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South



Australia.

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# REPORT

OF THE

# PROTECTOR OF ABORIGINES

FOR THE

YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 1908.



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**Adelaide :**

C. E. BRISTOW, GOVERNMENT PRINTER, NORTH TERRACE.

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# REPORT.



Aborigines Office, Adelaide, September 15th, 1908.

Sir—I have the honor to submit for the information of the Hon. the Commissioner of Public Works, &c., the following report on the working of the Aborigines Department for the financial year ended June 30th, 1908, together with reports from the Sub-Protector of Aborigines for the Far North and the superintendents of mission stations.

Mr. Edward Lee Hamilton, who has ably administered the department for many years, retired on February 29th last, and the Government did me the honor of appointing me as his successor. I owe Mr. Hamilton a debt of gratitude for the many kindnesses he has shown and the help he has given me in mastering details.

Thanks are also due to the Commissioner of Police and his officers for assistance given the department in numerous ways.

A Bill for an Act for the better protection and control of the aborigines, prepared by Mr. Hamilton and myself, has already been sent along, and I trust it will this session of Parliament become law.

In my opinion separate Acts are required for South Australia and the Northern Territory, as in South Australia proper the chief problem is the half-caste, who is yearly increasing. I will here treat all except pure-blooded natives as half-castes.

On June 30th, 1908, there were at Point Pierce, Yorke's Peninsula, 136 half-castes and 20 blacks; in the Point McLeay district there are about 320 natives, and fully 50 per cent. of them are half-castes. From this it will be seen that the aboriginal problem is rapidly assuming a different aspect than it bore some years ago.

In comparatively a few years the old type of native will probably have died out and be replaced by a race of educated half-castes, with a sprinkling of blacks.

The State schools and those formerly conducted by the missions have worked wonders, and it is now seldom in the settled districts that one meets a native who cannot read and write. The only things they lack are thrift and enterprise.

Unfortunately on the mission stations the children cannot be prevented from mixing with those natives who still retain some of the old habits and customs of the race, and while this is so there is not much

hope of immediately converting them into self-reliant, self-supporting people, as the present system practically teaches them to look to the missions and the Government for help.

I am of opinion that the young children—especially the half-castes—should be placed in an industrial institution, educated up to a certain standard, and trained to useful trades and occupations, and then apprenticed until they attain the age of 18 to 20 years. During this period they should not be allowed to mix with the other aborigines.

If something of this nature is not done, I fear we shall long be troubled with an aboriginal problem in the shape of a lot of nomadic half-caste mendicants.

According to the census of 1901 the aboriginal population of South Australia, exclusive of the Northern Territory, was :—

Blacks .....	3,386
Half-castes .....	502
Total .....	<u>3,888</u>

During the year there have been reported from the 44 depots :—

	Blacks.	Half-castes.
Births .....	24 ..	34
Deaths .....	51 ..	13

The seven years, 1901-08, show a decrease record of 316 blacks and an increase of 125 half-castes ; but doubtless many deaths and some births which occur in the bush are not recorded.

#### MISSION STATIONS.

Name of Station.	Average Number of Aborigines.	Number of Children.	Births.	Deaths.
Point McLeay .....	249	125	13	30
Point Pierce .....	156	59	9	8
Killalpaninna .....	90	17	1	4
Koonibba .....	50	35	3	1
Manunka .....	48	21	3	2
Totals .....	593	257	29	45

An epidemic of influenza, followed by consumption, was responsible for a number of deaths at Point McLeay.

The financial returns from these stations for the year show :—

	£	s.	d.
Voluntary subscriptions .....	1,594	9	8
Proceeds of produce sold .....	13,191	16	8
Wages paid aborigines .....	2,123	13	8

## CRIME RECORD.

The number of convictions during the year was :—

Drunkenness .....	31
Disorderly, &c.....	4
Resist police .....	1
Total .....	<u>36</u>

which shows the aborigines to be a remarkably law-respecting people.

The number of persons convicted during the year of supplying intoxicating liquor to aborigines was 10.

The amount voted by Parliament for the year was £4,710, and the amount expended was—

	£	s.	d.
Provisions .....	1,221	18	0
Blankets and clothing .....	651	2	3
Transport charges .....	541	3	9
Medical attendance and medicines .....	100	2	3
Boats, fishing tackle, &c. ....	24	13	0
Petty and travelling expenses.....	24	14	2
Firewood for old, infirm, and sick .....	7	12	4
Burial charges .....	41	4	2
Meals to travellers and prisoners .....	38	18	6
Printing and stationery .....	19	12	10
O.S. postage stamps and telegrams .....	22	5	0
Telephone exchange .....	10	0	0
Adelaide Hospital—Annual contribution .....	10	10	0
Clerical services for Sub-Protector Aborigines, Far North .....	12	0	0
Stores, charges, &c.....	30	11	2
Medical comforts and sundries .....	73	9	10
Salaries .....	210	0	0
Grant-in-aid Aborigines' Friends' Association, Point McLeay .....	1,500	0	0
Total .....	<u>£4,539</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>3</u>

A depot was opened during the year at Dalhousie Springs, Far North.

During my term of office I have visited Point Pierce, Point McLeay, and Manunka missions, and found the natives well treated and cared for.

Point McLeay, with a population of about 320 aborigines, requires more land. At present there are only about 4,000 acres set aside there for the aborigines. At Point Pierce there are 20,000 acres, worth about £45,000, and the population consists of 136 half-castes and 20 blacks ; and yet I regret to say these natives are not contented. Many of them are well able to earn sufficient to support themselves and families, if they had only been taught self-reliance and thrift.

I have not yet been able, owing to office duties (having no assistant), to visit the other two mission stations, viz., Koonibba and KillalPainna, but purpose doing so this year.

I have, &c.,

W. G. SOUTH, Protector of Aborigines.

## FAR NORTHERN DISTRICT.

Port Augusta, July 20th, 1908.

Sir—In submitting my annual report on the condition and general conduct of the aborigines in the Far North for the year ended June 30th, 1908, I have the honor to report that their general health and conduct have been fairly good. During the year I have inspected several depots, and, being able to converse in the native tongue, have ascertained that they were well cared for, and the Government rations were fairly distributed amongst them, and the natives had no complaints to make.

Some of the issuers exercise economy in supplying the rations, but others are inclined to be too liberal, and do not restrict the allowance to those natives for which they are intended, and, as instructed by you, a memo. was forwarded to all the depots impressing upon the issuers the necessity for economy. A strict watch will be kept on the issues in future for this reason, and every endeavor will be made to distribute the rations in an economical manner.

The prospects of a good season in some parts of the Far North are very favorable, so that the able-bodied natives in those parts should be able to earn their own living. A tribal fight occurred at Oodnadatta during the year, in which two natives took part, and as a result of their injuries both of them succumbed.

The birth rate has been low, and very few deaths have been reported, and the health generally has been fairly good. Several have been suffering from a mild attack of influenza and slight colds.

Several natives have been admitted to the Port Augusta Hospital for treatment, and one death has occurred. Too much praise cannot be given to Dr. Riddell and the nurses for their humane treatment of the sick aborigines under their charge, coupled with their attentiveness and kindness towards them, which the natives appreciate, as when sickness overtakes them they are most willing to go to that institution.

I have, &c.,

THOS. CLODE, Sub-Protector, Far Northern District.

W. G. South, Esq., Protector of Aborigines, Adelaide.

## POINT McLEAY MISSION STATION.

Mr. Ambrose Redman reports:—The total number of natives assisted by our mission and who come under its influence is about 320. The number on the station at the close of each month averages 249, and there were on the station on June 30th—Able-bodied adults, 116 ; old and infirm, 25 ; sick, 2 ; children over 5 years, 75 ; infants under 5 years, 52 ; total, 270. Births, 13 ; deaths, 30 ; marriages, 2 ; showing a loss of deaths over births of 17, and for the last three years of 23 more deaths than births.

We have passed through a trying year in this respect—whooping cough, influenza, and consumption carrying off both old and young. The year closes, however, with but little sickness, and we are now free from any epidemic.

The natives have had constant employment during the year, our pay-sheet showing during the winter months 50 natives employed.

We have improved the mission with substituting iron for thatch on 23 native cottages, thus improving the appearance of the settlement, which now has much the appearance of an ordinary town.

The men have been employed in general station work, also road-making, clearing, bootmaking, painting, &c. Work also has been given by our settlers and sheepfarmers at shearing and general work.

Stock on station on June 30th was:—Sheep, 1,947 ; horned cattle, 150 ; horses, 19.

The crops generally were poor, also the fruit returns, attributable to the very dry summer. Grass was plentiful, and stock has been in good order.

Religious services have been well attended ; at times difficulty has been found to seat all who would attend. Social temperance meetings have been held regularly, and have been much appreciated. We have made every effort to teach the natives the necessity and dignity of labor, and this year has been one of improvement in that respect.

The finding of fresh water in the centre of our mission during the year—although brackish water is plentiful—came as a surprise, and its value cannot be over estimated, and is worthy of special comment.

The question of firewood is becoming more serious as the settlers clear their land, and our supplies will soon be exhausted.

Apart from the many deaths, the year has been one of advance, and the mission has upheld the object for which it was started, viz., the uplifting of the native population.

We heartily thank the Aborigines Department for the stores and blankets, which have been of good quality.

AMBROSE REDMAN, Superintendent Point McLeay Mission.

## POINT PIERCE.

Mr. B. Lathern reports :—I have the honor to submit the following report for the year ended June 30th, 1908.

The affairs of the institution have been administered on much the same lines as in former years, with the object of improving the condition of the natives and the efficiency of the mission.

The season was fairly successful, enabling several much-needed works to be executed and more to be put in hand. The returns were as follows :—One hundred and fifty bales wool, 5,000 bags wheat—being about 10bush. per acre from 2,200 acres, two-thirds of which, however, was on h lves with neighboring farmers.

The stock at present comprises 7,500 sheep, 40 head cattle, 40 pigs, and 24 horses—all in good condition.

The number of natives on the station now stands at 156—a decrease of one since last report. There have been nine births, eight deaths, and seven marriages. The general health has been good, and continued progress has been made with regard to sanitary conditions.

We are still extending the water supply, with the ultimate object of making the same accessible to the stock on all parts of the station.

The day school is well attended, and is, we believe, meeting all requirements in its particular sphere.

There is nothing fresh to report as regards the moral and religious state of the people. The usual services are fairly well attended, and various educational and instructive attractions are provided at times by visitors and friends who kindly interest themselves in the welfare of the natives.

The rabbits seem to be decreasing in numbers, owing to the effective measures adopted to exterminate them. The boundary has been wire-netted, and poison actively employed with good results.

The policy of extensive cultivation is having a marked effect in increasing the value of the land for pastoral purposes. This policy we are still pursuing.

Work has proceeded on the usual lines, the natives being kept employed more regularly than formerly at an increased rate of wages, which tends to give more satisfaction—for the present, at any rate.

All the buildings, &c., are in good repair, with the exception of a few old cottages, which latter are to be pulled down in the near future, and new tenements erected on more modern lines. The continual building required to be done, and the upkeep of the fences, &c., necessitates constant supervision, and, of course, entails considerable expense, which is all met by the income from the produce of the mission—a state of affairs which is due to the wise administration of the managing committee, who at all times have shown the utmost desire to study the wellbeing and comfort of the natives in every way.



The following work is to be proceeded with at once—a new and up-to-date stable, with latest improvements, to accommodate 24 horses. The main features will comprise an oil engine, chaff-cutter, and most conveniently-situated feed and harness rooms, together with a new 100,000gall. tank to supply the stable with water. We also intend to build a new woolshed on Wardang Island in time for next shearing.

We are anticipating another very good season, present prospects being very favorable. Progress is naturally very slow, owing chiefly to the difficulty of impressing upon the natives the necessity for greater exertion on their part if they would attain to greater efficiency in all matters necessary for the continuance and wellbeing of the institution and the principles for which it stands.

B. LATHERN, Superintendent.

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#### KOONIBBA MISSION, DENIAL BAY.

Mr. C. A. Wiebusch reports :—The progress in the year past can be reported as favorable. The conduct of the aborigines has been good. Some unscrupulous whites still continue to cause some trouble by secretly supplying the aborigines with intoxicating liquor. The health of the natives was excellent; only one death occurred—an infant. There have been three births. The average number of natives has been 50. At present the number of aborigines which are supported by the mission is a little higher than at the beginning of the year.

Last year's harvest results were exceptionally good, about 700 acres yielding a little over 1,400 bags and 70 tons of hay. As much as 12bush. was reaped per acre. Most of the farm work was performed by aborigines, being supervised, of course, by a manager, who was assisted by another white laborer. This year copious rains have fallen, and in consequence thereof the wheat, as well as the grass, is looking exceedingly well.

The missionary, at the conference at Hahndorf—held February last—could report that the financial difficulties which had previously hindered the progress of the station to a very large extent had been finally overcome, partly by donations and partly by the proceeds of the harvests.

A few months ago a bore was put down to the depth of 139ft., when very bad water was met with. It is the intention of the manager to sink another bore in the near future.

Our synod had long since recognised the fact that a parsonage was necessary, but financial difficulties had postponed such an undertaking. Last year, however, the addition was made. A seven-roomed building was erected at a cost of £500. The customary opening of the parsonage

took place on October 18th, 1907. On the same day an examination of the aborigine school children was held, in which they acquitted themselves very creditably, thereby substantiating that the efforts of the teachers—a change of teachers took place during the month of August—have not been fruitless in the face of so many difficulties. At present 22 children are receiving instruction in school. Religious services have been conducted every Sunday, the attendance being very good. In addition to these religious services were held every Thursday evening during the winter months.

C. A. WIEBUSCH, Superintendent.

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### KILLALPANINNA.

Mr. L. Kaibel, Tanunda, reports:—In reply to your request to furnish you with a report on work done at Killalpaninna during the year ending June 30th, 1908, I beg to state that in March last we were able to fill the post of missionary to the blacks, which had been resigned two years ago. The new missionary set at once to work to master the language with such zeal and success that he was able some weeks ago to start services on Sundays again. This was a day of great rejoicing for the blacks, who had impatiently waited for the event, and they rolled up from all sides in large muster. We hope and trust this newly kindled interest in the gospel will last, and that they may receive much benefit from it.

After the flood spoken of in my last report had dried up, myriads of rabbits came down the Cooper, and they left little feed behind them. Our blacks made great efforts to cope with this pest, but to no purpose, and the day may not be distant when we have to declare ourselves beaten by the bunny and withdraw from the country, as the rabbit leaves nothing for our stock. As we unfortunately cannot, like other mission centres, grow wheat, we have to rely on our stock, and the existence of this is endangered, and becomes more so every year. We are not rich enough to erect vermin-proof fences, and having no near neighbors cannot form districts for the destruction of vermin by enclosing large areas with wire netting provided by the Government and paid back in 20 yearly instalments. We are thus in an unfortunate position, and it is a serious problem how to escape our doom.

We are erecting at present a couple of windmills—one at Blazes Well and one at Etadana—together with the necessary tanks; and also we have sent up a boring plant, as we intend to bore for water in places where there is a likelihood of getting some. Should water be found, then some more windmills will be erected on our run.

Ours has been a peaceful community. The blacks are willing workers if properly supervised. Without help from white shearers they have shorn over 5,000 sheep and done all other work necessary on a station. Galloping consumption has taken away several of them, otherwise health has been good. The scarcity of feed will, no doubt, give some anxiety to our manager, as we have 6,000 sheep (lambs included), about 300 horses, and 400 cattle, besides a number of goats. Our prospects for the coming summer are, therefore, not very bright; but we hope a kind Providence will not let us be tried more than we are able to bear.

L. KAIBEL, Chairman of Board of Management.





5. Natives Yarding Sheep at Point Pierce Mission Station.—(By Mr. Finlayson.)



*6. Point Pierce Mission Station.—(By W. G. South, Protector of Aborigines.)*