ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE ABORIGINES.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS

APPOINTED TO INQUIRE INTO THE PRESENT CONDITION OF THE ABORIGINES OF THIS COLONY, AND TO ADVISE AS TO THE BEST MEANS OF CARING FOR, AND DEALING WITH THEM, IN THE FUTURE;

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE AND APPENDICES.

PRESENTED TO BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY'S COMMAND.

By Authority:

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To our trusty and well-beloved Sir William Foster Stawell, Knight, Chief Justice of our Colony of Victoria, Frederick Race Godfrey, Esquire, M.P., Ewen Hugh Cameron, Esquire, M.P., George William RUSDEN, Esquire, Clerk of Parliaments, and Alfred William Howitt, Esquire, Police Magistrate:

GREETING:

Whereas the Governor of our Colony of Victoria with the advice of the Executive Council thereof has deemed it expedient that a Royal Commission should forthwith issue to inquire into the present condition of the Aborigines of our Colony of Victoria and advise as to the best means of caring for and dealing with them in the future: Now know ye that We, reposing great trust and confidence in your zeal, discretion, and ability, have authorized and appointed and by these presents do authorize and appoint you the said William Foster Stawell, Frederick Race Godfrey, Ewen Hugh Cameron, George William RUSDEN, and Alfred William Howitt to be our Commissioners for the purposes aforesaid: And we do by these presents give and grant unto you, or any three or more of you, full power and authority to call before you such person or persons as you shall judge likely to afford you any information upon the subject of this our Commission, and to inquire of and concerning the premises by all other lawful ways and means whatsoever: And We will and command and by these presents ordain that this our Commission shall continue in full force and virtue, and that you our said Commissioners or any three or more of you shall and will from time to time and at any place or places proceed in the execution thereof and of every matter and thing therein contained, although the same be not continued from time to time by adjournment: And We do hereby appoint you the said Sir William Foster Stawell to be Chairman of this our Commission: And lastly, We direct that you do with as little delay as possible report to us under your hands and seals your opinions resulting from the said inquiry.

Witness our trusty and well-beloved Sir George Ferguson Bowen, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Colony of Victoria and its Dependencies and Vice-Admiral of the same, &c., &c., &c., at Melbourne, this twenty-ninth day of January one thousand eight hundred and seventy-seven, and in the fortieth year of our reign.

G. F. BOWEN.

By His Excellency's Command,
JAMES McCULLOCH.

(Extract from Government Gazette.)

COMMISSION OF INQUIRY RELATING TO ABORIGINES.

The Governor, with the advice of the Executive Council, has been pleased to appoint John Gavan Duffy, Esq., M.P., to be a Member of the Commission of Inquiry into the present condition of the Aborigines of this Colony and to advise as to the best means of caring for and dealing with them in the future.

GRAHAM BERRY,
Chief Secretary.
REPORT.

To His Excellency Sir George Ferguson Bowen, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Colony of Victoria and its Dependencies, and Vice-Admiral of the same, &c., &c., &c.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY—

We, the Commissioners appointed to "inquire into the present condition of the Aborigines of this colony, and to advise as to the best means of caring for and dealing with them in the future," have the honour to submit the following Report:

The Board for the Protection of the Aborigines caused a special census to be taken of all natives in Victoria on the 15th of March last, and have thus ascertained a fact of some importance in considering their condition. The result confirms the opinion generally held that their number has rapidly diminished. The total, inclusive of half-castes and those of less close consanguinity, is 1,067; of these 527 are on stations under the Board, and the remaining 540 are described as residents of Victoria; but a large proportion frequent both banks of the Murray, visiting sometimes Victoria and sometimes New South Wales, and belong as much to one colony as to the other. A table of the result of the census is contained in Appendix A.

With regard to those on the stations, it is gratifying to report that considerable improvement has been effected in their general condition, and still larger results may be attained. They dwell in houses; are decently and suitably clad; live with their families around them; polygamy is not known, and marriage is respected. They follow employments of civilized people with some regularity—fully as much as can be expected of a race just emerging from barbarism; the vices of drunkenness and prostitution, though not unknown, are exceptional. The young receive sound education in schools, and the great leading truths of Christianity are instilled into the minds of all.

The stations, details of which are given in Appendix B, are six in number; four of these are Mission, receiving aid from the Government, stores, and grants of money for improvements; salaries and all other expenses being provided by the Mission. The other two are under the immediate management of the Board. All are on reserves of Crown lands.

On our appointment, we deemed it necessary to make ourselves acquainted by personal inspection with the actual condition and mode of management of the different establishments; and with this view they were visited by the Commissioners, information having been in the meantime requested by circulars addressed to Local Guardians and other persons interested in the Aborigines, we have been courteously furnished with all the information in their power; the answers, together with a synopsis, are given in Appendix C.

RAMAHYUCK.

At the head, presenting the most successful results, may be placed Ramahyuck. The site, on the River Avon, about fifteen miles from Sale, is well chosen; the land is of fair quality.

On our appointment, we deemed it necessary to make ourselves acquainted by personal inspection with the actual condition and mode of management of the different establishments; and with this view they were visited by the Commissioners, information having been in the meantime requested by circulars addressed to Local Guardians and other persons interested in the Aborigines, we have been courteously furnished with all the information in their power; the answers, together with a synopsis, are given in Appendix C.

The buildings consist of thirteen cottages, missionary’s house, church, school-house, and a boarding-house for children. These are arranged so as to form three sides of a quadrangle, presenting altogether a pleasing appearance, with an air of comfort pervading the cottages; most of which have fairly-kept gardens attached.

During a service on Sunday at which some of the Commissioners were present, the natives attended and conducted themselves in a natural and seedy manner, and as if they fully comprehended the act in which they were engaged. The singing was remarkably good, time being most accurately observed; a harmonium was very fairly played by a native woman. The children were examined, and answered with quickness and intelligence questions that could scarcely have been anticipated.
Arrowroot, hops, and vegetables form at present the principal products of the station. Ramahyuck arrowroot is a decided success; it is sold for a moderate price, and its quality is undoubtedly superior.

The natives find sufficient employment on the reserve; the wages they receive, together with rations, house, &c., enable them to support not only themselves but their families, and pay them, all things considered, better than if they left the station and worked as labourers. The system of payment by piecework is generally observed. Thrifty habits are encouraged; some of the men have deposited money in the savings bank; others entrust their savings to the manager. The natives subscribe to the Sale Hospital, whither the more serious cases of illness are sent.

The boarding-house, as it is termed, is a building for orphan children, which seems to be all that need be desired for such an institution. The single men live in a cottage by themselves.

The school is under the direction of the Board of Education. The examinations by the Inspectors of State-schools afford security that sound instruction is imparted and fair progress made by the scholars. The Ramahyuck school was the first State-school in which 100 per cent. of marks was received under the present result system. The excellence of the instruction, as well as the capacity of the children to profit by it, are shown in the testimonies of the Inspectors of schools, which we print in Appendix D. There is a library for the natives; the books are fairly used, but illustrated newspapers are peculiarly attractive to both old and young.

It is right to state that the purchase of a piece of land has been forced upon the superintendent of Ramahyuck for reasons he gives, and that the land is now used in connection with the station; we think it advisable for the future welfare of the establishment that this land should not be excluded from its limits.

LAKE TYERS.

Lake Tyers Station is about five miles eastward of the entrance to the Gippsland Lakes; it is on the further side of the lake, which is there about a mile wide. The reserve is bounded on two sides by arms of the lake, and fenced on the third.

The position of the station, on a promontory extending into Lake Tyers, is in some respects inconvenient. Under the present conditions, horses or bullocks required to transport stores or materials from the lakes' entrance, five miles distant, must either be driven a long way round a western arm of the lake, or compelled to swim across it. To remedy this inconvenience, a portion of land on the western side of the lake should be added to the reserve, enclosed, and used as a paddock. This would prevent both the straying of the cattle and a resort to the objectionable plan of the natives carrying stores from the lakes' entrance.

The buildings are—six cottages, a boarding-house for children, school, store, and houses for superintendent and schoolmaster. Service is held in the school-house. Arrowroot has been cultivated to a slight extent, about an acre and a half having been planted; the produce last year was 60 lbs. This product might be increased if provision were made for collecting rain water from the roofs of the buildings; that of the lake is not suitable, being brackish, and pure water cannot be obtained by sinking.

Some efforts have been made to burn lime for sale. During the season the blacks obtain employment in hop-picking in the neighborhood of Bairnsdale.

In material progress Lake Tyers Station was not found so far advanced as many of the others; nor could this be reasonably expected. The site has been chosen on special grounds; it lies to the east of the Tambo River, which seems to be regarded by the wandering blacks of Maneroo and Bidwell, in a way fully recognised by them, as the limit of their excursions westward into Gippsland, which limit they are still unwilling, for tribal reasons, to cross; it was selected with the view of inducing the wild and wandering natives to visit an Aboriginal station without bringing them into the more settled parts of Gippsland; and it still possesses this as well as other advantages. In the extreme eastern portion of the district, bordering upon Maneroo, there is a certain number of nomadic Aborigines, leading a wretched and, in some instances, depraved life. Uninviting as it may be in some respects, no other station affords such facilities as Lake Tyers for practical efforts to civilize these natives.
At the date of our visit, many of the regular residents were absent; but, on the other hand, a number of the East Gippsland blacks already referred to had for the first time visited the station. They arrived just before we did, seemed satisfied with their reception, and though not prepared to remain expressed an intention of returning at a future time.

The ordinary diet here does not include meat, except such as the natives themselves obtain by hunting.

The area of the station must be very considerably increased to meet even present requirements; the land in the neighbourhood is poor, and its extent would give an erroneous idea of its capacity for grazing purposes; it is unsuited for agriculture. If the number of the resident natives be increased, as may be reasonably expected, this extension should be promptly and liberally made.

The school is a capitation school under the Education Department.

Framlingham.

Framlingham Station is situated near Purnim, about fifteen miles from Warrnambool, the River Hopkins forming part of its boundary. The soil is not equal to that of the neighbourhood generally; there is, however, a tolerable proportion of good land.

The site has been fairly selected. The huts of the natives are moderately comfortable, but are ill-placed; no order has been observed, nor have any proper attempts at drainage been made. Some slight efforts at civilization are apparent in the cottages, where we observed articles of furniture that had been purchased by the natives with their own money.

Framlingham is one of the stations directly under the control of the Board for the Protection of the Aborigines. The wife of the manager teaches the children, but there is at present no school-room, and no regular system of instruction such as that observed on all the other stations. A building for scholastic purposes was in course of erection when we visited the place.

The enclosing the reserve is an absolute necessity, in order to prevent trespasses and confine the cattle belonging to the station. At the date of our visit some fencing was in progress; but in order to render it complete and sufficient the river frontage also requires special attention, for, as a boundary, the Hopkins does not, except in time of flood, afford a sufficient protection.

We feel bound to observe that Framlingham station bears an unfavourable comparison with any of the others in the arrangement of the buildings, the management of the land, as well as the efforts to civilize the natives. We by no means consider these defects irremediable; the soil is fair, the site unobjectionable, and a number of natives have been collected and are now attached to the locality.

Lake Condah.

Lake Condah Station is close to the lake of that name, and on a suitable site for an Aboriginal station; but a portion of it, and that, comprising some of the best land in the reserve, is comparatively useless. By the judicious expenditure of a comparatively small sum in constructing proper drains, a large extent of rich land might be rendered available for many purposes. The reserve is in part enclosed by a stone wall, erected by the natives; in part by a post-and-rail fence; part being still unenclosed. The natives were occupied the greater portion of last year in erecting fencing, which has been executed tolerably well.

Hops, arrowroot, and cattle, form the principal resources of the station.

The cottages present fair attempts at comfort; but the future re-arrangement of the buildings must be kept in view, and the boarding-house should be enlarged, so as to allow of separate beds for each inmate. The buildings themselves lack ventilation under the floors, and many are out of repair.

The results observable in the school were highly encouraging. There was a marked intelligence in the scholars, and, as distinctly pointing out what may be achieved by careful training, it may be mentioned that two Aboriginal youths were efficiently instructing classes of younger pupils in reading and arithmetic.
EBENEZER STATION.

The station called "Ebenezer," or "Lake Hindmarsh," is on the Wimmera, about ten miles north of Dimboola.

The principal buildings are of stone, well built and well arranged, the whole establishment presenting a clean and cheerful aspect. A good garden is attached, stocked with vines and fruit trees; it is irrigated in the summer by means of an apparatus devised by a former superintendent, and constructed by natives under his direction.

As regards the healthiness of the site, and its distance from public-houses, it is everything that can be wished; but the land of the reserve is of the very poorest description; a large proportion affords scarcely any pasturage; and, as sheep form one of the main supports of the station, this is a great drawback; the grazing capacity is not equal to the requirements, and the number of the stock is only maintained by the generous gifts of neighbours: an increase of area is therefore imperatively demanded.

In order to render it efficient, the station should be fenced as well as enlarged; part has been enclosed, and the whole could be completed by the natives under the supervision of the superintendent. We were pleased with the discipline and general appearance of the station.

It is under the management of the Moravian Mission, at whose expense the buildings were erected; here, as elsewhere, considerable progress in civilization has been attained.

CORANDERRK STATION.

Coranderrk, the other station under the management of the Board, is situated about two miles on the west side of Healesville—a short distance from the Melbourne road. The healthiness of the site is a moot point; the climate is beyond doubt more humid than that of Victoria generally, while the natives at present on the station have been gathered from all parts of the colony.

Whatever opinion, however, may be formed as to the sanitary effect of the climate, the construction, position, and arrangement of the cottages are, it must be conceded, most prejudicial to health. In some there are merely earthen floors; others, although provided with wooden floors, are without any attempt at ventilation underneath. The result of this must be that, during the wet season—in that neighbourhood of somewhat long duration—the inmates necessarily breathe in their habitations a mixture of atmospheric air and the vapors that rise out of the soil: the effect on health must be similar to, if not the same in degree as, that described by the author of "Old New Zealand" in the paragraph set out in the Appendix E.

It is necessary that special care should be taken to prevent the casting of offensive or injurious matter into the running water, which has been diverted into the station from the Badger Creek, and passes by the various huts.

Coranderrk is situated upon a ridge, along and somewhat on the slope of which the houses are placed, in a double row, fronting each other: the lower row necessarily receiving much of the drainage. This is most objectionable; it might be remedied by removing all the houses in the lower row to the higher part of the ridge, near the hop-kiln. This removal, as well as the placing all the huts in proper repair, with suitable drainage and efficient ventilation, should receive prompt attention; and these observations as regards drainage and ventilation are applicable in a greater or less degree to all the stations.

There is an extensive and profitable production of hops at Coranderrk which contributes to the support of the station; hop-picking was in progress at the date of our visit; as in the Kent hop-gardens, whole families were to be seen at work. The hop-grounds are capable of being largely extended; but in any case it will be necessary at the time of hop-picking, owing to the rapidity with which hops ripen, to augment the staff of pickers by the employment of some paid labourers from without.

Coranderrk is not fenced; as a consequence, a large proportion of the meat consumed on the station is purchased instead of being produced there.

Greater attention might not improperly be paid to the appearance of the grounds surrounding the settlement—no effort has as yet been made in this direction; the effect of tidiness, and per contra of untidiness, on the Aboriginal mind, is very important; the inculcation of tidiness forms part of civilization as well as of discipline.
Large sums have been expended on Coranderrk, but the Aborigines have not made such progress as might have been fairly expected. The physical condition of the residents indicates a very liberal scale of diet: their bearing and demeanor form a contrast with those of the natives on all the other stations.

**ABORIGINES NOT ON THE STATIONS.**

Five hundred and forty Aborigines are not domiciled on any of the stations; a concurrence of testimony points to their low condition; there are exceptions—such as that of two men, some women, and children who occupy comfortable cottages, and are employed on a station at Carr’s Plains; some natives in the Wimmera district, who are dependent on the charity of settlers for their food and clothing; and two at Camperdown, who are kindly cared for; but such instances are few in number. As to the others, one local guardian writes—

“There are about a dozen Aborigines in the locality, including two children. Most of them are given to drink.”

Another—

“There are six natives in the neighbourhood, who refuse to reside at the station; their habits and moral condition are degraded to the last degree.”

Others bear similar testimony; while, as to those in the district of the Murray, the following joint report was furnished, about two years ago, by a member of the Board for the Protection of the Aborigines, and the Board’s Inspector—

“From the very full information we have received from residents on both sides of the river, we have further come to the conclusion that during the last five years the tribes in question have been reduced in numbers by not less than one-half. This will be easily credited when it is borne in mind that the natives are readily engaged by sheep-owners and others as shepherds, bullock-drivers, boundary-riders, &c., at the highest current wages, and that almost the whole of these large earnings are devoted to the purchase of spirits either in this or the neighbouring colony, and for doing which there appears at present to be no practical obstacle; though, at the same time, it is probable that, were they really supplied with the amount of spirits which their wages should purchase, a very speedy termination of their existence would ensue. On occasions, particularly of being paid off at any woolshed, it has been pointed out to us, on testimony which it is impossible to doubt, that it is the custom of the tribe, four or five of whose members may have cheques amounting to £70 or £80 amongst them, to adjourn to some low hovel or public-house, where they are met by appointment by a white man, who has long had his eye on them, with a cart containing a few cases of spirits, when they proceed to dissipate, sometimes in one night, the whole proceeds of their previous labour. On such occasions atrocities are enacted which it would be difficult for those unacquainted with savage life to realize.”

We consider that all credit and thanks are due to the gentlemen who for years past have discharged honorably the duties of local guardians, and who have used their best endeavours to benefit the Aborigines; but no other result than that described in the extracts quoted could have ensued from a system which consists merely of the free distribution of stores and clothing, without providing any means whatever of guiding by education or controlling by discipline a people of barbarous instincts.

The Rev. F. A. Hagenafier, referring to the natives supplied through local guardians, says—

“There is one man living near Ebenezer; he writes an intelligent letter; and he says, ‘We prefer this place; we get a bag of flour, a bag of sugar, and have nothing to do for it, and enjoy ourselves.’ It is very natural that they should choose that.”

Another witness says—

“I have long since come to this conclusion, that if it be desired to civilize those blacks, they should all be brought in to one or other of those stations or divided between them.”

Further, it is found, that while this system is inefficacious to raise the condition of those who are the subjects of it, it is necessarily, in all instances, a positive hindrance to any improvement, as it not only detains from the stations those who might be attracted to them, but supplies a refuge for those who will not submit to the gentle but salutary discipline, necessarily part of the home life on a station. The ration depot at Towaninnie is a marked illustration of this injurious effect on the residents at Ebenezer; the local guardian at Towaninnie himself supports the view that these depots should be abolished.

**FUTURE TREATMENT.**

The failure of the few instances in which Aborigines have been afforded the opportunity of endeavouring to earn their own living, unaided by supervision, shows that a discontinuance of the existing stations would be unwise. It may be conceded
that their absorption in the general population may be looked forward to; but, judging from the past, so long a period must first elapse, it is unnecessary now to enter into the consideration of the subject. Nor do we feel at liberty at present to suggest as an alternative the hiring out or apprenticing of the native youths; from the evidence before us, it seems that they do not possess sufficient capacity and providence to make the arrangements essential for their own support. It is not to be inferred that they have not the power of learning trades, and therefore earning a fair subsistence; but they require, according to all our present information, to be subjected to a controlling and directing influence.

Another circumstance in considering this subject must not be lost sight of. The great object of teaching them trades, boarding-out, and apprenticing, should be not merely to enable them to support themselves, but to mix on equal terms with the rest of the community. Not unnaturally, a certain reluctance at present exists among colonists to associate freely with the natives; this, added to a peculiar sensitiveness on their part to any slight or rebuff, loads them to associate with those who will associate with them instead of selecting the most suitable companions. They may be tolerated, perhaps even petted, as children, but no sooner do they reach adult age, than their society is shunned, and a project which might be otherwise successful is thus marred.

So far as these objections are concerned, no distinction can well be drawn between the blacks and the half-castes; for, although a general impression appears to obtain that the half-caste is more easily educated and more readily civilized than the Aboriginal native, yet, the evidence given, and our own observation, lead to no such conclusion. The former may perhaps receive instruction more readily, though this seems doubtful, but they are just as liable to temptation, and yield as easily to it; an appearance of civilization is, no doubt, more quickly obtained, but it is only superficial, and fails at the moment of trial. The semblance of attention to outward appearance, and a ready conformity to conventional rules, have probably led to the misapprehension that any sound distinction could be drawn between the Aboriginal native and the half-caste.

We have already shown, from the superior condition of those on the stations, how advisable it is that all should be gathered to them. It may be supposed that attachments to localities, and hereditary tribal enmities, would militate against any efforts to bring them in; but the existing local attachments are, it must be borne in mind, of recent origin; on the breaking up of the tribes consequent upon the seizure of their territories, and on the decrease numerically of each tribe, the love of the land on which they were born, and which they considered therefore as theirs, became lessened. The tribes, as tribes, no longer exist, and the individuals yet remaining have formed associations which are not necessarily connected with former tribal boundaries. In fact they are now most attached to the spot in which they are best treated; their motto seems to be, ubi bene, ibi patria. The same observation applies to tribal enmities; and our examination of the stations has shown us instances where blacks from different tribes and districts are now living harmoniously together.

It cannot be denied that they look with a lingering regret upon the past; one of them—a native of the Darling—remarked to a Commissioner, that perhaps the neglect by the blacks of their national marriage-laws, and the consequent breach of ancient practice and duty, was bringing about the decay and disappearance of the race. Mr. Hagenaiër (questions 1126, 1127) tells of an instance in which an old man, though he would not prevent the marriage of his daughter to a man whom the intricate tribal laws would have forbidden her to marry, was yet so impressed with the reverence due to his ancient faith, that he disappeared on the day of the marriage. There was no personal dislike, for the father was on friendly relations with the son-in-law.

The Australian Aborigines are more a law-abiding people than is generally supposed; in their natural condition, their daily domestic and social life was regulated by well-understood and strictly observed rules. Examples illustrative of this might be multiplied indefinitely; but it may suffice to point out that, among the natives who have come under our notice, we have found that rules obtained respecting marriages in the tribe, forbidding them within a more comprehensive circle of consanguinity than with us, and even dictating those portions of the food obtained by the individual
which should be allotted to the various members of his family group; ignorance of
such facts has led to the belief that the Aborigines have no rules or laws of their
own; hence, that having no such rules or laws, they would not be inclined to obey
ours. From the information in our possession, we would suggest that the collecting
of the still wandering Aborigines should be under the sanction and guidance of some
regulations, and should be carried out by some persons whose authority they would
recognize; while at the same time the white population should be made aware by a
regulation authoritatively issued that they were enjoined not to oppose the gathering
of the scattered remnants; and the blacks themselves should be impressed with the
conviction that those who were engaged in collecting them to the stations were only
carrying into execution a law which they (the natives) were bound to obey.

If such a regulation were issued with the necessary formality, we feel convinced
that only a gentle but steady and sustained suasion would be necessary to effect the
required purpose.

The regulations referred to should specify by a notice the time after which no
more provisions would be given; and a formal proclamation should show a positive
intention of adhering to the time so fixed.

No false sentimentality as to the supposed hardship of gathering in the
Aborigines should be allowed to interfere with this step. It might be urged that they
are happy where they are, and that it were better to leave them alone; but it must
not be forgotten that leaving them alone is, in fact, abandoning them to lower and
lower stages of degradation.

We are of opinion that many now scattered abroad, and exposed to injurious
influences, might be collected on the stations in the manner alluded to in the evidence
(questions 1070, 1096 and 1097), a course which seems to have been in contem-
plation of the Board.

In addition, it may be well perhaps to have some statutory enactment, to make
more stringent the measures dealing with vagrancy and drunkenness of the natives,
and prohibiting the supply to them of liquor, extending after repeated offences to
forfeiture of the license of the offending publican, or of the vehicle and animals
of transport engaged. But we do not place much reliance on such measures; the
great difficulty lies in the enforcement rather than the provisions of the statute;
there are almost insuperable obstacles in obtaining the evidence necessary for a
conviction.

We have fully considered the expediency of forming an additional station for the
benefit of the natives who are not gathered to any of those now existing: it seems to us
that the advantages of the formation of such a station would not justify the necessary
expenditure; wherever it might be formed the majority of its inmates would have to
travel far to reach it, and by kindly inducements, such as we recommend to be used
it would be as easy to win them to existing stations as to a new one. By these means
also the machinery already established would suffice, with only the additional expendi-
ture required for food and clothing of the new arrivals, and economy might thus be
practised.

In recommending a policy of dealing with the Aborigines on stations, rather
than of their dispersion throughout the community, the evidence taken before us
justifies the expectation, we are glad to state, that such a course would not entail a
permanent charge upon the public revenues. The cost per head at the Lake Wel-
ington Mission Station, in 1876, barely exceeded £6; and without asserting that the
fencing and stocking the reserve would at once make it self-supporting, the manager
declares (questions 991, 1151, &c.) that it would be "in a very short time self-supp-
porting." To enlarge the stations whose area is insufficient, to fence them in and
stock them, would doubtless involve an increased expenditure for some years; but this
would be the truest economy, and would lead to the best results as regards the natives
themselves.

They attach importance to the stations being considered theirs*; this seems to us
a natural and proper feeling; if it were extended so that they entertained a similar
interest in the stock on these stations, not merely would they take more care of the
stock itself, but we believe a step would thus be gained towards producing a convic-
tion that they could and that they actually were supporting themselves.

* Letter No. 22, Appendix C.
Intimately connected with the question of self-reliance is the mode of remunerating them for the labour which they now perform. The present system works unequally; payments are made only on some, not on all stations; all are fed and clothed, although not alike; where no payments are made, there is no incentive to the able man to work, who sees that he receives no more for his exertions than food and clothing, which are equally given to the indolent and feeble. We recommend that some payment should be made to all who labor, but that, so far as practicable, it should be for work performed by contract, and not by time, thus forming an incentive to industry.

The manager on each station may be empowered to sanction engagements by the natives with employers off the station, but his authority should be supreme in the community he governs; it will be his interest to permit them, if circumstances are favourable; it would be highly injurious to his influence, and to the Aborigines themselves, if, in opposition to his judgment, the practice were allowed under circumstances which he might think unfavourable.

We have also arrived at the conclusion that when the natives are permitted to engage themselves in service to private employers, it would be well to give the manager of the Aboriginal station power to insist at his discretion that the wages should be paid through him to the native employed.

We recommend, in order to render the stations self-supporting, the following measures:

First. That each station be enclosed with a suitable fence.

Secondly. Be suitably stocked.

It is imperative to provide stock of a kind that will prove remunerative. Neither money nor trouble should be spared in making a judicious selection in the first instance, and the stock should then be allowed gradually to increase to the amount required; until this point has been attained, it would not be possible to diminish the annual grant. In fact, to meet these requirements, it would be necessary, in addition to the present sum, to allot a sufficient amount to fence the stations and stock them.

Thirdly. (a.) That the area of Ebenezer Station be sufficiently enlarged, viz., to about 17,600 acres.

(b.) That Lake Tyers be provided with a block of land (say 640 acres) on the west side of the lake, as well as a general increase of the original reserve to 10,000 acres.

Fourthly. That steps be taken for the establishment of the following pursuits, where practicable, on the stations; and that where already commenced and found suitable, they should be extended and energetically prosecuted, viz.:

- Growing hops,
- osiers,
- arrowroot,
- olives,
- walnuts,
- garden seeds for sale,
- Drying fruit,
- Keeping bees,
- Making coir matting,
- baskets and wicker-work generally,
- Farming,
- Horticulture,
- Rough carpentering,
- blacksmith's work,
- Sewing,
- Cooking and domestic work.

And with reference to this, we would specially direct attention to the growth of osiers and basket-work.

Fifthly. That the Aborigines should receive a fair remuneration for their labour, and that, so far as possible, payment should be made for the amount of work actually performed by contract and not by time.
Sixthly. That the buildings, where necessary, should be re-arranged in a manner conducive to order and regularity of appearance, attention being devoted to ventilation and drainage, especially underneath the floors.

Seventhly. As a means of preventing the blacks from squandering their money, there should be on each station a store at which articles suited to the tastes and wishes of the Aborigines should be kept, for sale to them at cost prices. These stores should contain not merely necessaries, but comforts and small luxuries. The sight of merchandise of this description in a local store would probably tend very much to industry and the saving of money received as wages.

The schools at the stations should be State schools. This is important, not only in order to have the security of the examinations by Inspectors of schools as to the thoroughness of the instruction imparted, but also that the superintendents of stations should not, in addition to their other multifarious duties, be charged with this responsibility.

With respect to the general management of the stations, success, in our opinion, depends in a great measure on the fitness and energy of the manager. An earnest active man imparts a tone to the whole establishment, maintaining order by the influence he exercises rather than by the enforcement of any laws. Such a person must necessarily possess a special combination both of qualities and attainments; he ought to have received a liberal education; be capable of governing others; tolerably acquainted with most handicrafts; conversant with gardening and husbandry and the management of stock. A long and systematic training seems essential to the attainment of these various requisites. Possessing qualifications which would command a high remuneration, he must yet be so thoroughly in his work that he will rest perfectly satisfied with his position. We see no prospect of obtaining such a class of men excepting amongst missionaries who have specially devoted themselves to this occupation. Our own observation has shown us that, without comparison, stations under the missionaries are the most effective. We therefore strongly recommend that all be placed under similar management; and that the Board should be empowered to encourage the coming of trained missionaries from Europe.

We need hardly observe that when a competent manager has been obtained, his authority should in the main be paramount over his charge. Nothing can be more detrimental to his influence than a feeling that his decisions can be impeached by ex parte representations. If the Government appoint a Board composed of upright able men, and the actions of the Board are, in the last resort, susceptible of revision, there seems ample security for proper management, without that dangerous premium upon insubordination and discontent which would be furnished by a feeling that the orders of the manager in charge could be lightly set aside.

The fact that a manager is, as regards the range of his duty to the blacks, secure from undue interference ought not to involve his freedom from supervision and control with respect to produce from the stations as well as grants from the Government.

Through the Board for the Protection of the Aborigines, proper guarantees are provided for all necessary checks.

We have found the various managers ready to give all information in their power. There was the most frank communication with regard to the produce of the Mission Stations raised by the labour of the blacks under the supervision of the missionary manager.

We may observe, in passing, that we think it would be well if the accounts of each station were to show annually the amounts thus raised, and expended in maintaining or increasing the comfort of the inmates. The account should not of course be merged in the expenditure of the Government grant, but should be merely a separate statement which might contain much interesting information; the practice of one station thus leading to wholesome improvement in the management of another.
The Board for the Protection of Aborigines is constituted under the Act No. 349.* It consists of the responsible Minister by whom the Act is administered, and who is ex officio chairman, and as many members as the Governor in Council may from time to time appoint. As the chairman himself rarely attends, a vice-chairman, annually elected by the members, is virtually the chairman.

The number of members last year was thirteen, of whom a list is given in Appendix G. The meetings, however, are seldom attended by more than six or seven members, and the business practically falls to a minority who take an active part in it.

The Act empowers the Governor in Council to appoint local guardians and local committees. Of the former, a list is given in Appendix G; but the power to appoint local committees has not, so far as we are aware, been exercised.

There are regulations under the Act (vide copy in Appendix F.) for the following purposes, viz.:

1. For prescribing the place where any Aboriginal or tribe of Aboriginals shall reside.
2. For prescribing the terms on which contracts for and on behalf of Aboriginals may be made with Europeans, and upon which certificates may be granted to Aboriginals who may be able and willing to earn a living by their own exertions.
3. For apportioning amongst Aboriginals the earnings of Aboriginals under any contract, or, where Aboriginals are located on a reserve, the net produce of the labour of such Aboriginals.
4. For the distribution and expenditure of moneys granted by Parliament for the benefit of Aborigines.
5. For the care, custody, and education of the children of Aborigines.
6. For prescribing the mode of transacting the business of and the duties generally of the Board, &c., &c.

Although it is desirable that the Board should consist of persons possessed of varied information with regard to the Aborigines and the management of their affairs, it is evident that want of uniformity of action and other evils may result from a large body and irregular attendance. To obviate this, we recommend that the Board should be reduced to seven members, with a quorum of three, and that non-attendance for three consecutive meetings without permission should be held to vacate membership.

The Minister should not be ex officio chairman. His multifarious duties prevent his attending to details, and it is therefore desirable that the office should be filled by the vice-chairman, who is now practically chairman.

It seems highly convenient that if any member of Parliament has the time at his disposal, and is desirous to devote himself to the philanthropic labours of the Board, there should be at least one such member of it; by this means Parliament can receive extra viva voce information of the highest authority if at any time questions should be raised as to the principles or details connected with the management of the Board.

The care of the natives who have been dispossessed of their inheritance by colonization is a sacred obligation upon those who have entered upon the land. Various causes tended to the destruction of the native race; feuds in the earliest times brought numbers of them to death by violence; diseases, and the passion for drink, to which all savage races are prone, hastened their decay; their degradation was no less shameful to humanity than appalling in the sight of Christian men. But for the action of Parliament, the last pages of the history of the Aborigines of Victoria would have been written in characters of reproach to the colonists.

When the revenues derived from the territory of Victoria are compared with the pittance required to continue the policy initiated by Parliament on behalf of the scanty remnant of the natives who are left, it cannot be doubted that the Government will gladly keep alive, on their behalf, the system which has already done so much good.

* Appendix F.
There are those who think it premature to assert that the race must necessarily disappear altogether, and that, though at present they have not the moral force to hold their own in the struggle of life,* they may, in future generations, acquire the resolution and provident habits which would enable them to do so.

Whether this be too sanguine a view or not, none can deny that the colony is bound to temper, as best it may, the injurious effects which the occupation of Victoria has produced on the Aboriginal inhabitants; a small sum, comparatively, is required to maintain the stations now in existence, and to make them all, or nearly all, self-supporting; even if the race is fated to disappear, those stations will still be valuable as public property; and, in any case, there will survive the memory that the Government of the day did not neglect a sacred duty to those who, by no act of their own, became subject to its control.

In concluding their labours, the Commissioners desire to acknowledge the assistance they have received from their Secretary, Mr. E. J. Thomas.

All which we humbly submit for Your Excellency's consideration.

(L.s.) WILLIAM F. STAWELL, Chairman,
(L.s.) FREDERIC RACE GODFREY,
(L.s.) E. H. CAMERON,
(L.s.) G. W. RUSDEN,
(L.s.) JOHN GAVAN DUFFY,
(L.s.) ALFRED WILLIAM HOWITT,

by WILLIAM F. STAWELL, Chairman.

* Evidence, question 925.
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I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

Christian Ogilvie,

Vice-Chairman of the Board for the Protection of the Aborigines.

24th April 1877.
Christian Ogilvie,
24th April 1877.

continued,

there is a large number of aborigines come in from the Snowy River and the mountains. There are camps on the station, that after they have left the rule of the schoolmaster they have gone back and lost what they we must look for as our results. The savage man, as a rule, can never be expected to amalgamate with

but what we read leads us to know it is very likely. The experience of the Government of New South

"King Billy" at Coranderrk. He was living just as he did when we first came here; and at Lake Tyers gained 2—Yes, because they are still in contact with savage life on the station.

treating the children of aborigines just as we would white children, as far as apprenticeship goes. If the occupations of any kind, pastoral or agricultural?—Anything. I would make the experiment now of

persons ?—Yes. The discipline ; they are losing what they have acquired at those stations in the way of discipline ?—The

them with the idea that they are at liberty to go as they please; that seems to be the difficulty ?—You

their returning to their old habits ; the point is how you can prevent that, and yet at the same time inspire

the stations they must be amenable to the discipline there, as I do not imagine many would take advantage

of the liberty offered them."

prospect, that he had something specific in the way of an engagement.

would be the duty of the Board or of the manager to ascertain that there is something more than the

be preferable to a certain extent to his going out on a wild speculation of obtaining employment ?—It

now ; and not long ago I stood beside his bed with a tin dish, the man coughed up a great deal of blood

out you should allow them to go without any restraint, and doing that is open to the objection that all the

people increase, and they will.

We are now talking of the adults, the present generation, the present adults ?—Yes.

17. They will do that?—That is my opinion; but practically, as I have already said, very few would take advantage of it. If you told them that they all might go away, a few would go away; but I am not chiefly of Coranderrk now; but it would show them that they could do just as they please. There is a law in force just now that they cannot go away from the Station without a pass from the Board—an Order in Council. However, I have let it be known that so long as they get a note from the Manager, that will pass; but only yesterday a man named Jimmy Barker came, and I asked him for his order on Mr. Halliday, and he said he had none. That man is somewhere in the Deep Creek district now; and not long ago I stood beside his bed with a tin dish, the man coughed up a great deal of blood in it.

18. Do you not think that the compelling a father to take his children with him, or rather not allowing him to go unless he saw a mode of providing for wife and children, or his wife at all events, would be preferable to a certain extent to his going out on a wild speculation of obtaining employment?—It would be the duty of the Board or of the manager to ascertain that there is something more than the prospect, that he had something specific in the way of an engagement.

19. If he had not would you not allow him to go?—No.

20. Is not that rather in opposition to your idea of encouraging self-reliance?—It would be the foundation of a system of that sort, I imagine, as I have said here—[referring to the letter]—"This on the adults would probably have no other practical effect than showing them that if they voted to remain on the stations they must be amenable to the discipline there, as I do not imagine many would take advantage of the liberty offered them."

21. I quite see the object to be attained, and it would be most desirable, but to carry that principle out you should allow them to go without any restraint, and doing that is open to the objection that all the attention already expended on them would be thrown away. They are civilized according to your opinion to a certain extent; if they are allowed to go as they please, humanity speaking, is there not a certainty of their returning to their old habits? the point is how you can prevent that, and yet at the same time inspire them with the idea that they are at liberty to go as they please; that seems to be the difficulty?—You refer to the chance of their drinking.

22. Not only that, they with their habits of life are reluctant to return to any submission to discipline; they are losing what they have acquired at those stations in the way of discipline?—The practical great good that has been done by the policy that has been adopted towards just as they please.

23. To go to the younger aborigines, you say that apprenticeship should be encouraged to suitable persons?—Yes.

24. For what occupations or trades; would you confine the apprenticeships to trades only or to occupations of any kind, pastoral or agricultural?—Anything. I would make the experiment now of treating the children of aborigines just as we would white children, as far as apprenticeship goes. If the child showed a tendency towards mechanics he might be apprenticed to a mechanic. The school children are quite as far advanced as white as a rule, and that is a great test.

25. Have you not noticed with regard to those children that have grown up, become men and women on the station, that after they have left the rule of the schoolmaster they have gone back and lost what they gained?—Yes, because they are still in contact with savage life on the station.

26. What is your experience in contact with savage life upon the station?—Well, semi-savage life. There was an old man named Coranderrk, who was living just as he did when we first came here; and at Lake Tyers there is a large number of aborigines come in from the Snowy River and the mountains. There are camps of people living just the same as their children did thirty or forty years ago.

27. But you do not find that the aborigines who have become accustomed to the huts and all the comforts of the station go back to their gunyahs and the savage life?—No, we have not found that actually, but what we read leads us to know it is very likely. The experience of the Government of New South Wales, I think, has been that there is that tendency.
28. Does not that show that it would be better to keep them in than to induce them to go out?—I
think not.
29. Of course it does?—It depends upon how you look on the people on the stations. I look on
them as divisible into classes.
30. Certainly; but the great difficulty in your suggestions is to carry them into practice, how to
overcome those practical difficulties is the question. Have you ever known, in your experience, a single
instance of a young native adopted, if I may so speak, by a person and educated and trained and taught,
who did not relapse into his savage habits, one who continued steadily pursuing the life of a civilized
European, after being taught and trained as well as any European in his station would have been?—No.
I may say, however, that I have two letters in the office with a half-caste, of the name of Barrham, who has
married a white woman, and those letters tell me that he has heard that Mr. Goodall is going to leave
Framlingham, and he is asking for the situation. I do not know the man.
31. That is the case of a half-caste, and who perhaps implies more than half his nature from the
European side?—Well, there are a large number of these people half-castes.
32. I know that, but we are speaking of the adults on the station, and the advisabilities or other-
wise of their going out and earning their living away from their families?—I do not assert that it is an
unmixed good, but as a principle it is better than this artificial way of bringing them up.
33. But the question is, how can you carry that principle with ordinary caution into practical appli-
cation, even supposing that the boys might be apprenticed in that way? but, as I said, that would be an experi-
iment accompanied with a great deal of risk indeed. How would you deal with the women and the girls?—
Sometimes the same as in the orphan schools.
34. Boarded out?—No, educated on the station and made fit for service in a very good house; she
would be hired out to some highly respectable mistress.
35. Considering the very early age at which these girls arrive at puberty, what is the prospect of
their remaining chaste if they are not married soon?—They could come back to the station. Besides, as
far as the girls are concerned, it does not seem so hard on them as it does on the men, because plenty of
white men will cohabit with a half-caste girl, but you will not so readily get a white woman to cohabit with
a half-caste man.
36. Do you consider it desirable to apprentice these girls and young women as freely as you would
the boys and young men?—Yes; only you would need to be more careful as to whom you put them with.
37. Do you think it would be a more desirable thing from your experience to encourage them as
much as possible to stay on the stations with their families. I mean the adult men, but at any time to say,
"If you choose to go away you can, but if you go you do not leave your wives here unless you contribute
to their support"?—That would be equivalent to none going at all.
38. Would not that be better?—It all depends upon what policy is to be pursued towards them for the
future.
39. I am not speaking of the children, but of the old people?—That is only my opinion, I may be
wrong.
40. We see with you that it is desirable to decentralize and impress on all the blacks that they are
at liberty to go, and we might let them, if we could be satisfied they would conduct themselves properly
after they leave; but the great obstacle is this, that the apparent civilization which they have now arrived
at may all be dissipated and lost in a moment, and the question is, are we justified in carrying out our wishes,
subject to these risks, or how can we lessen these risks or avoid them; in other words, how can we safely
and sensibly carry these principles into practice. We are bound, I presume, to encourage family life amongst
them, and the question is, how to carry this principle with ordinary caution into practical application.
41. Ought he not to take his wife with him?—I think that would be the second stage; I think that
would be too risky on the part of the man at first, he might prostitute his wife about the country.
42. That is the case of a half-caste, and who perhaps imbibes more than half his nature from the
European side?—Well, there are a large number of those people half-castes.
43. Why?—I think the other women would look after the woman, and be a check upon her.
44. Would not the women do that on the station?—No.
45. Ought he not to take his wife with him?—I think that would be the second stage; I think that
would be too risky on the part of the man at first, he might prostitute his wife about the country.
46. That is only natural, and we must
47. If I follow you rightly, you think the object is so desirable that we would be justified in incurring
the risks which you admit to exist?—Yes.
48. And you do not see any better mode than that which you have suggested of avoiding those
risks?—No; that is as far as my knowledge goes. Why we poor human beings never undertake anything
without a large amount of risk.
49. No doubt, but if these persons are entrusted to us we ought to be careful not to expose them to
any risks that caution and thought on our part could avoid?—You would find as to the practical effect of
it, say at Coranderrk, I do not suppose there would be more than half-a-dozen of the men that would take
advantage of it for six months.
50. Mr. Hagenauer does encourage their going out to work occasionally, does he not?—Yes, Mr.
Hagenauer, when I was down there, impressed it on me.
51. I understood that in that case it was merely going out for such work as ploughing and shearing,
and harvesting, a short job as it is termed, a few weeks, about six weeks. That is in itself desirable, and
not open to the dangers of the other?—I think it should be borne in mind that, good as these missionaries
are, they like having their little flock around them for the sake of the religious influence, and would not
therefore be so likely to encourage the natives in going away from the station.
52. That is only natural, and we must not unduly press our views against that feeling. Mr. Hage-
naeur does not object to the idea of their going out, does he?—In the last report Mr. Hagenauer desires
me to "draw the attention of the Board to the necessity of initiating some system whereby all the boys,
after leaving school, may, if they object to remaining to work on the station, be apprenticed out to farmers,
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Christian Ogilvie, Esq., on the benefit of the aborigines, down the Lower Murray, where the Coranderrk natives with weak chests plight go down in the winter. contemplate that as a practical thing?—Yes; but that station was the station lower down the Murray, for Lower Murray, to which any suffering from lung disease might be removed in the winter. That apparently suggested that they are to be removed back again in the summer?—Did you severe climate there on many of the people, by forming a new station in the more congenial climate of the discipline, it may be well to remind you that it was the intention of the Board to counteract the effect of the will not bear favorable comparison with any of the other stations, either as to its climate or its state of the warmer climate, did you contemplate their being removed backwards and forwards?—The idea of the Board--winter, who suffered from cold, from Coranderrk, and removed to a station on the Murray for the sake of Murray?—Yes, that refers to what the Board said in their report.

The contracts were out for it, and then this money could not be spent. then one of the members of the Royal Commission made a to-do, and the money is lying in abeyance now, secured for the station?—No doubt. Parliament voted £1,000, part of which was to be spent on that, but.

Would it not conduce to the profit of the station if the run were fenced and the cattle all secured for the station?—No doubt. Parliament voted £1,000, part of which was to be spent on that, but.

Put it this way, one person may treat a native with kindness, and another with contempt; is their treatment such as to encourage them to work the training they have received.”

30. Do you think there are any difficulties in the way of aborigines who leave the station to hire tradesmen, or others, as it is evident that it is at this period of their lives that the proper bias can be given to them to become useful members of society, and practically prove the advantages they have derived from the training they have received.”

54. What machinery, if any, would you establish for selecting the persons with whom the young should be apprenticed; do you think there should be some control of the Board, or somebody, as to the character of the persons with whom they were apprenticed?—Yes, certainly. At present there is a system of gates. If the present system was strictly carried out, no aboriginee has a right to be away without a pass filled up on parole.--[The witness handed to the Commission a printed copy of the form referred to.]

55. Is that carried out?—No.

56. You think something of that sort should be done; that is my question?—Yes, the same as the plan adopted in the Orphan Schools, I think at Emerald Hill. But the fact is there has been so little encouragement to us to work these things thoroughly, that it was very little worth while putting one's thoughts down. I have torn up more than I have kept.

57. About Coranderrk, have there been any evils arising from the intrusion of white persons hanging about or trespassing about the place?—No; I should say not. Of course when I first went up there I heard a great many warnings. I was sent up to report on Coranderrk, but it does not do to put in reports all you hear. If I had done that I could have given a very queer report.

58. Then you think there have been no evils from the proximity of Coranderrk to Hovelsville?—Yes, I think there have been; but I object to state as fact what came to me as mere hearsay. For instance, such a story as that, when the roads were being made there, the road party would fire so many guns at night as a signal that so many women were required in their camp. That was only hearsay.

59. I only ask what has come under your own observation?—Nothing in the way of prostitution. I remember once, when I was called out of my bed at 12 o'clock by the overseer, who had caught two women and brought them to my verandah, one of whom charged the other with having come out of a man's hut.

60. What I ask is, whether any evils have come before you arising from the intrusion or frequenting of that place by visitors or trespassers?—No; those are things that you seldom see, if I guess rightly what you refer to.

61. I do not refer to anything in particular. I simply want to know whether anything has come before you which shows that there has been undue trespass or intrusion by the white inhabitants of the district?—No, not that I am aware of.

62. Is the run fenced?—No.

63. Are the cattle easily managed; do they run loose and mix with the neighbours' cattle?—Yes.

64. Are there no inconveniences with that?—The neighbours are not inconvenienced, but perhaps the Coranderrk people are. Possibly the neighbours get some of the Coranderrk calves, and not a little of the Coranderrk grass.

65. Would it not conduce to the profit of the station if the run were fenced and the cattle all secured for the station?—No doubt. Parliament voted £1,000, part of which was to be spent on that, but.

66. Do you think that in consequence of that not being fenced there is a great deal of waste of the labor and time of the inmates?—Yes, necessarily so.

67. You are aware that Mr. Halliday encourages saving by the blacks; has that been encouraged, or does it exist at Coranderrk?—I am not aware of it. I hear from Mr. Halliday that one man is saving money.

68. He does not do it through the intervention of the manager?—No; perfectly independent.

69. Do you think there are any difficulties in the way of aborigines who leave the station to hire out; are they treated on such terms by the whites with whom they work as to make their work pleasant to them?—Yes; because they get high wages.

70. Are there any difficulties in the way?—No. At the Murray they get as high wages as the white people, and higher.

71. I do not refer to their pay, but this point. Supposing a man engages and works upon a station, is his treatment by the whites there such as to be agreeable?—My experience is that he would be always looked upon as a black fellow.

72. Put it this way, one person may treat a native with kindness, and another with contempt; is their treatment such as to encourage them to work to them?—Yes; because they get high wages.

73. I observe that you suggested that the Coranderrk natives, who suffer from cold, should be removed to the Murray. Do you mean moved backwards and forwards every year?—No, that is explained by this report.

74. I mean, in your own letter, that the natives who suffer from cold should be removed to the Murray?—Yes, that refers to what the Board said in their report.

75. Apart altogether from the Board, when you mentioned the natives being taken away in the winter, who suffered from cold, from Coranderrk, and removed to a station on the Murray for the sake of the warmer climate, did you contemplate their being removed backwards and forwards?—The idea of the Board.

76. I want your own idea, and what you now think, apart altogether from the Board?—Mr. Curr and I, when we went down the Murray, were instructed to look out a suitable locality.

77. That is not the point. Will you kindly refer to your own letter?—As the Coranderrk station will not bear favorable comparison with any of the other stations, either as to its climate or its state of discipline, it may be well to remind you that it was the intention of the Board to counteract the effect of the severe climate there on many of the people, by forming a new station in the more congenial climate of the Lower Murray, to which any suffering from lung disease might be removed in the winter.

78. That apparently suggested that they are to be removed back again in the summer; did you contemplate that as a practical thing?—Yes; but that station was the station lower down the Murray, for the benefit of the aborigines, down the lower Murray, where the Coranderrk natives with weak chests might go down in the winter.