaply erected. There are innumerable iguanas on the island which would provide food for the blacks, and which have apparently nearly exterminated the snakes as only two small ones have been seen by the four people who have now lived there for about three months. Tamma are so plentiful that two or three are snared every night (with onion bait) within a hundred yards of the camp. It is found that with the loose soil and the abundance of grubs, fowls thrive uncommonly well and could be reared on a large scale. The Salt Lake, which is about 50 acres in extent, is a gory Indian red—very curious and interesting. The reason for this deep coloration has, so far as I can learn, not yet been determined; but the salt is shown by analysis to be exceptionally pure and equal to that from Pink Lake, which costs 9s. 6d. per ton for wharfage and cartage and to place aboard ship at Esperance. As the Middle Island supply is separated by a sandhill of only about 150 yards wide from a point at which it could be shipped, the salt should, if a little capital to erect a boat jetty and tram were available, be obtainable at a rate below that now paid.

And I see no reason why Government should not utilise native labour on this industry, and so bring down the cost of such an establishment as I recommend to a minimum. The little bays abound with fish, and rabbits and mutton birds from Goose Island, with wild geese from Mile Island, and pigeon and other game from Middle Island, would obviate the necessity for any other supply of animal food. The blacks would I believe, grow plenty of vegetables—for which they have acquired a taste when they can get them—if they knew they would get what they grew. There is no difficulty about a fresh water supply, as there is a well giving enough for the present residents (who have also a native, Moses, with them). Wells could be multiplied of larger size, and the gnamma holes in the granite are now full, though some want cleaning out. Mackay, who has just been appointed Rabbit Inspector for this district, is leaving shortly to take up his new duties.

He has been recording the rainfall in three check tins, and is of opinion that it is considerably heavier than on the mainland, though of course his observations have not extended over any length of time. Mackay thinks Middle Island would make a good pig farm, and that the pigs would root out the iguanas. When there was a regular service to Esperance from Adelaide all vessels used to make for shelter to Middle Island in bad weather. The s.s. Dawn and sailing vessels trading along the coast do so still, as it is the best harbour on the South coast.

Middle Island is only four or five miles from the mainland, from which the natives could be taken across easily. I shall be glad to have your views on above report.

I am, etc.,

W. A. HARRISON, R.M.

Appendix 10.

Extract from Police Patrol Report on country between Eucla and Eyre.

Report of Constable Jas. G. Lynch relative to patrolling District West of Eucla.

I beg to report that on the morning of the 8th inst., I left Eucla on patrol Westward. Visited Mr. A. C. Beadon at Knowsley, some 30 miles from Eucla. He is a grazier, and keeps about 12 natives, who kill kangaroos and dingoes for him. He had no complaints to make, and apparently gets on excellently with the natives, who look remarkably well and happy. They told me they get plenty of clothes and rations. For the last two years Mr. Beadon has had a very bad time with his stock on account of the rabbits and drought. At present he is condensing water for his few remaining stock. He told me he lost his two last horses with poverty a week or two before I arrived there, he being now left with four working bullocks to cart his rations from the coast. On the 9th inst. I started for Mundrabillia, which is sixty-five miles from Eucla, and owned by Talbot, Bridge, and Anderson. I arrived there on the morning of the 10th inst. Mr. A. Scott, the manager, has one European working for him besides about eight natives. * * * * * I received no complaints and found everything quiet, and left there same afternoon for R. Blackburn's camp, a kangaroo hunter, some fifteen miles south; he employs about eight natives killing kangaroos for the skins. The natives appear to be well fed and clothed, I also found everything quiet there, and received no complaints.

I being informed that there were no other camps or settlers between Mundrabillia and Eyre, excepting one man named David Boxer, who is caretaker at the Government boring plant at Madura, and I paying such a high price for the hire of camels, decided to return to Eucla, which I accordingly did on the evening of the 12th inst.

The rabbits I found to be very scarce at present about Eucla, they apparently having eaten themselves completely out; and those that have not died have travelled farther Westward.

Kangaroos are becoming very scarce in the Eucla district. I believe there has been wholesale slaughter of both young and old in that district for the last five or six years, and I feel sure that if some steps are not taken immediately to protect the kangaroos in this district, in a very short time they will be almost exterminated, the natives now who are not employed by the Europeans find it very difficult indeed to get a kangaroo for food.

Mr. Ryan, J.P., at Eucla, complained to me about a case that was reported to him some time ago by a native. That a man * * * had taken his (the native's) woman away from him, and that he could not get her back again. Mr. Ryan states that this is not the first case of the kind that has occurred in the Eucla district.

I made inquiries, and found that the native and his woman had been working on the station. The native left, taking his woman with him, but * * * persuaded her to come back to him, which she did. I understand that any of the native women can be coaxed away from their men by giving them presents and promises of others. One could not be surprised to hear of trouble between the Europeans and native men emanating from the cause above-mentioned.

I left Eucla by the s.s. Dawn on the 16th. She called at Eyre, and I went ashore for a couple of hours. Visited the postmaster (Mr. Fletcher) and his assistants (T. Breen and W. Grant), the only residents of that place. There were no complaints, and everything was quiet. Therefore I continued my journey to station, arriving here on the 19th inst.

JAS. G. LYNCH,
Constable No. 482.

Appendix 11.

Report by Sub-Inspector of Police, Roebourne, on statements made in letter by Mr. W. Malcolmson, in London "Times," 6th May, 1904.

The *Times* (Weekly Edition), London, Friday, 6th May, 1904.

ABORIGINES OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

To the Editor of the *Times*.

"Sir,—Agent General Lefroy says, 'The aborigines of Australasia are admitted to be one of the lowest types of humanity.' Yet the Western Australian Government passed pages of Acts and clauses to rob them of all liberty, and to bind this low type of people to work without payment. By the Act of 1892, Clause 2, if the aboriginal 'neglects his work, deserts, or quit his work without the consent of his master, or shall commit any other breach of his contract, he is liable to three months' imprisonment, with or without hard labour.' Under the Act of 1893, any single J.P. can sentence a native up to three years

upon conviction. Many 'indentured' natives cannot speak or understand English. Mr. Lefroy writes as if the Protector of Aborigines and all J.P.'s were warm friends of the aborigines. A correspondent in the *Melbourne Age* wrote that he had seen the Warden (principal magistrate) of Pilbarra Goldfield brutally flog his own little native boy with a knotted rope. I saw a J.P. at Mallina flog his indentured servant with an iron-tipped swingle-tree for a trivial error. Within the past year two medical men wrote in Perth papers of cruelties to natives. One in the Murchison Goldfield had seen the Resident Magistrate tie his little native boy up to a verandah post and flog him brutally with a riding whip. About a year ago the *Sunday Times*, Perth, mentioned the case of a squatter J.P. who had annexed the wife of an aboriginal. When the native came to demand his woman this 'Justice of Peace' fired both barrels of a shot gun into the native's legs, and left him to crawl away and die as he liked. The starving natives on Nor'-West stations eat offal and filth because their 'masters' do not supply them with enough decent food to satisfy their hunger. On many Nor'-West stations the natives are naked, both men and women, because they have no European clothes to wear, and although Mr. Lefroy says the race is becoming extinct because the native does not know how to dress. Cruelty exists wherever the indenture is in force. The natives get a holiday whenever the owner has no particular work for them to do, he then turns them into the 'bush' to hunt and beg their food from travellers. I wrote both in the *Age* and *Bulletin* (the latter the most widely read paper in Australasia) and gave them numerous cases of gross cruelties. The Western Australian squatter is altogether inferior to other States in Australia; the others pay white men to do their work, the Westralian only employs slaves. This probably accounts for the low type of 'cockatoo' squatter who rules in golden Western Australia.—I am, Sir, yours sincerely,

WALTER MALCOLMSON."

"Marine Parade, Holywood, near Belfast.

The Chief Protector of Aborigines, Perth.

Sub-Inspector's Office, Roebourne, 13th June, 1904.

I have to acknowledge receipt of your letter, dated 4th instant, with copy of Walter Malcolmson's letter to the editor of *The Times*.

I have forwarded copy of letter to police stations at Station Peak and Marble Bar for inquiry *re* incidents mentioned in letter, viz., the Mallina J.P. and Pilbarra Warden.

These incidents, if they ever occurred, must be fairly ancient, as I have been in charge of this district over two years and never before heard of either; and at present I have not the faintest idea as to who the J.P. at Mallina was. I know that, since I have been in this district, there has been no J.P. at Mallina, and there is none now. Mallina used to be a kind of gold-mining centre years since, and one hotel was built; but the place gradually became deserted, and what used to be the hotel is now occupied by Mr. Murray as homestead, on station occupied by him. Possibly the writer of letter is alluding to the goldfield days of Mallina. Inquiry is being made *re* same, and result will be sent you as soon as possible. Respecting assault stated to have been committed by the Warden of Pilbarra Goldfield, the headquarters of Warden of that goldfield is at Marble Bar, and I am having inquiry made there. These are the only direct references made respecting this district. I have never heard of natives on stations having to eat offal and filth owing to not being supplied with rations by squatters, and so far as I have myself personally seen the natives on the stations, they appear to be well fed and looked after. The police on patrols look out for natives who are not able to provide for themselves, and these cases are reported to you, and authority has been invariably received from you to supply this class of native with rations and also with blankets or rugs every winter. I have been at a good many stations in Roebourne district, and can state that at those stations the natives who are indentured (signed under contract) are principally occupied at the homesteads, and are well clad and certainly have the appearance of being well fed. I have never heard of a case in this district of natives on holiday begging their rations from travellers. The natives do hunt and kill kangaroos when on holiday, and I have met natives on holiday in the Marble Bar district from stations, and they were well supplied with rations, and were making spears to kill kangaroos, and seemed contented and enjoying themselves. Bush food for natives, especially kangaroos, is very plentiful in this district, and on some stations the kangaroos are a nuisance to the settlers; and the kangaroos are so plentiful that there are several parties of white men making a living by shooting them and preserving and selling the skins. I may also mention that on several stations in this district the squatters do not sign on any natives, and have not done so in some cases for years, and although the natives on these stations are free to leave if they like, and know it, they remain on the station working for the squatter, and I have often found it difficult to get a native to leave a station to work as police tracker, even though they are not signed to squatter. I have never seen natives at stations without clothing, but I know that natives on holiday revert to their wild customs for a time, and wear no clothing, but wear clothing again when they return off holiday. The only trouble I have had with respect to natives in this district were troubles amongst the natives themselves, spearing each other in fights, and, in a few cases, murder was committed. These are, however, all tribal customs amongst the natives themselves, and no white men are directly or indirectly concerned in same. Since I have been in this district I have not received a single report *re* any assaults committed by whites on natives, with exception of one case, where a statement was made that a native boy had died from effects of a beating his master had given him. In this case an inquest was held by Roebourne R.M...

and the statements were proved to be grossly untruthful and malicious, as the evidence proved the master was in Perth when native boy died, and that the boy was in his usual health when master left station; and further, that after the master's departure the native in question had a fight with another native, in which the deceased native got the worst of it; and afterwards this boy worked again, and subsequently contracted a cold, and was well attended by station manager and his wife, but died; the employer, who was alleged to have been the cause of death, being away from station all the time. In this case I called about twenty witnesses, black and white, and had numerous others to call, but the Coroner and jury said they had heard enough, and returned a verdict of death from natural causes. All the witnesses in this case swore the deceased native had never been ill-treated by his master, but was, on the contrary, one of his favourites. All the indentured natives whom I have seen speak the usual pigeon English; but the indentured natives, as well as all other natives in this district, invariably speak their own language when talking to each other. Personally I am quite satisfied that no cases of cruelty exist in this district at present time, or I am certain I should hear of same at some time or another; of course I cannot speak of former years, but can only speak of past two years. The greatest trouble here is to check the supplying of liquor to natives, the coloured men, Chinese and Malays being the principal offenders; the grog being supplied by these men so as they can get the black women. This offence is, however, gradually becoming less as there have been numerous prosecutions against these men, and in most cases they have been convicted and severely dealt with. I shall report result of inquiries in due course.

W. LAPPIN,
Sub-Inspector of Police.

13th June, 1904.

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