

1885.
WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

REPORT

OF THE

Select Committee of the Legislative Council

Appointed to consider and report upon

QUESTIONS CONNECTED WITH THE

TREATMENT AND CONDITION OF THE ABORIGINAL NATIVES

OF THE COLONY.

~~~~~  
*Ordered by the Council to be Printed, 9th September, 1885.*  
~~~~~

PERTH:
BY AUTHORITY: RICHARD PETHER, GOVERNMENT PRINTER.

1885.

A 15.

EXTRACTED FROM THE MINUTES.

FRIDAY, 21ST AUGUST, 1885.

MESSAGES FROM HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR.—A Messenger from His Excellency the Governor being announced, the Speaker reported the receipt of the following Messages :—

* * * * *

Message No. 20.

F. NAPIER BROOME.

Referring to paragraph 22 of the Speech with which he opened the Session, the Governor has the honor to bring under the consideration of the Honorable the Legislative Council the Report of the Commission appointed in 1883 to consider questions connected with the treatment and condition of the Aboriginal Natives of the Colony.

2. This Report was received by the Governor in September last, and was presented to Your Honorable House, by a Minute in which the Governor stated that it would be considered during the recess, and would be transmitted to the Secretary of State.

3. The Governor now lays before the Council the despatch, No. 194 of the 28th of October last, by which the Report was transmitted to Her Majesty's Government, together with the Earl of Derby's despatch in reply, No. 16 of the 3rd of February last.

4. A Minute dated the 23rd of October last, giving orders on points connected with the management of Rottnest Prison, forms an enclosure to the Governor's despatch above mentioned. The Report of the Superintendent of Rottnest, laid recently before the Council, should be read in connection with this Minute.

5. The Governor will be obliged if Your Honorable House will give these documents, and the whole subject, that careful consideration which the Legislature of this Colony is ever ready to bestow on matters brought before it, and if the Council will favor him with suggestions as to the further action which should be taken on the Report of the Commission.

Government House, Perth, 21st August, 1885.

Ordered—That the consideration of Message No. 20 be made an Order of the Day for Monday 24th August.

WEDNESDAY, 26TH AUGUST.

MESSAGE No. 20 (REPORT OF COMMISSION ON TREATMENT OF ABORIGINAL NATIVES)—CONSIDERATION OF.—The Order of the Day for the consideration of Message No. 20 being read, The Honorable J. Forrest moved, That the Order of the Day be discharged, and that it be referred to a Select Committee; such Committee to consist of Mr. Brown, Mr. Marmion, Mr. Shenton, Mr. Harper, and the Mover.

Mr. Steere moved, That the election be by ballot.

The members having delivered to the Clerk a list of the names of members to serve on such Committee, the Clerk reported to the Speaker the following members as having the greatest number of votes :—The Honorable J. Forrest, Mr. Brockman, Mr. Burges, Mr. McRae, and Mr. Randell.

WEDNESDAY, 9TH SEPTEMBER.

MESSAGE No. 20 (TREATMENT OF ABORIGINAL NATIVES)—REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE.—Mr. Burges brought up the Report of the Select Committee appointed to consider His Excellency's Message No. 20, and moved, That it be received.

Question—put and passed.

Report received, and ordered to be printed.

REPORT

OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE, consisting of The Honorable John Forrest, Mr. Brockman, Mr. Burges, Mr. McRae, and Mr. Randell, elected by the Legislative Council to consider His Excellency's Message No. 20, together with the Report of the Commission appointed to consider the treatment of the Aboriginal Natives.

YOUR COMMITTEE, having carefully read the several documents submitted for their consideration, have to state that, with the exception of the Honorable John Forrest, they are not in accord with the suggestions of the Commission for the appointment of a Board of Management at Perth, as they consider such a Board unnecessary, and would, under the circumstances, tend rather to cripple the work of the object in view; but recommend that all Government Residents, Resident Magistrates, and Police Magistrates be appointed Protectors of Natives; also, such Justices of the Peace and country settlers as the Governor may please to appoint as Honorary Protectors: and that the duties of all such Protectors be those recommended in paragraph 3 of the Report, under head of No. 2, "Medical and Poor Relief."

Your Committee recommend that the Native Protectors appointed, as above, be empowered by the Governor to expend such sums of money as may be allotted to each district from the grant in aid of "Aboriginal Department," and to report quarterly to the Colonial Secretary, who will also report annually to the Legislative Council, as to the amounts expended, and the nature of the relief granted to natives in the various parts of the Colony.

Your Committee further recommend that where a well devised scheme of private mission work for natives may be proposed or established, that grants of land may be given, and also some assistance from the public revenue.

Your Committee approve of the suggestion made by the Commission to increase the cells accommodation to 280 cubic feet for each prisoner.

Your Committee fully concur in the Minute of His Excellency the Governor, dated 23rd October last, as to the necessary treatment of native prisoners, and the management generally of Rottneest Establishment; and are also pleased to find that the Superintendent has so fully carried out the instructions forwarded to him.

The Committee have also had before them a letter addressed to the Colonial Secretary by the Government Resident of Roebourne, suggesting that a small fee should be charged on all agreements entered into between employers and natives, to be devoted to the support of the aged and infirm natives. Your Committee recommend this suggestion to the consideration of the House, and to name the amount of the fee to be so charged.

THOS. BURGES,
Chairman.

9th September, 1885.