

1885.

(SECOND SESSION.)

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

PROTECTION OF THE ABORIGINES.
(REPORT OF THE BOARD.)

Ordered by the Legislative Assembly to be printed, 8 September, 1885.

To the Honorable the Colonial Secretary,—

Sir,

Office of the Aborigines Protection Board, Sydney, 27 April, 1885.

A year having elapsed since we presented to the Government our first Report regarding the condition of the Aborigines, together with certain recommendations made with a view to the amelioration of their condition, we have now the honor to furnish the following information respecting the operations of the Board during the past twelve months, and some particulars regarding the condition of the aborigines, which cannot, we think, fail to be of interest to the Government and the Country generally.

The Census returns which we referred to in our former Report have been again corrected up to a recent date by the police throughout the country, and the following figures will explain the changes which have taken place in the number and condition of the race during the year.

We should explain again that half-castes are taken into account as aborigines when they live with them in camps and under the usual conditions of the life they follow.

	Aborigines—full blood.					Half-caste.					General Total.
	Adults.			Children.	Total.	Adults.			Children.	Total.	
	Males.	Females.	Total.			Males.	Females.	Total.			
By returns, September, 1883	2,622	1,925	4,547	1,579	6,126	621	481	1,102	1,243	2,345	8,471
Births ascertained .....	.....	.....	.....	62	62	.....	.....	.....	64	64	126
Increase otherwise .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	19	19	19
	2,622	1,925	4,547	1,641	6,188	621	481	1,102	1,326	2,428	8,616
Deaths ascertained	77	41	118	9	127	5	5	10	10	20	147
Decrease from unknown causes	105	147	252	120	372	20	6	26	.....	6	378
Total decrease	182	188	370	129	499	25	11	36	10	26	525
By returns, 1884	2,440	1,737	4,177	1,512	5,689	596	470	1,066	1,336	2,402	8,091

There are at the present time 390 aboriginal and half-caste children receiving instruction, chiefly in Public and other Schools.

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We were much gratified to receive an intimation from the Department of Public Instruction, dated 3rd December, 1884, to the effect that "The Minister is of opinion that in all localities where a sufficient number of aboriginal children can be grouped together for instruction it would be advisable to establish a school for their benefit exclusively; but in places where there are only a few such children, there will be no objection offered to their attending the nearest Public School, provided they are habitually clean, decently clad, and that they conduct themselves with propriety both in and out of school."

Any prejudice which may have existed against the admission of aboriginal and half-caste children into the Public Schools will, it is to be hoped, be now entirely removed. We have striven to induce parents to send their children to school, offering every inducement to them to do so, chiefly by providing decent clothing for them and granting a half-ration of food to all who regularly attend.

The results so far are most gratifying: we have received specimens of the children's handwriting, and are informed that they and their parents are proud of their improvement under instruction, and we look forward hopefully to such children being in time reclaimed from the uncivilized and degraded condition in which they have hitherto existed, and taking their place—as they are well fitted by their natural intelligence to do—amongst the industrial classes.

If we can extend these benefits generally to all the young, that alone would amply reward us for the labour we have undertaken.

The following extracts from reports we have received will show further that many of the adult aborigines have been induced by timely aid and advice to engage in pursuits which have afforded them ample means of support for themselves and those dependent upon them.

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POLICE REPORTS.

Locality—North-eastern District.

Inspector Harrison reports:—"The aborigines are behaving well, intoxication has decreased, and a great inclination shown to cultivate land. The blacks on Pelican Island and Fattorini Island and Lower Macleay have grown a considerable quantity of maize, and are working most satisfactorily. No complaints have been made against them. Their fishing-net is well cared for, also the boat.

"On the Nulla Nulla Creek ten able-bodied blacks with their families are settled, have built themselves comfortable quarters, and are clearing the Reserve (40 acres). Mr. Toose, Telegraph-master, looks after them. A great improvement in their condition.

"At Rollands Plains and Hastings River some are cultivating, and others are industriously employed.

"At the Manning one full-blood family farm and bring fowl eggs to market; another takes contracts for clearing, &c., and employs others. There are ten children at school.

"At the Nambuccra they intend to clear and cultivate a portion of the Boura Reserve (20 acres).

"As regards the attendance of children at school, the instructions issued to the school teachers have been so recent, no noticeable effect is perceived.

"Twelve publicans fined within the year for selling liquor to aborigines."

Brewarrina.

Sergeant Steele reports:—"Since the removal of the blacks from the vicinity of the town, there has been less drunkenness. A number of the women who are able to work find employment in the town and go back to camp in the evening. They are now on a reserve about two miles from the town, on the opposite side of the river. The half-caste children require special care." The establishment of an Aboriginal Home would be very desirable in this locality.

The Board hope to be able to take action in this direction.

Jervis Bay.

Sergeant Brayne reports:—"22 half-castes and aborigines attending school: most of them are quick at learning. Some of them come a distance to school, leave home on Monday, and return on Friday evening. They live in a hut with an old aboriginal couple, who cook the food for them and keep them clean; they appear eager to learn. Mr. Beetson, Public School Teacher, also Mrs. Beetson, take a great interest in them. Mrs. Beetson gave great assistance in making the clothes for them. The aborigines and half-castes in the district are all very comfortable, none in want of necessaries of life. Most of the young men work and have given up wandering. No drunkenness. Messrs. Dwyer and Pitt, Inspectors of Schools, were surprised at the intelligence of the children when they examined the school."

Narrandera.

Sub-inspector Brennan reports:—"They are exceptionally well treated, and have a splendid reserve (1,280 acres). There is nothing to suggest, as the Board has done all that is possible on their behalf. They are contented and comfortable. They very rarely are under the influence of drink now. A few of the gins do washing and are paid for it. Some seed and farming implements have been supplied."

Whilst the Board have been guided by certain principles and rules in distributing the funds placed at their disposal, they have applied themselves to ascertain the condition of the aborigines, not only when congregated in considerable numbers in camps, but have investigated the cases of individuals requiring aid and dealt with them.

Their

Their wants are various. Some, with the aid of a boat, can support several families by fishing; others inland, with slight assistance, can provide for themselves by cultivating the reserves allotted to them; others, with occasional assistance for children and the infirm, can earn a livelihood on farms and stations.

But little progress has been made in furtherance of the desire of the Board to establish aboriginal homes in different parts of the Colony. One would be of great benefit on the Darling, and another is required on one of the northern rivers—the Clarence or Richmond. When suitable reserves (which have been applied for) are appropriated for the purpose, further action will be promptly taken.

The objects sought to be attained are to provide asylums for the aged and sick, who are dependent on others for help and support; but also, and of at least equal importance, to train and teach the young—to fit them to take their places amongst the rest of the community. The half-caste girls especially deserve consideration. If trained to industrious and civilized habits they would readily find employment in domestic service. The males can always obtain work.

There are many aged, crippled, and sick aborigines throughout the Colony, whose condition is such as to excite the gravest commiseration. In example, the following is an extract from a report received by the Board from the Clarence Heads:—

Four very old aboriginals and a gin have come to Iluka from the Freshwater River.

“King Peter,” about 60 years old, and almost naked, tries to earn something by carrying wood, but the people do not like to see him about their places.

“Old Harry,” about 65 years old, and almost naked, also tries to earn something by carrying wood.

“Cranky Charlie,” about 65 years old, wanders about through the bush, sometimes naked.

“Old Charlie,” about 55 years old, has better clothes than any of the others, and also earns a little by cutting wood.

“Herriette,” or “Emmitte,” a very old gin, has had her back injured, and can scarcely walk about. The other blacks supply her with food.

Under such circumstances common humanity demanded that these poor creatures should be provided with food and clothing, and when practicable, that they should be housed in some aboriginal asylum. The Board have liberally disbursed the funds at their disposal in this direction and for which, so far, Parliament has made sufficient provision.

Several Magistrates and country residents have manifested a great interest in the welfare of the aborigines in their neighbourhood, but we have had mainly to depend upon the agency of the police to carry out our wishes and instructions, and we cannot express too strongly our grateful acknowledgments of the prompt and effective assistance rendered by all the officers with whom we have corresponded; without their valuable aid our operations would have been almost useless.

With this experience, and as the Inspector-General has been able to attend our meetings more regularly than other members, and as he is constantly at hand to give instructions to the Secretary regarding the business of the Department, we unanimously decided upon electing Mr. Fosbery to the position of Chairman of the Board, which he accepted in deference to our wishes, whilst earnestly desiring that another selection should be made.

Permanent arrangements have not yet been finally made for the management of the Mission Stations at Warengesda and Maloga.

Liberal provision was voted by Parliament in aid of the funds of the Aborigines Protection Association in which the control of the Institutions is vested. In accordance with the views of the Premier, the Honorable Alex. Stuart, communicated to the Board by minute dated 25 February, 1884 (*vide* Appendix A), we have confined our action to a supervision of the proposed expenditure by the Society which is to be provided out of Government grant.

We are desirous of seeing a more definite and responsible system of management of these Stations, though not without misgiving that their cost will be out of proportion to the aid accorded to the aborigines generally.

The selections of the Messrs. Matthews at Maloga (about 781 acres), upon which the Mission Station is built, should be resumed if the Institution is to be continued, as the land is peculiarly well situated for a Station, and suitable for cultivation; without it the Government reserve of 1,800 acres would be comparatively useless.

The selections, however, are valued by the owners at between three and four thousand pounds. The huts and other buildings on the Station require to be replaced, as they are dilapidated and uninhabitable.

The Department of Public Instruction provides a school-teacher at each Station. In addition to which the Association proposes to appoint a general superintendent and matron, also an overseer of works, who should be competent to instruct and supervise in several trades, such as rough carpentry, blacksmith's work, fencing, and ploughing.

The necessary buildings, together with the equipment of tools, implements, stock, and vehicles, will however cost a considerable sum, exceeding the amount available on the vote.

It will be seen from the annexed statement (Appendix B) that the Board have expended in the various districts, in the supply of rations, clothing, work done, &c., for the tribes, as well as clothing supplied from the Government Stores, for forty-one males, forty-nine females, and fifty-one children at Grafton, and twenty-five males and twenty-five females on the McIntyre River, £2,417 13s. 6d. The Board has also paid to the Aborigines Protection Association, for the maintenance of and supplies for the Warangesda and Maloga Stations, £750; salary of Secretary, £200; house rent, £58; total, £3,425 13s. 6d.

EDMUND FOSBERY, Chairman.

W. J. FOSTER.

ALEXR. GORDON, M.L.C.

RICHARD HILL, M.L.C.

PHILIP GIDLEY KING, M.L.C.

HUGH ROBISON.

APPENDIX A.

Minute by Colonial Secretary upon Aboriginal Mission Stations.

In a letter from the Secretary to the Aborigines Protectorate to the Principal Under Secretary, dated 22nd ultimo, it is stated that before the Board can make any report on the application made by Mr. Matthews at Maloga for Government aid, it will be necessary that the positions of the Mission Stations should be clearly defined, as to their relation to the Government or the Board.

The position may be defined as follows:—

1. I have laid it down as a principle (see my minute of 5/2/83, appointing the Board) that, in administering the funds voted by Parliament for the aborigines, advantage should be taken of any movement dictated or impelled by the benevolent or religious instincts of persons working for the benefit of these people. I also stated that one of the main objects of the Protection Board should be to supplement the funds raised by private benevolence and expended by voluntary Associations.
2. I would prefer the Government aid passing through the Protectorate, and have only given it hitherto direct to the Society in fulfilment of engagements made before the appointment of the Board.
3. I consider that the Society for the Protection of the Aborigines is the best channel through which to pass the money aid. The object of that Society is to raise funds voluntarily and distribute to the two Missions, and it seems to me that these funds are those which should be supplemented.
4. While I consider this a better way of distributing the aid than by giving it as a direct payment from the Government to these Institutions, I consider it most desirable that the Protectorate should have a watchful inspection of and control over them—care being taken, while not interfering with their religious aspects, that the physical welfare of the aborigines is cared for, in accordance with general principles approved of for their benefit.

5. I have considered it necessary that additional lands should be set aside, so as to make these settlements to some larger extent than heretofore self-supporting, and I understand that these are being fenced in by the Mission Station's labour.
6. I do not consider it desirable that any portions should continue to be private property, and have intimated to Mr. Matthews that the land heretofore held by him and his relatives as mineral conditional purchase or otherwise should form part of the public estate of the Mission Stations, for it is obvious that the Government or the Board might lose all control over them.
7. I consider that, by applying that tact and wisdom in their administration which the members of the Board possess, which will enable them to wisely discriminate between insisting upon the application of such general principles as will insure care for the physical condition of the people and interference with the religious and moral training they may receive, much good will be accomplished.

25/2/84.

ALEX. STUART.

APPENDIX B.

1884.

Locality.	Average monthly No. of Aborigines.		Period.	Rations, Clothing, Work done, &c., &c.	Amount expended during year.
	Adults.	Children.			
Barrington	4	.....	12 months	Rations, and ground ploughed	£ s. d. 34 2 4
Boat Harbour	24	.....	"	Rations	116 0 6
Burrier	3	.....	"	"	16 4 0
Brewarrina	14	.....	"	"	120 5 0
Bega	7	.....	"	"	26 0 9
Cowra	2	3	"	"	7 7 0
Cox's River	4	7	"	"	55 8 3
Coonabarabran	5	4	"	Rations and clothing	79 4 4
Coraki	1	.....	"	Rations	9 14 4
Collareendabri	4	2	"	Rations and clothing	35 4 5
Dubbo	15	4	"	Rations	72 19 2
Dandaloo	3	.....	6 "	"	3 17 3
Eugowra	8	.....	12 "	"	10 1 1
Forster	5	.....	"	"	27 11 1
Gresford	5	.....	"	Rations and clothing	36 7 7
Gunnedah	1	.....	"	Clothing	2 5 0
Grafton	90	51	"	Clothing issued to 41 men, 49 women, 51 children	Govt. stores.
Gilgunnia	2	.....	6 "	Rations	8 12 2
Huka	5	.....	"	Clothing and rations	11 15 2
Jervis Bay	5	20	12 "	Rations and clothing, oars, paint, sail, rope, fishing-lines, and hooks.	98 4 7
Kogarah	4	2	"	Rations	21 19 10
Kempsey	61	.....	"	Rations, clothing, and a net	326 10 11
Kangaroo Valley	2	.....	"	Rations, huts built	16 15 9
Mungindi	12	.....	"	Rations	85 14 10
Mogil Mogil	10	3	"	Rations and clothing	90 16 8
Moruya	4	5	"	Rations, oars and paint for boat	48 11 11
Mungyer	4	.....	1 "	Rations	0 16 3
Narrandera	5	5	12 "	"	51 15 10
Nambucca	24	.....	6 "	"	60 16 5
Narrabri	5	4	"	Rations and clothing	12 11 9
Port Macquarie	10	7	12 "	Rations, clothing, and a boat	45 0 0
Pelican Flat	2	.....	"	Rations	9 9 7
La Perouse	13	18	"	Rations, sails, and repairs to boats	145 8 0
Pudman's Creek	4	10	"	Rations and clothing	35 19 5
Penrith	2	.....	6 "	Rations	3 19 9
Singleton	16	.....	12 "	Rations, clothing, and farming implements	25 9 11
Shellharbour	4	8	"	Rations	47 16 4
Port Stephens	12	.....	"	"	74 2 6
Tilba Tilba	6	.....	"	Rations, paint, seed, farming implements	39 12 9
Terembone	5	.....	"	Rations	36 8 6
Tomboye	4	.....	"	"	24 19 1
Taree	12	8	"	Clothing and rations	79 8 10
Tomakin	4	.....	"	Rations	24 5 0
Ulladulla	4	.....	6 "	"	6 0 1
Warialda	3	1	12 "	Rations and clothing	23 0 6
Wellington	5	.....	"	Rations	43 8 5
Wingham	21	11	"	"	114 2 9
Windsor	7	9	3 "	Rations and clothing	7 11 7
Warren	6	1	10 "	Rations	21 5 10
Yass	2	23	12 "	Rations, clothing, school requisites, and medical attendance.	117 10 6
M'Intyre River	50	.....	"	Clothing for 25 males and 25 females	Govt. stores.
	530	211			£ 2,417 13 6

Blankets are liberally supplied from the Government stores to all Aborigines throughout the Colony.

APPENDIX C.

RESERVES granted for the use of Aborigines.

Locality.	Area.	Date notified.	How used.
	acres		
Peaks	400	9 Dec., 1878	Made no use of by aborigines.
Woolmoolah	700	26 Sept., 1881	Not occupied, fenced, or cleared.
Wallagoot	112	4 July, 1883	Occupied by George Cohen and family (aborigines). Have about two acres ploughed, and growing oats. A hut and a few gunyahs erected. Other aborigines camp there at times.
Tunabidgee	24	24 July, 1882	About six acres cleared and fenced, and occupied by an aboriginal woman, who cultivates a small portion. About four acres cleared and fenced; occupied by a Chinaman.
Canomodine	40	7 April, 1879	Not cleared, fenced, or occupied.
Walcha	320	24 Dec., 1882	Occupied by J. Burns, an aboriginal, and two half-caste families. One and a half acres under cultivation, and four acres enclosed with a fence.
Wagonga, Congo, and Bodalla.	199	1861, 1877, 1878, 1880.	Not cultivated or cleared. Occupied by some aborigines.
Moruya		— July, 1875	Not cultivated, cleared, or occupied.
Mongarlowe	100	— Feb., 1879	Granted to half-caste, Mrs. Willoughby. All fenced in and portioned into paddocks. A good hut on the ground, and a small garden.
Opton and Blakeney	160 and 80	— June, 1875; — July, 1881; and 28 Feb., 1883.	Occupied by the widow Lewis and families. About two acres cleared by them. Two acres occupied by H. Wedge and family (half-castes). Two acres cleared. Five acres under crop.
Arakoon	120	— April, 1883	Reserve on mainland not occupied. Pelican Island occupied by three half-castes, industrious sober men. Forty acres cleared and under cultivation.
Nambuccra	30	— — — — —	An island in the river; not occupied.
✓ Killawarra	116	— July, 1882	Occupied by an aboriginal, wife, and family. Two acres under cultivation.
Kinchella	2a. 3r. 39p.	— April, 1883	Fattorini Island, partly cleared and cultivated, growing maize. Occupied by two half-castes with their families, seven children. Both steady, sober, hard-working men.
Arakoon	acres	— Nov., „	Unoccupied. Used as a camping ground.
Waddi	1,500	21 Dec., „	Warangesda Mission Station.
Eania	1,800	9 April, „	Maloga Mission Station.

GRANTED during year 1884.

Locality.	Area.	How used.
	acres	
Bateman's Bay	40	Occupied by Tommy Bellard, Tommy Tinboy, and gins, and used by others as a camping ground.
Grong Grong	1,280	Occupied by C. Roberts, wife, and child, old Kitty, Widgawa Jimmy and wife, Mudgee Dick and wife. Many more are expected to settle. Growing potatoes and vegetables. Seed and some implements supplied.
Arakoon	30	W. Inew, on sufferance. This man is growing fruit and maize; his crop is worth £250 to £300; has horses, cows, farming implements, ploughs, harrows, &c.; has cleared and stumped about twenty-five acres. He supports other aborigines who are helpless.
Yewrangara	40	Billy-billy to reside on; going to build a house. Other blacks will settle there.
Bowra	20	About twenty aborigines are going to settle on and cultivate it.
Nulla Nulla Creek ..	40	Ten able-bodied blacks and their families settled on it. They have built houses and are clearing.
Kinchella	11½	

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NSW Aborigines Welfare Board

"Protection of the Aborigines, Report of the Board 1885"