

1925.

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

NORTHERN TERRITORY.

REPORT OF ADMINISTRATOR

FOR THE

YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 1924.

Presented by Command ; ordered to be printed, 11th June, 1925.

[Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given ; 845 copies ; approximate cost of printing and publishing, £38.]

Printed and Published for the GOVERNMENT of the COMMONWEALTH of AUSTRALIA by H. J. GREEN,
Government Printer for the State of Victoria.

No. 1.—F.5322.—PRICE 1s. 3d,

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that at other Australian ports; but the pity of the situation is that, now that the men can and do work willingly and well, there is so little work offering for them as the few vessels calling here, for which cargo has to be handled, do not, I think, enable the waterside workers to average more than 36 hours' work per month, if so much.

I can well imagine the uninformed reader inquiring here "Why do they not do something else?" and the answer simply is that there is nothing else for them to do, and to the further probable query "Why do they not go elsewhere?" the reply is that many of them are family men who, during the prosperous time when Vestey's Meat-works were in full swing, saved money, bought houses and small areas of land, and settled down as permanent residents of the Northern Territory.

The value of their properties has depreciated to vanishing point, the permanent employment they looked forward to has gone, and the high rates of passage money to Southern ports, added to the uncertainty of finding employment elsewhere, causes them to prefer to remain here in the hope that the meat-works may some day re-open and relative prosperity may return to Darwin. It is my belief that some of these people might have gone elsewhere two or three years ago but for the fact that every year since 1920 it has been rumoured, and even asserted, that the works would re-open, and it would have been distinctly beneficial if, in that year, an announcement could have been made that the works would not re-open for five years. The same thing is going on at present; rumours are about and statements have appeared in the press that the works are likely to open in 1925 for a short boiling-down season, but no definite authoritative announcement has been made, and since "hope deferred maketh the heart sick" many people are very sceptical about it.

The detailed reports of Heads of Departments, with their tabulated statements, are attached hereto, and are as follows:—

ABORIGINES.

The newly-appointed Chief Protector of Aborigines, Major G. V. Dudley, D.S.O., Commissioner of Police, is only able to cover a short period of the year from his own knowledge and observation, but during that time he has been most energetic, has covered a great deal of country, and has observed with keenness and noted with care all matters pertaining to the well-being of the aborigines.

Sensational reports appear occasionally in the Southern press which seem intended to persuade the public that able-bodied aborigines are cruelly treated, and that the old and infirm are starved and neglected; but there is no truth at all in such statements. The police throughout the Territory, who are all Protectors of Aborigines, are most sympathetic towards them, and never fail to bring under notice any reasonable requirements or to suggest anything which, in their view, can be done for the benefit of their charges, and such requests and suggestions always receive careful attention.

I have observed that much has been written and spoken lately concerning "The Half-caste Problem." It is a matter with which I have been familiar for many years, and I know that, though perhaps not necessarily, it is practically the certain concomitant of the pioneering stage of the occupation of country inhabited by indigenous coloured natives by a white race. As the pioneering stage passes and the white population, especially the white female population, increases, the conditions which favour miscegenation gradually disappear, and a healthy public opinion against it finds such forcible expression that white men generally hesitate to incur the social odium involved, and the practice dies out. There are indications that, in some portions of the Territory, what I have called "the pioneering stage" is beginning to pass, but, owing to the stagnancy of the white population, the process here will be a slow one, and it will be some years before any substantial improvement in this regard is apparent.

That there is any other practicable solution of this "problem" I do not believe.

MISSION STATIONS.

The following Mission Stations have been subsidized during the year:—

Roper River Mission	..	..	..	..	..	£ 250
Bathurst Island Mission	..	..	..	..	..	250
Goulburn Island Mission	..	..	..	..	..	250
Elcho Island	..	..	..	..	..	250
Finke River	..	..	..	..	..	200
						<hr/> 1,200 <hr/>

During the year £5,870, exclusive of salaries, was expended in connexion with the Aborigines, and supplies of food and clothing for them were distributed to Police and Telegraph Stations throughout the Territory.

HALF-CASTE HOMES.

The Darwin half-caste children have now been removed from the Darwin Compound and are quartered in one of the Government Residences at Myilly Point under the supervision of a Matron. There are 21 girls in the Home who, in addition to receiving usual school tuition, are instructed in general domestic duties. The health during the year was very good.

The number of inmates at the Alice Springs Home is 54, consisting of the following:— Adult females, 5; children between the age of 4 and 13 years, males 22, females 22; infants between 1 and 3 years, males 2, females 3. The health and behaviour of the children have been very good.

The management of the Institution by Mrs. Standley has been favorably reported upon. The children receive excellent training in domestic work, and many of them have been placed in employment in private homes.

ABORIGINAL COMPOUND, DARWIN.

This Compound is situated between Emery and Myilly Points, Darwin, and was opened in 1913. It contains 40 huts, made of galvanized iron in good order, consisting of clinic, dormitory, kitchen, storeroom, bakehouse, &c. It is under the supervision of a Protector and Matron.

The average daily number of inmates at the Compound is 60, which includes travelling natives. Blankets are issued to those in need, the total last year being 1,100.

There is a garden and fish-trap near the General Hospital, and fish and vegetables are supplied to the Hospital when required. The Compound and Half-caste home are supplied daily. During the past year another garden was opened at Mindel Beach and a fish-trap at the Compound. It is estimated that these gardens and traps save the Department £25 per month, and are all operated by aboriginal labour.

The health and general condition of all the inmates is good.

INLAND HOSPITALS.

During the year the Australian Inland Mission opened a Hospital at Victoria River Downs. There are now two Inland Hospitals in the Territory, viz., at Marranboy and Victoria River Downs. These institutions are each staffed with two nurses supplied by the Mission Authorities. The total subsidy granted by the Government towards the erection and maintenance of these Hospitals was £3,000. A third Hospital is in course of construction at Alice Springs.

AGRICULTURE AND BOTANIC GARDENS.

The report of the Superintendent of Agriculture and Curator of the Botanic Gardens describes the work carried out in the Gardens at Darwin, and refers to the abnormally erratic rainfall, alluded to in the earlier part of this Report, and its disastrous effects on the cotton and peanut crops, from which, up to January, 1924, good results had been expected, the failure of which was a great disappointment not only to growers but to the Administration, which had done all in its power to foster and encourage the growing of these products in the Territory.

The Superintendent draws attention to the possibilities in connexion with tobacco growing, and suggests the appointment of a tobacco expert; but, before endorsing this, the question requires some study, as to labour requirements, irrigation, cost of production and transport from growers' holdings to market, and net profit to be realized.

So with coconuts, also referred to by the Superintendent. It has been long recognized that coconut trees will grow well along a large portion of the coast-line, but it is taken for granted that the production of copra by means of white labour is not a payable proposition at present rates of wages, and aboriginal labour is too insufficient, both in number and as to reliability, to encourage the investment of capital in this industry.

The Superintendent makes a recommendation for the establishment of a Forestry Reserve on Bathurst Island and the appointment of a Forest Officer, a suggestion good in itself, but not as yet of pressing urgency, as at present the timber on Bathurst Island is not being interfered with.

CHIEF HEALTH OFFICER.

The annual report of this Officer is, as usual, comprehensive and full of interest, and contains some account of work done by him in the Islands of the Malay Archipelago and Federated Malay States in the investigation of tropical diseases during his leave of absence from the Territory.

It is noteworthy, that the Department has been compelled to import to the Territory, Queensland grown cypress pine, because it found it impossible to procure locally-grown and milled cypress pine. This industry was at one time flourishing in the Territory. It is said that the best, and most easily accessible, timber has been cut down by now. Should that be the case, a possible re-forestation of those depleted patches of country would mean an asset of great value to the Territory in years to come. This timber is incomparable from a Territory point of view, because it resists the ravages of the white ant, an enemy, so far—practically—unsuccessfully combated against, if any other timber than cypress pine has been used for building purposes.

Touching the matter of freight and landing charges, the former remained unchanged at 70s. per ton, while the latter experienced a reduction from 18s. 3d. to 15s. 9d. per ton. Railage charges from Darwin station to the siding of the Government Store remained unchanged at 6s. per ton.

K. NYLANDER,
Government Storekeeper.

NORTHERN TERRITORY.

OVERSEAS TRADE FROM PORT OF DARWIN FOR YEAR ENDING 30th JUNE, 1924.

Articles.	Country to which Exported.	Total Quantity.	Value.
Fish (smoked or dried)	British Malaya and China	95,430 lbs.	£ 3,381
Fish (other)	British Malaya and China	105 cwt.	173
Cattle, ordinary	Philippine Islands	581	2,615
Hides, all other	British Malaya ..	..	1,266
Pearlshell	United Kingdom	31 cwt.	251
Sandalwood	China	177 cwt.	239
Metals, scrap	China	10 cwt.	10
Machinery, electrical	British Malaya ..	..	22
Furniture	British Malaya ..	..	26
Fertilizer, other	Philippine Islands	20 cwt.	13
Personal effects	Java .. ..	..	10
	Total ..	..	8,000

Total imports at Port of Darwin for year ended 30th June, 1924, valued at £14,432.

REPORT BY SUPERINTENDENT, CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY, ROPER RIVER.

I beg to report that the work of the Church Missionary Society, on its stations at the Roper River and at Groote Eylandt for the year ending 30th June, has been carried on as in past years. The number of aborigines on and around the station are decreasing slightly, but with us there have been three births and only one death.

The work done during the year has been the usual round, school, garden, stock-raising, house-building, housework, and fancywork on the Roper, while at Groote Eylandt we

have concentrated all our energies on buildings hoping to be able to get into working order there before the end of the present year.

The cotton grown was not a very great success. The seed arrived too late and a hot spell killed most of the seedlings, but we are hoping for an earlier planting and better luck this year.

H. E. WARREN,
Superintendent.

REPORT ON HERMANNSBURG MISSION, FINKE RIVER.

I beg to submit the Annual Report on the Hermannsburg Mission Station, Finke River, Northern Territory, for the year 1923-24.

1. *The Personnel of the Staff.*—Mr. G. A. Johannsen, manager; Mr. A. Heinrich, teacher, acting also as substitute for a missionary; Mr. M. A. Kleinig, book-keeper, and supervisor of natives when at work; Mrs. Johannsen, Mrs. Heinrich, and Miss Elsa Johannsen, teaching the native women and girls domestic arts.

2. *Religion.*—On 4th November Mr. Heinrich completed a course of instruction for those preparing themselves for holy baptism. The baptism was conducted by Rev. J. Riedel, who remained on the Station during Mr. Heinrich's furlough up to the beginning of March. The class numbered 28 adults. On the same day, the confirmation of one girl took place. The Sunday services were taken by Mr. Heinrich, Rev. Riedel, and four natives. The standard of Christian living attained by the native congregation is very satisfactory. Something new in the history of the Station is the missionary zeal manifested by the native Christians. Regularly, Henbury, Horseshoe Bend, Alice Springs, Arltunga, Deep Well, and other places have been visited by native evangelists. They have also established contact with the neighbouring Loritja tribe through several visits. Mr. Heinrich and some of the natives are engaged in translating bible stories into the Loritja dialect. The Aranda Church Home and School Book is at present

printed with some additions, amongst which are several hymns composed by native Christians. Rev. Strehlow's manuscript of the new testament in Aranda is being utilized. We are preparing the manuscript of St. Luke's gospel for the press. It will be printed by the British and Foreign Bible Society.

3. *Education.*—School work was adversely affected through the fact that Mr. Heinrich, before the arrival of Mr. Johannsen and family on 31st August, had to take over some of the various other duties, and that he was compelled to go on furlough in order to undergo an operation. Since his return he has thrown himself energetically again into school work. There are five grades in the school. Altogether sixteen subjects are given: Five in Aranda—Catechism, bible history, hymns, reading, and writing; sixteen in English—Reading, writing, copy-book writing, transcription, spelling, dictation, arithmetic, mental arithmetic, geography, drawing, and singing. School is held for three hours for five days per week, from 8.30 to 11.30. Out of school the girls are receiving lessons in sewing and other needlework, whilst the boys are employed in garden and other work under the supervision of Mr. Heinrich.

4. *Health.*—The community in general on the Station enjoyed good health. No epidemic visited our Station.

Minor ailments had to be attended to almost daily. Medicine dispensed, bandages, and wadding, amounted to the value of £27 9s. 3d.

5. *Stock*.—Our Mission owns—Cattle, 2,965; sheep, 200; goats, 250; horses, no exact figures can be given. In former years the horse-mustering was not properly attended to. The horses got out of hand. They greatly increased in number but, owing to inbreeding, deteriorated as regards stamp, and our new manager finds that he has to do away with quite a number, being absolutely unmarketable. When sending his last report he had not concluded the horse-mustering, consequently he was unable to give exact figures. We may deem ourselves lucky if we shall have 500 to 1,000 horses of a useful stamp when the mustering is concluded.

6. *Cultivation*.—Garden with date palms: 100 palms, in bearing some 30. Vegetable gardens: Two new ones made this year—one at Caprilja Springs, about 5 miles from the Station, 65 yards x 30 yards; the other $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from the Station, 80 yards x 45 yards. In the latter a whip has been erected.

7. *Progress*.—The following works were done besides any enumerated above:—Trapping yard, 20 yards x 30 yards; receiving yard, 12 yards x 15 yards; cattle yard, 30 yards x 30 yards; trapping yard, 47 yards x 70 yards; receiving yard, 20 yards x 27 yards; grass bungalow on Station for old and infirm, 15 feet x 35 feet; two wells sunk, one not completed; soakage scooped, motor roads, 50 miles.

8. *Statistics*.—There were on the Station on 30th June, 1924, 225 natives, of which there are 44 male and 46 female able-bodied adults; 19 males and 19 females old and infirm; children attending school, 30 males and 33 females; infants, 16 males and 18 females. Births 7, deaths 3; increase from within 4. Twenty-seven came in from outside the Station.

9. *General Remarks*.—During the year the training of the natives in handicraft has been done more systematically than hitherto. Tanning has proved a success, so that boot repairs and bootmaking is being done on the Station. Saddlery, blacksmithing, and woodwork are also taught. Three sewing machines are on the Station, and the women not only sew their own dresses but are now able to sew the men's trousers and shirts which had, up till now, to be sent up as ready-made articles. A leather sewing machine will shortly arrive on the Station. The Mission is sadly handicapped by shortage of funds. It works under the burden of a debt amounting to £3,500. We do not expect the Government to bear the greater part of the burden of financing the work, which has cost £3,000 during the last year, and which there is no chance of carrying on under £2,600 per annum. We are conducting a Mission Station, and support comes from the church standing behind it. We carry on stock-raising, and know that a good amount can be realized in good seasons from the results of this industry. But is it expecting too much that the Government should do more than give a subsidy of £200? We think not, and this, for two reasons (1) other Missions receive more, and (2) the maintaining of 38 old and infirm and 97 children, besides giving the children of school age a school and a teacher, which costs alone from £500 to £600 per annum, is a burden that ought to be shouldered by the Government.

JOHN J. STOLZ,
Chairman of the Finke River
Mission of the United
Evangelist Lutheran Church
in Australia.