79. Would you move the natives backwards and forwards, then?—Yes, I think the other place would be a sanatorium to Coranderrk.

80. Would not it be better to take the whole of them, according to your own opinion as a practical man, if it is at all necessary, in consequence of the climate not suitling some of them, to make a total change—transfer them completely?—No, because there are strong aborigines at Coranderrk, and they have become attached to Coranderrk. I think it would be cruel to remove them.

81. Do you think that they are so much attached if they enjoyed the same treatment anywhere else they would not be just as well satisfied?—Yes, only there must be none of this parliamentary interference.

82. Never mind that. If you gave them the same liberty and food elsewhere, is their love of the locality so strong that they would not be so happy as they are at Coranderrk on another station?—No, they would not.

83. Why?—Because of their love of the place. None of us like leaving home.

84. That is not their home, or else they have acquired a domicile in a very short time. How long have they been there?—I have the original document, which I think will show you what I mean. [The witness searched amongst his papers. At any rate, they would have a great objection to go.

85. Do you not think that the objection rests on this, that they see that the discipline at Coranderrk is not so strict as at other places, and the quantity of food would not be so great in proportion to the work; that it is their liberty of ease and of food?—Yes.

86. And that is all?—No, they would not be so content.

87. You think there is a proportion of them attached to the place as it stands?—Yes.

88. On what does your opinion rest, for it is not their original place. They have been there a comparatively short time. They are not as advanced in age?—They have become attached to the place.

89. I want to know your reason for your opinion. Why do you make that statement. How do you discriminate between the attractions of food and liberty and the attraction of their love of the place?—Because they are terrible gossips, and they can always get a white man to gossip with and to write to the member of the district, and he will make a fuss.

90. Then by your own showing that is not locality. What you say may happen to occur there, and if we gave them the same opportunities of gossip elsewhere your objection would be removed?—Parliament does not care to interfere in any other locality.

91. But that has nothing to do with the love of locality, and I want a single fact in proof of that, and have not heard one except gossiping in this way and their immediate vicinity to Melbourne, and the consequent ease with which they can make their grievances known, that is propinquity to Melbourne, but I understand by what you say that they have a love of that spot beyond any other spot?—I accept your explanation then, and say I have made a mistake.

92. Then why do you think they would not just as easily go anywhere else?—[No answer.]

93. Cannot you call to mind instances of a dozen who have cleared out for a warm climate?—Not a dozen, that was to a station.

94. But was not their idea that they should get back to the country which they liked? I think I could mention a dozen names. Have they not sometimes said that they would like to go to the Loddon and the Murray?—Yes.

95. Why?—That is love of locality. You are speaking of an exception. I spoke of a rule.

96. Those men who love the locality, are they not gossips and idlers? Those who are supposed to have such a love of locality, are they not the men who are known as the turbulent spirits?—I have made a mistake in using that word "locality;" we will change it.

97. The love of locality is a feeling that ought to be regarded, but in my opinion it is utilized rather by their being kept at Coranderrk instead of their going to the Loddon and the Murray. A large number are kept away from the Murray tribe where they wish to be. They like Coranderrk for numerous reasons, you are aware; but that is not love of the spot for the sake of the spot, but the love of the flesh-pots. Is that so, or is it not?—Yes.

98. Have you often spoken to the natives about their wishes about Coranderrk?—No.

99. Have they made known their feelings to you, and have you talked to them about it in their own language, and as to whether they wished to remain at Coranderrk or not?—No.

100. They have not expressed their feelings as to going or remaining?—No, but I know it.

101. What is your opinion as to the natives who are not on any of the stations should an effort be made to gather them in on some suitable station?—Yes. Mr. Ralston has been continually asking the Board to have about 20 acres of land about his place set apart for the purpose, but the Board has always refused to interfere in any other locality.

102. Would you think then practically that those natives wandering who get food and blankets would be any more attached if you transferred them completely?—No, because there are strong aborigines at Coranderrk, and they have become attached to Coranderrk. I think it would be cruel to remove them.

103. How would you induce those natives to abandon their present wandering life and come into Wellington; but, since this affair in Parliament, the natives, having heard of it, have refused to come down.

104. Surely you would not snare the young one to get the mother?—Here is a practical instance of such a rule.

105. Those men who love that locality, are they not gossippers and idlers; those who are supposed to have such a love of locality, are they not the men who are known as the turbulent spirits?—I have made a mistake in using that word "locality;" we will change it.

106. On what principle?—Because they are, to a certain extent, free agents. I should only try to get them; but I should think it very hard if a man would not part with his liberty that you should starve him.
Christian Ogilvie,
24th April 1877.
continued,
Esq,
those stations which are better managed, and give up those which are worse managed?—I would, if it were practicable.
blacks are decreasing in numbers, as I apprehend they are, to as it were concentrate them more or less on
have done a little good, but I am leaving the Aboriginal Board simply because I am getting a better billet;
principal object is to civilize, and works without reference to his pay. I am an instance of it. I daresay I
missionaries, and the layman takes his office and holds it because of the salary, while the missionary's
and restraints necessary for the maintenance of due order and their own training?—Yes. 129. You have spoken of the management of Coranderrk and the state of discipline there, as being worse than that of any other station?—Yes.

115. Why then?—Because they have been accustomed to have the food and blankets. It would be most cruel to deprive them of them now.
110. What hope, then, can you entertain of their coming on the station if you continue to pander to their desires and hold out inducements to them to continue their wild and savage life, and remain off as they naturally would?—what reasonable hope can you entertain of their coming to those new stations if they were established?—They might look on it as a benefit for their children, and if you once got hold of the children the old people might come to visit them.
111. Is it not a greater cruelty to get hold of children, and then force the mothers to come and visit them; would anything justify the separation of the mother from the child?—That is another question.
112. Have you, from your returns, any idea of the number of blacks outside the stations?—There are about 500 blacks on the six stations. I imagine the census returns give about 800 altogether.
113. Including the stations?—Yes.
114. Then there are only 300 outside blacks altogether?—Yes.
115. Then the number of the outsiders that has been always supposed to exist is very much in excess of the real number?—Yes.
116. So far as has been yet ascertained?—Yes.
117. Where are most of the outside blacks?—I cannot carry them in my mind. Swan Hill and down the Murray.
118. And a good many out Gippsland, Snowy River way?—Yes, about 50.
119. What is the style of life they lead, does it not consist of prostitution, and the lowest forms of debauchery of every sort?—So Mr. Curr and I were told, but we saw nothing of it.
120. Then, in just passing through the country, you were not likely to have seen it?—No, our experience is no proof it does not exist.
121. Then do you see any reason to doubt the statement that such is the fact?—No.
122. Is that not an additional reason to try and draw them into the stations? are not those just the sort of men who earn a portion of money and go in for drink and debauchery, and their wives and children are prostituted for the sake of getting money for drink?—I think it ought to be done.
123. What means would you use after asking them and failing to get them in by that means?—I think if a station were formed down the Murray, to induce the people to stop there, it would have to be conducted on the principle of a gaol or a stockade. You have to deal with men who earn £1 a week on stations.
124. Suppose you give them employment and pay them?—I do not think the Government would give them £1 a week.
125. Why not apply their labor to advantage on the station, and pay them a fair amount?—These men I speak of are hunting wild cattle, and the Government could not provide them with employment of that sort.
126. Those are the exceptions. I speak of those who are still leading a wild vagrant nomadic life?—In a word, I think it is impracticable to do anything down the Murray in the way of getting the whole of them; you might get a few.
127. We understand you then that you would offer inducements, but you think it would be wrong to use coercion?—Yes, I do; and I think it would be useless.
128. Those are the exceptions. I speak of those who are still leading a wild vagrant nomadic life?—In a word, I think it is impracticable to do anything down the Murray in the way of getting the whole of them; you might get a few.
129. We understand you then that you would offer inducements, but you think it would be wrong to use coercion?—Yes, I do; and I think it would be useless.
130. Which station is the highest as regards discipline and management; you have seen all?—Yes.
131. Some frequently?—Yes; comparisons are odious, but if I select any Mr. Hagenauer's without doubt.
132. Which is the next worst to Coranderrk?—The other station directly under the Board, Framlingham.
133. Then the two stations managed by the Board have worse discipline and general management than any of the others?—Yes.
134. To what do you attribute that?—Because in the one case you have laymen and in the other missionaries, and the layman takes his office and holds it because of the salary, while the missionary's principal object is to civilize, and works without reference to his pay. I am an instance of it. I daresay I have done a little good, but I am leaving the Aboriginal Board simply because I am getting a better billet; but a missionary, in my position, would have continued on without reference to money.
135. Do you think it might not be possible, under these circumstances, and considering that the blacks are decreasing in numbers, as I apprehend they are, to as it were concentrate them more or less on those stations which are better managed, and give up those which are worse managed?—I would, if it were practicable.
136. Why would it not be practicable?—My idea is, that if you attempted to remove the people from Coranderrk you would have to send up twenty or thirty police.
137. Suppose you stop their supplies, would not that bring the thing to a very speedy termination?—I have letters here from the natives which indicate the spirit that prevails there. Here is an extract from one, "All the men are anxious to know who own the land—the people or the Board." Here is another, "I am now in my bed very bad, and I asked Mr. Ogilvie if I could go to the Lilydale doctor, and he said, 'No, for you have been drunk.' We would like Mr. J. Green back. That is all. From yours, JOHN HALL."
138. Suppose you put your foot on these precious productions altogether—That is the height of
the wish of the Board and myself.
139. Supposing it were possible, would not that opposition very soon disappear?—Yes; for instance,
if a man, say myself, could be empowered to go up to Coranderrk and just talk a bit of his mind to
these blacks very soon hear Coranderrk in the hollow of my hand, so to speak.
140. Then the position of the Board, as regards the management, is the cause of those places being
deteriorated—The Board—
141. What did you not do that?—I have been as a man dangling in the air ever since I have been
in the hands of the Board.
142. Is that the fault of the system?—It is the fault of Parliament.
143. The natives are aware that they only have to appeal from the Board to Parliament, and their
supposed grievances will be redressed?—Yes, just so. There was one case of the kind where a deposition
waited on Mr. MacPherson, and he was disposed to listen to them, and I told him he would soon get tired
of it. They would appeal to the Governor next; and if that failed, go higher on. At the first, when I went
there, they used to come down from Coranderrk without the knowledge of the manager, and tell the
Board all sorts of stories without the manager knowing, and at last they were advised to go to the Chief
Secretary. They made complaints in one case against me in regard to a piece of land; and the Chief
Secretary expressed his surprise, and went up to Coranderrk, and I believe he made them a very good speech and expressed his
surprise.
144. You think the manager of a station like this should have, apparently to the blacks, supreme
control?—Yes.
145. You think that is essential?—Most decidedly. I should not think, except in extraordinary
cases, you can go beyond him. There cannot be any stipulations
146. Are the salaries paid to the managers by the Board sufficient to tempt men of such character
as could be trusted with this supreme control?—One manager gets £120 a year; and another £150, and he
brought two highly recommendatory letters; he was sergeant of police at Richmond; letters from Captain
Standish and Mr. Hall.
147. The question I ask is, whether the amount is such as in your opinion would tempt men of such
character as could be trusted with the supreme control which is necessary over their fellow-creatures.
Would you hold that a manager of such a character as could safely be trusted?—I should say so.
148. What does Mr. Hagenauer get?—£200, I think.
149. What do you estimate that place at; what is it worth in round numbers to the manager,
including food and all?—I should make it altogether, speaking in the rough, worth £400 a year to him,
taking everything into consideration.
150. Do you think it is worth £400 a year?—If you compare it with the manager of a station in the
bush he is placed in the same position as Mr. Halliday, but if you compare it with a man in town it is
different.
151. The manager of a station, receiving all the allowances of a pastoral station, would receive a
great deal more than £400 under similar circumstances?—I say it would not compare with that.
152. Then how do you think it is sufficiently high to tempt a man of sufficient character and
position and education?—Because the present superintendent—
153. Put it this way, supposing you were asked, "I want to get a man who can be trusted with the
entire control of this station, and who is not to be interfered with unless he misconducts himself" could
you get such a man for anything like the present salary and allowances—Well, I should think you could
get one for £150 or £200. It does not require a very high class man. The Board fixed the salary.
154. About the Board, as to the usefulness of the Board, or the management of the blacks by
means of the Board?—I think I have found the Board very useful to myself to refer to.
155. As to the constitution of the Board, do you think that the management of the blacks is better
under the present system than if they were placed under some responsible individual or an officer of the
Government?—If it were my own case, I would rather work under the Board than have the responsibility
on my own shoulders.
156. But what would be best for the aborigines generally; do you think the system of management
under the Board is the best way of managing?—Yes.
157. Why?—Because there are more people to consult than there would be if the inspector were
left to himself.
158. Supposing you were asked this question—strike the Board out of your mind altogether—
suppose you had the power at one time of revising the constitutions whereby the authority would be exercised
over the aborigines generally in the different stations for the aborigines, do you think the Board, or a
single individual, or any other mode to be the best?—I think the Board, with a single individual doing the
work under them, would be more satisfactory. The Board meets every month, and I give in a monthly report of what I have done,
and, if the Board does not approve of it, they can check me.
159. Supposing there was one person over you instead of a board, and that you reported to one man
instead of to the Board as you do at present, which do you think would be the best?—I cannot answer that
as I have no experience; but I think I should differ with one man, because it would be only one against one.
160. Did you notice any want of proper supervision in the Board when you were first appointed,
and went up to Coranderrk the first time; was there anything that struck you there on any one’s part?—
When I was sent up to report in consequence of there being a great disagreement between Mr. Stahle and the
Board, in consequence of my report Mr. Stahle was dismissed.
161. Has the place in your opinion ever been done with what it might have been done with if it had
been well managed?—No, not in my opinion.
162. Then to whom may that fault be attributed; is it the fault of the system or is it the fault of
any particular individuals?—The fault of Parliament.
163. Do you think the parliamentary influence extends as far back as that?—Yes, I do. If the
Board had not been interfered with, it would have carried out many necessary reforms.
164. Putting individual opinions of that sort out of view now, do you think that a Board to which an active manager can apply for definite ruling on points is better than an individual to whom he might refer?—I am in a corner. I have had no experience. The Board is naturally slow, but I think it is a great safeguard.

165. Why?—Because it is a great safeguard and check.

166. Would not one person be a quicker and quite as safe a check, or is there safety in numbers, a multitude of councillors?—I do not know how to answer that question, because the Board and I have always got on very well.

167. What you say then is, that is a subject on which you are not very well informed and hesitate to give an opinion, but for yourself you prefer a number of heads?—Yes. The number of heads as a rule have only been three; though there have been twenty members we rarely have more than three at the Board, and ever since I have been there, instead of any great discussion, matters were passed quietly almost as a matter of course.

168. In fact the working of the Board has been confined to three or four or five persons?—Yes.

169. The same five?—About the same five, rarely six, one hour a month.

170. Practically the Board has had the advantage of consultation by five members since you have had to do with it?—Yes.

171. Do you think the opportunity and advantage of consultation amongst those five members is better than leaving the matter to one individual or to the control of one departmental head?—Yes, as a private opinion I think so.

172. But if they do not take an interest in the work?—Then I should have had to run after them.

173. You consider it would be sound economy to fence in all those aboriginal stations?—Yes, it was the intention of the Board to have done it.

174. Yes, think it a good thing?—Yes.

175. Has it not been recommended by every person who visited Coranderrk particularly?—I believe so. If any of those reserves were private property, it would be the first thing a man would do to fence them in.

176. Ought they not to have been fenced in years ago?—Yes, the sooner it is done the better.

177. As to finance, can you make any suggestions in regard to that, as to the monetary management of the Board; is it the present the most desirable or judicious plan?—In the gross expenditure of the money?

178. I mean, first of all, the way in which the money is appropriated by votes, and paid out by vouchers by the Treasury, do you think that is judicious?—It is too clumsy a way, and causes frequent delays.

179. What would you suggest?—That the money should be placed in a bank.

180. Subject to the Board's control?—Yes, most decidedly.

181. To account for afterwards?—Yes.

182. You think, in other words, that it would be desirable that the Board should be given the amount voted in such sums as they happen to require it, quickly or otherwise, and spend it as they think fit, and account for it afterwards?—Yes, certainly.

183. What advantages would result from that?—I believe that we are charged a certain percentage more because people do not get paid so quickly as they would by cheque; for instance, in the case of poor people, who have no accounts in town, I have had complaints.

184. Is that difficulty caused by the forms observed in obtaining payment from the Treasury?—Yes.

185. What advantages would result from that?—I believe that we are charged a certain percentage more because people do not get paid so quickly as they would by cheque; for instance, in the case of poor people, who have no accounts in town, I have had complaints.

186. Is that difficulty caused by the forms observed in obtaining payment from the Treasury?—Yes.

187. Do you think the amount voted to the blacks sufficient for the requirements of the station?—No.

188. I asked you whether the money voted by the Department was sufficient for the requirements of the aborigines generally?—Certainly not.

189. There would be a certain sum necessary to fence in all the runs; suppose that was done, what then would be a sufficient sum?—I think about £2,000 more than we got now.

190. Even if the runs were fenced in?—Yes. You see there are 800 aborigines, who only get £2,000—certainly the missionaries get something from their several churches—but you can see that that sum is not much for a rich country to give to 800 aborigines that it has taken the country from.

191. Supposing those stations were your own, what is the first thing you would do after you had fenced them in?—would you not spend a large sum of money in stocking them, so as to make them remunerative?—Not with Coranderrk.

192. That might be done by an additional clerk?—Yes, that they might send these forms down to him, and he receive the money for them.

193. The fact is, that delay in payment has increased the cost?—Yes.

194. Do you think the amount voted to the blacks sufficient for the requirements of the station?—No, and for this reason, that when I became the Inspector the Board was altogether in debt, and I am sorry to say it is in the same state, or a worse one, now; further behind I expect it is. You see there is that £1,000 that was voted for building and fencing, which has been held back, and in expectation of which I very foolishly expended some of the Board's money in building, and that has had to come out of the £6,500.

195. Only with a certain class of people, the poor people who cannot get the orders filled up. I have had to get the forms myself.

196. More because people do not get paid so quickly as they would by cheque; for instance, in the case of poor people, who have no accounts in town, I have had complaints.

197. That is not fenced?—It is very nearly.

198. It is only lately; if it had been fenced the cattle would not have been so poor. Did they not suffer from it?—Yes they did.

199. Is not that the system that should be adopted; suppose the stations were fenced in and stocked, what then would be necessary to grant, would not the expense be immediately reduced?—Yes.
200. Would it not be possible under good management to make it eventually self-supporting?—You, Christian Ogilvie, would have to spend a great deal of money for that.

202. What besides stock-in-trade and fencing?—It is only 2,000 acres, and there is no station of that size in the colony that supports more than 100 people; you could not make a grass reserve of 2,000 acres support 100 people.

203. Might not there be other industries, one assisting the others, besides the grass reserve?—Of course there might, but practically there would not.

204. How many cattle would that 2,000 acres carry?—I should say, speaking roughly, 300 head of cattle would be as much as it would carry. Lake Condah, the area is about 2,000 acres, and I suppose it is not adapted for sheep; it would carry from 350 to 400 head if properly managed.

205. Do you think that other industries could be carried on that ought to make the other stations self-supporting or very nearly so. You say a certain amount of grass country will not support more than a certain number of people; the question is, how much would it bring in with a certain amount of labor bestowed on it advantageously in cultivation of various kinds, how much?—Black labor is very expensive. In discussing such a question as this you must have a great deal of experience of the inutility of black labor.

206. Surely the blacks could be taught to make butter and cheese?—Who would eat it?

207. They did it at Coranderrk for some time?—I think if you gentlemen knew as much of aborigines as I do, you would not be so sanguine about their labor.

208. If the stations are to be managed profitably it would be desirable, in your opinion, that a larger sum should be voted for one or two years in order to place them in an independent position, and after that they might get on without so much?—Yes.

209. But you do not think they would ever be altogether independent?—Never.

210. What is the cost at Ramahyuck?—Ramahyuck costs the Board about £6 a head. Mr. Hagenauer states it a little lower.

211. Well, the cost to the public Treasury is about £6 per head at Ramahyuck?—Yes.

212. What is the cost at Coranderrk?—I should think very nearly double; more than double.

213. What is it at Lake Condah?—A little more expensive than Mr. Hagenauer.

214. And Ebenezer?—The Ebenezer is a very cheap station to the Board; there they do not trouble you with a lot of extra accounts after getting supplies.

215. And Mr. Officer and others have assisted them by giving presents of sheep?—Yes.

216. Lake Tyers is less than any?—Yes, the whole slop account there only came to £42, against £140 to £160 on the other stations.

The witness withdrew.

Adjourned to to-morrow at half-past Four o'clock.

WEDNESDAY, 25TH APRIL 1877.

Present:
His Honor Sir W. F. Stawell, in the Chair;
F. R. Godfrey, Esq.,
G. W. Rusden, Esq.
Mr. Christian Ogilvie, further examined.

217. I think you said yesterday that the Board's accounts were overdrawn, that they were in debt in fact, and were always more or less in that state?—They certainly were last year, when I took charge.

218. Is not that in a great measure caused by the fact that all the purchases for the whole year have to be effected just now, in fact at the end of the financial year, before we have got our next year's grant?—I hardly think that will count.

219. For instance, at the present moment, is there not enough money to meet all the liabilities of the Board?—No, decidedly not.

220. Not for the current year terminating the end of June?—No, at the beginning of last year we entered in debt.

221. I am aware of that, but was not that because we had purchased the next year's supplies?—Yes, to a certain extent.

222. That is what I want to be understood?—For instance, here is the cost of the slop clothing, that covers for the whole of next year.

223. And that is now ordered?—Yes.

224. It seemed as if you meant that we were outrunning the constable year by year?—Mr. Andrews will be better able to answer those questions than I can. In my position I am the man who outruns the constable, and Mr. Andrews is the man who has to keep me in check.

225. It is this way that this year's supposed debt is met by the power of appropriating funds already voted; you have anticipated to a certain amount, but the instant the money is got the debt will be liquidated?—Yes.

226. Is it your duty to order the slops and other things for the stations?—Yes.

227. Were any complaints made to you when you first went to those places about the quality of the slops that had been sent previously?—Yes, by Mr. and Mrs. Spieseke.

228. Have any complaints been made since?—None.

229. Have you any documents or testimonials on the subject from any of the stations with regard to the supply of stores?—I have.

ABORIGINES.
Christian Ogilvie, Esq.

25th April 1877.

I think that would be desirable to let them go out; how could you prevent them spending their money in drink? I think the surplus labor, so to speak, must be utilized off the station, but all the necessary work on the station must be done by the inhabitants themselves, that is, the blacks. You are encouraging them to go away?—The idea of encouraging those people to go out in this same way, would they not be inclined to do the same now?—Considerably against my idea of those people Mr. Curr and I are talking about here had ever been in, but they are the people on the banks of the Murray who have never lived on an aboriginal stock.

239. With regard to the Lake Tyers station, is there anything that you particularly recommend, any expense that you think should be gone to there to make that station work better and more remunerative in fact?—There should be a herd of cattle or sheep on it to provide the people with rations.

240. You stated yesterday that all the stations should be stocked in order to place them on a better footing?—Yes.

241. You would only let out the steady ones?—Yes.

242. In a station like Coranderrk, how would you manage the station if you let all the natives out? By white people.

243. And pay them?—Yes; white people, as far as necessary.

244. Would not that rather tend to make the blacks less independent than otherwise if they had white people to earn their money for them, and they were to just come to the station when they liked, and go when they liked. Then you would make a station for the aborigines in order to teach them habits of industry, and instead of that you would allow them to go away outside, and leave the white men to do the work?—I deny that those stations do teach them habits of industry.

245. Every work performed is calculated to do that, and instead of inducing the blacks to do the work that you propose that they should do work elsewhere, and that the whites should do the necessary work and be paid for it?—Suppose instead of 140 blacks there were 1,400 there.

246. Very well, other stations would be selected. Have not the blacks on Rarnahymyck been taught habits of industry, in your opinion?—Not up to the white standard. They never will on a station.

247. Have they not been taught habits of industry in advance of any other station; they have money saved?—Yes, they are in advance of other stations.

248. Does not that show that they have there, under proper tuition or some system, been taught some habits of industry?—I am considering not only the present, but I am trying to consider the future of these people.

249. No doubt that should be done, and the best way to consider the future is to make them work, not keep what would really be a white station under the name of an aboriginal station. I think it would be destruction to adopt such a plan. I do not see how you reconcile that. The surplus labor, so to speak, on a station might be profitably utilized off the station, but all the necessary work on the station ought to be done by the inhabitants themselves, that is, the blacks. You are encouraging them to go away?—The idea of encouraging those people to go out in this same way, would they not be inclined to do the same now?—Considerably against my idea of those people Mr. Curr and I are talking about here had ever been in, but they are the people on the banks of the Murray who have never lived on an aboriginal stock.

250. They are people who have been accustomed to be more or less independent, and earning the current rate of wages?—But they have never had the civilizing influence of the stations on them; and I beg to call your attention to my report of 24th January 1876:—"I do not think they indulge in intoxicating drink to any great extent, but I heard of four being drunk at a shanty up the river about Christmas
time, and sent Mr. Harris to ascertain particulars; he was, however, too late. I am not aware of any steps being taken to prevent them getting drunk except that some time ago a Healesville publican was fined for supplying them with grog. And in the postscript, "Since the above report was sent in, drunkenness has been very prevalent at Coranderrk, but it is confined to about six or eight of the people there." Now in a population of say 70 or 80 adults, I do not think that is much beyond the average of what you will find with white people.

244. I think you alluded to grog shanties in the neighborhood of Coranderrk; have any steps been taken in order to put them down?—We have endeavored to put them down, but it is all the same thing, it is hard to obtain a conviction. Within the last three months I got a letter from the schoolmaster further up the road than Coranderrk, telling of one of the black fellows having been supplied by the publican with a bottle of beer. I immediately sent the letter to Mr. Halliday to act upon it, and he prosecuted the publican, who was convicted, and the penalty was £1, at Healesville; whereas, according to the Act, the bench might have fined that man £20.

245. You recommend that a new station should be formed in the Kulkyne district; have you visited that part of the country?—Yes.

246. Are you of opinion that is suitable for the purpose?—Yes.

247. What is the nature of the soil?—It is a plain in the middle of the mallee.

248. Sufficiently good to support sheep?—Yes.

249. How much of the land do you think would carry 5,000 sheep?—Of the plain country that we should select it would take six acres to a sheep, but the surrounding mallees that would be required would take thirty acres to keep a sheep.

250. That is the inferior parts?—Yes. It is on a very large run belonging to the Hon. Henry Miller, I think.

251. Is there water there?—It is on the lake. We purposely selected away from the river, twenty miles back, because of the grog coming in the steam-boats.

252. Is that lake permanent?—Yes.

253. From what you know of the habits of the blacks, they are fond of fishing and fish agree with them?—Yes.

254. Now do you think it would be desirable, if it would be carried out, that the Coranderrk station should be done away with, and a new station formed on the Murray, to which those blacks who were accustomed to a warm climate should go, and that the blacks accustomed to a colder climate might be drafted off to some of the other aboriginal stations?—Well, in answering that question, I am obliged to revert to my old answer. If Parliament would not interfere I should have no objection to the blacks remaining at Coranderrk, with the arrangement suggested by the Board, that a station should be formed down the Murray for the weak blacks to go to in the winter time. There is no doubt the climate is too severe for them in the winter time.

255. What particular reason have you for advocating the keeping up of Coranderrk at all, is there anything to be said in its favor?—No, not if you look at it hardly. I have no great affection for the blacks at Coranderrk; but I would have some little regard for their love of the place.

256. Do you consider that the pursuits at Coranderrk, the hops, are really remunerative, taking into account the outlay?—Well, I would like to speak specifically on that subject. I suppose this year the expense of cultivating the hops might be put down at about £900, and the profit, so far as we know now, will be something under £2,000.

257. The gross profit?—Yes, the gross.

258. Then, in fact, the Coranderrk hop experiment there is a success financially as regards Coranderrk?—Yes.

259. As to the position of Coranderrk with regard to its proximity to the white population round about, is it desirable or undesirable?—Undesirable.

260. That is one objection to that station?—Yes, almost all the other stations are more remotely situated from population. Lake Hindmarsh has not a public house within fifteen miles of it. Lake Condah has not one within twelve miles. Framingham has one within four miles of the station.

261. What system have you adopted since you have had that business with regard to the purchase of slops and other things, whereby have you obtained them?—From Banks Bros., Bell, and Co.

262. Do you consider that any saving has been caused by that, or the reverse?—I know one specific saving in the large item of blankets. We used to be charged by the Penal Department 27s. a pair for the same weight?—The same weight that Banks Bros., and Bell charge 13s. 9d. for, the only difference being that the latter have a little cotton in.

263. What was the saving in that one item last year?—I should think certainly there would be 350 or 400 pairs of blankets issued.

264. So that there would be a saving of something like £200, or nearly half?—Yes. With reference to other slops, such things, as petticoats, that I do not know much about. I always took the precaution to tell Banks Bros., Bell, and Co. that I would get skilled reports as to the quality and price, and I have by me these reports.

265. Have they been favorable?—Entirely so.

266. Have you adopted the system recommended by the Board of sending up the slops in the piece to have them made up on the stations?—Yes.

267. Does it work well?—It does, and is much cheaper, and it provides suitable work for the girls.

268. Had that never been done before?—I think not.

269. There have been a great quantity of slops and stores sent to various places for the blacks outside?—Yes, under the control of the local guardians.

270. Considering that the number of blacks is now very much reduced, do you not think it is desirable to diminish that supply very considerably; in fact, to do away, as far as possible, with the supply of blankets to those outside blacks?—In the first place, the number has not been reduced, it is only that the real number has been found out by the census.
282. But the supply has hitherto been based on the assumption that the population is much larger than it has ever been found to be.—I am not aware of that.

283. Have any particular complaints been made by the Audit Commissioners as to how the slops have been bought, complaining that the method is extravagant?—Yes.

284. Are those reports you have referred to all in favor of the last system adopted?—Yes.

285. Was one of the complaints made by the Audit Commissioners; would you mention in regard to one thing, wine?—Yes, I had an order for three dozen port wines and three gallons of brandy from Coranderrk for medical comforts. Mr. James Graham provides those things for the Board. I gave him the order, and the price of the port wine was 55s. a dozen and the brandy £1 a gallon. I got rubbed over the knuckles by the Audit Commissioners wanting to know why the Board did not buy their brandy from the Government contractor, whose price was 17s. a gallon, and why we did not buy our port from the Government contractor also, his price being 24s. a dozen; and I wrote back to say that what was bought was for "medical comforts," and I thought that contract port at 24s. a dozen would be a medicinal comfort to no one, and the same with the brandy.

286. With regard to medical attendance at those stations, are you of opinion that there has been any neglect with regard to the attendance or attention to the inmates?—No.

287. Do you approve of the present system?—The present system is that they send for medical attendance when it is required.

288. Do you approve of that?—I do. I approve of the quarterly visits being dispensed with. They cost £40 a year to every station, and they were no good whatever.

289. Were they not very perfunctorily performed?—I cannot say, as they were done away with within two or three months of my coming to town. All are agreed that they were absurd. For instance, the quarterly medical visitor for Coranderrk lived at Flemington, and one day I happened to come across him on the day of his paying his quarterly visit. It was at ten o'clock in the morning, and he said he had been paying the quarterly visit at Coranderrk from about seven o'clock in the morning.

290. And even when these quarterly visits were paid, was it the practice when illness occurred to send for some special medical advice?—Yes. The quarterly visit was only a visit of inspection.

291. So that it did not reduce the expense when they were ill?—No.

292. Did those quarterly reports produce any practical effect; were they of any use to the Board.

293. What do you imagine would be about the expense of carrying out the improvements suggested by Dr. McCrea in his report of March last. Did the Board not take action upon that report, give you instructions to commence some of the improvements he recommended?—Yes, I drew up the contract.

294. What was to be about the price per hut?—The tenders were never answered. This wretched parliamentary affair occurred, and I withdrew the thing by your instructions.

295. Have you any idea what it would cost about if now carried out, the fencing of the station and the erection of the huts?—The fencing goes over very rough ground, and if well done I should say it would cost about £750 to £1,000.

296. That is if the whole were fenced?—It would have to be fenced in right across the Badger Creek, because that is where the cattle go.

297. What would be the expense of the huts?—Twenty huts. Taking all the requirements set down by Dr. McCrea, some of which are not in my opinion necessary, I should think not less than £30 each.

298. Is it your opinion that much saving could be effected in the cost if the blacks were encouraged in building their own huts?—They are very slow about it, and all blacks' work is anything but substantial.

299. You have seen the buildings at Ramahyuck?—Yes.

300. They are mostly done by the aboriginals?—I think so. I thought that you were speaking with reference to Coranderrk.

301. No, I speak generally as to improvements being effected; could it be managed, and would it effect a saving if those who are to live in the huts were encouraged to work at them?—Yes, they could put up a good enough hut.

302. Would not the knowledge that they were to live in the huts be a stimulus to them, and lead to the work being done more cheaply?—Yes.

303. You would not be expected to pay a man so much as to build his own but as one for general use?—Yes.

304. No, that stimulus would enable you to get the work done more cheaply?

305. Have you ever looked at that flat at Lake Condah with a view to its being drained?—Yes.

306. That stream in winter must convey a very large body of water, evidently, and all that would have to be got rid of?—Yes.

307. What would be the expense?—I do not think the drain would have to be very deep. I think the drain would be very trifling.

308. Are you aware that there is a very good stream running into that swamp?—It is local drainage.

309. No, a decided stream, a running stream?—Yes.

310. That stream in winter must convey a very large body of water, evidently, and all that would need to be got rid of?—Yes.

The witness withdrew.

Adjourned.
318. That would not be five per cent. —No, but I wish to note that of the deaths that took place
no reference was made, to the managers
and other officials as the guardians of the aborigines under their care.” In the Act of Parliament there is
then do—practically what steps would you take? —Perhaps I had better first read the whole of my paper
management of the station.

322. Is there game there? —Chiefly on the lake—geese and ducks, fish and eels.
323. Are you in charge of the station at Lake Condah? —Yes.
324. Then you think the situation especially adapted to them as an aboriginal station in every aspect
—healthy situation, excellent water, cool and not too much exposed, and away from any large settlements?
—Yes.
325. Any large number of population? —Yes.
326. And possessing hunting grounds? —Yes. The next question was whether I could make any
suggestion in regard to the management or discipline of the station. Of course what I say has special
reference to the station of which I am in charge. “A certain amount of money, say £60 or £80 per
annum, should be granted for the use of each station, and be at the disposal of the manager so as to enable
him to make improvements, and to pay incidental expenses. This refers only to such stations as have no
income from produce, &c. and should cease when there is a sufficient income.”
327. How do I understand that money is to be expended—is it in paying the aborigines? —No;
for paying incidental expenses, such as to mend a bullock dray or to get tools mended when the men are
working, say at a fence, axes and saws and all sorts of things.
328. A sort of petty cash to meet emergencies? —Yes; for the number of little things that are
required during the year for which there is no money.
329. Do you suffer inconvenience from these articles not being supplied? —Yes, very much. Last
year I managed to get along because I got the wattle bark stripped, and got so much money; but the trees
are all stripped now, and there is nothing before me to cover those expenses.
330. But you are immediately under the control of a religious denomination, not under the control
331. Are we treating of the question generally? —Yes, I am under the mission committee; they
consider themselves merely responsible for the salary of the missionary and teacher. I have no doubt
such money may have been granted by the Board for the Protection of the Aborigines in some instances;
but in my case, supposing I wanted some tools mended, the men are going to work, I cannot expend money
for these unless I have authority to do so; and if I write that “an axe has been broken or a saw, will the
Aboriginal Board kindly authorize me to buy one,” in the meantime the work would be stopped and the
discipline would suffer; so I have managed somehow hitherto, but it would help greatly to the improvement
and management of the station.
332. You think that each manager should have the means of supplying those necessaries promptly?
—Yes; of course I would keep a very particular account of every penny expended; it might be placed in a
bank for those purposes for incidental expenses. “This refers only to such stations as have no income.” I
have had £15 for the hops, but I am still indebted to storekeepers—one £9, and the other £10—which I
have to pay, against which I have still a little bark. “The aborigines should not have power to leave the
station on which they are located without having permission to do so.” To prevent their knocking about.
333. How would you enforce that—supposing a native leaves without permission, what would you
then do—practically what steps would you take? —Perhaps I had better first read the whole of my paper
through.
334. Please do so?—“The managers of the various stations should be recognised by magistrates
and other officials as the guardians of the aborigines under their care.” In the Act of Parliament there is
no reference made to the managers of the stations. “No aboriginal should have power to go to law against
I 8th May 1877.

The main object should be to train and educate them to become self-supporting communities on each station. "The main object should be to train and educate them to become self-supporting communities on each station." With respect to this question, I do not think that any distinction should be made in regard to treatment of blacks and half-castes, but I would suggest that, combined with payment, rewards for diligence and good conduct should be given occasionally, in order to encourage them. I think this would also help to raise a spirit of manliness in them. I have found this plan to answer very well. 335. Not to be absorbed in the population generally?—No, not to be absorbed in the population generally. The twelfth question was, "Whether I could make any suggestions with regard to the aborigines to the whites?" I said, "No, unless through agreement made with the managers." I want to say here that I would, however, suggest that such articles as boots, hats, dishes, candles, brooms, and small things of that sort which they require constantly should be kept, to encourage them to spend their money usefully, without going away where they might spend it foolishly; and if they spent the money properly I would suggest that the money for clothing should be added to the money paid for wages, so as to enable them to buy their own clothing, but that I would not consider advisable for the present. For the present I should consider it only advisable for them to have a little money. The sixth question was whether it was advisable, if they are employed among whites, that the employers should send them away where they might spend it foolishly; and if they spent the money properly I would suggest that the money for clothing should be added to the money paid for wages, so as to enable them to buy their own clothing, but that I would not consider advisable for the present. For the present I should consider it only advisable for them to have a little money.

But in special cases where the aborigine has behaved himself well, and is desirous to go out for a change (and the manager is aware that the employer would take care of him actually got his money which has been forwarded to the manager. The seventh question was, whether orphan children should be boarded out from the station. I said, "No, unless it can be proved that they are not properly trained and cared for on the stations. Besides this, they have relations among the aborigines on the stations who are almost as much attached to them as if they were their own children." The eighth question was, "Do you think it advisable that they should hire out the labor of aborigines to the whites?" I said, "No, unless through agreement made with the managers." I want to say here that I would, however, suggest that such articles as boots, hats, dishes, candles, brooms, and small things of that sort which they require constantly should be kept, to encourage them to spend their money usefully, without going away where they might spend it foolishly; and if they spent the money properly I would suggest that the money for clothing should be added to the money paid for wages, so as to enable them to buy their own clothing, but that I would not consider advisable for the present. For the present I should consider it only advisable for them to have a little money. The sixth question was whether it was advisable, if they are employed among whites, that the employers should send them away where they might spend it foolishly; and if they spent the money properly I would suggest that the money for clothing should be added to the money paid for wages, so as to enable them to buy their own clothing, but that I would not consider advisable for the present. 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working occasionally for whites. After they receive the money which they have earned they spend it in
beverages, tobacco, drink, tobacco, and in going to the station. They are not allowed to buy weapons or anything
which leads them to fighting and other evil deeds, and causes them to lead a miserable existence. I would suggest that they be compelled to settle on the various aboriginal stations—as of their own free will
few of them will do this until their health and strength is gone, and their life ruined. Let them go to any
station they may prefer?

336. In connection with the first question, I wish to know whether you think it would be desirable
that the reserve should be extended, or whether there is at present sufficient acreable extent?—Several
gentlemen in the neighborhood, men who understand about rearing stock, remark that it is rather
overstocked. There are 300 head of cattle on 2,050 acres of land, and there is some land not taken
up quite close to the station, where we put up a fence. I think if that land could be added to the station it
would be very beneficial.

337. On which side?—On Mr. Cook's side, higher up on the top of the swamp.

338. The north-east?—North.

339. You anticipate greater improvement from the station being enclosed and fenced, in the grazing
capabilities?—Yes, of course.

340. In your estimate have you made allowance for the improvements in the grazing capabilities
when the whole shall be fenced in?—Yes, I said the reserve will be able to carry more than the stock
is increasing every year.

341. But making allowance for the increased capabilities, you still think the reserve should be
extended?—Yes.

342. What do you think would be the best means of employing the natives after the reserve had
been fenced?—They would have to work putting up the fence themselves. They would have three and a half miles put up.

343. After the fence is finished how would you employ the natives?—My object is next to drain the
swamp with the labor of the aborigines.

344. You think they are equal to it?—Yes; they will carry it out if they are properly directed; and
after this I thought of fencing in parts of the swamp to make several scattering paddocks, so as to fatten
beasts and grow anything on.

345. Do you grow any wheat now?—Six acres of oats have been grown this season.

346. If you had any more fenced in you could grow more wheat?—Yes.

347. Your six acres, how much do they yield; how many bushels to the acre?—About fifteen
bushels, but it would have been more if the weather had not been so dry—of course the swamp would
grow anything—the produce would be much more.

348. I do not think the swamp would grain?—The farmers round about there have drained
swamp and cultivated. One farmer at Hamilton told me he had a splendid crop.

349. But you could easily extend your wheat-growing without going on the swamp?—Yes.

350. The hops did not succeed particularly well?—They were rather small, but the half of the hops
were not of the proper kind. They did not do well at all.

351. It was a dry season too?—Yes.

352. In that swamp you might grow willows, osiers, and make baskets?—Yes, I forget to mention
in regard to the handicrafts on the station. I do not consider that an aboriginal is capable of carrying on a
trade or a business, but in regard to willow basket manufacture I would recommend that as a commence-
ment, because that is work they could do. Every one could take part in it. It would keep every one on
the station employed. If a man were short of work it would always be something to follow from time to
time, so as to keep them always employed. They have a great taste for basket-making.

353. The women have shown that already?—Yes.

354. The men show great ingenuity, and would succeed in basket-making?—Yes.

355. You suggest that a native who left the station without leave should be sent to another station?
—Not at once, it should be always gently done; but in cases where they continually disregard discipline, and
in that case, if after due consideration and communication with the manager, if the man were short of work it would always be something to follow from time to
time, so as to keep them always employed. They have a great taste for basket-making.

356. The women have shown that already?—Yes.

357. The women have shown that already?—Yes.

358. Do you think they would regard that as punishment, being sent from one station to the other?
—That is a punishment if they are sent in spite of wishing to remain. They do not like to go, they have a
certain feeling of dignity, and do not like to be sent away from the station. They consider that a disgrace.

359. They look upon the station as a home?—Yes.

360. Would not the adoption of that course be injurious to the station to which they were sent?—
I think not. For instance, if a single individual is sent to me who has behaved badly, I could keep
him under special supervision, so that it would not be possible for him to do any damage. If a man is badly
behaved and incorrigible I think it would do.

361. How many stations are there?—Six.

362. You do not suppose that the station itself to which such a man would be sent would be injured?
—No. If the manager who is responsibly in charge of the station is willing to accept them, but they
should not be sent against his will.

363. Are there occasions when they go away by themselves, or do they go with wife or children?—
No, there have been no such cases where they have gone away with wife and children.

364. In all instances have they gone by themselves?—There has been in fact only one case. One
man went away without leave, and when I informed the man who employed him of the Act of Parliament
about the matter, after due consideration and communication with the manager, the man was sent back.

365. In that case did the aboriginal leave his wife and children?—Oh yes, but only for a time.

366. What you mean is that they go in a restless way—go and come as they like, and that it ought
to be stopped?—Yes, I think they have taken an active part in their original home, and considering their
present condition and state. I think that there should be also a distinct rule on the subject. Originally
almost nobody believed that they would settle and be inclined to adopt civilization, but it is proved that
they will now.

367. As much as possible residence on the same station should be enforced?—Yes, but not to give
them a feeling of pressure, and in exceptional cases, when a man has behaved himself well, and is desirable
to go for a time to work (or if some one requests labor who is a respectable man whom the managers could
trust in other things), there should be a certain authority for the manager to let him go, but the manager
should inform the Board of the fact so as to where the aboriginal is going and to whom.
366. In those cases would you allow the natives to go by themselves, or would you compel them to take their families with them?—To have their family on the station, especially that the children should not be interrupted in the school and kept in regular employment before and after school, and for the reason if they are away it is very often the case they are badly used, whilst where the children and wife are on the station they are well cared for. I suggest that no aboriginal should have power to go to law against the manager.

367. I am afraid we could not do that. That would be too strong a course. English law would not allow you to do that. You suggested in answer to the third question that clothing, rations, and a little money should be given them.—Yes.

368. Would you encourage them to deposit that in any way—the money they earn.—Yes, for that purpose there should be certain articles kept for sale on the station.

369. But suppose they have a surplus would you encourage them to put it in the savings bank.—If they are willing to do so.

370. Would you desire to encourage that?—Yes.

371. Have you been able to do that?—There is one case I have referred to.

372. Have you known one?—There was one man who had between £20 and £30 in the savings bank.

373. In your hands?—No, altogether in his own hands.

374. Where is the savings bank?—Portland or in Melbourne. I think in Portland.

375. And you believe it was between £20 and £30.—No, he told me himself.

376. Do the others not see the advantage of that. Have there been any attempts to follow his example?—There was another who had money in the savings bank, but he drew it out and spent it on clothing. We've got a grant of cloth, and the clothing is made on the stations, but the younger class of the aborigines who get better taste become more fashionable. They think the clothing on the station is good enough for work, but on a Sunday they like a coat made by a tailor.

377. They are fond of dress?—O yes, they like to appear nice. They have a very nice taste if they can indulge in it; that is, some of them. That does not refer to the old camp people, but those who are under the influence of civilization and Christianity.

378. This man, who drew out his money from the savings bank, were you able to point out to him how much interest he had got?—He had drawn it just when I went to the station, and I know nothing particular about it.

379. Are they aware of the nature of interest now?—Yes. The only reason they do not deposit now is because they have so little money. Suppose if the money would be paid to the managers, which they have earned outside, and they get the money in hand, they then use it sensibly; but when they are away, and get the money, it is often spent in drink, or otherwise foolishly. They have not enough chance at present to put it in the savings bank.

380. Do not you think that nice articles, neatly made clothes, and attractive things, if kept in store on the station, would induce them to invest their money there instead of purchasing at the different shops and places outside?—You mean if they were not provided with clothing by the Government.

381. No, apart from that—you spoke of their taste in dress?—Little trimmings and buttons. O yes, that is just the thing. They would be likely to buy such articles.

382. I now speak with reference to stores on the station—just those things necessary for use are kept there. Do you think that if articles of taste were kept there they would buy them on the station instead of outside?—No; we have hawkers who come on the stations (and I have no right to prevent them coming), and there are shopkeepers right round the station; and when they know that the aborigines have money they entice them to the very utmost to buy this or that.

383. If no profit was sought to be obtained by the sale of those goods, and they got better bargains from the store on the stations than outside, would not that induce them?—Yes, for that purpose there should be certain articles kept for sale on the station.

384. A nice hat or bonnet?—You mean to say to them: "You have bought that hat for such a price. I could give you one just as good for 3s. 6d."—Yes; are they not quick enough to see that?—Yes.

385. The hawker has to get his profit?—Yes, but when the hawker comes it makes more show to buy from him. They like to make a show when they have a little money. I think it could only be tried by degrees.

386. I did not quite catch your idea as to the mode of paying money. First of all, do you think that employers of labor would trouble to send the money to the manager of the station instead of paying the Government a kind of interest?—Yes, apart from that you spoke of their taste in dress?—Little trimmings and buttons. O yes, that is just the thing. They would be likely to buy such articles.

387. I am afraid we could not do that. That would be too strong a course. English law would not allow you to do that. You suggested in answer to the third question that clothing, rations, and a little money should be given them.—Yes.

388. Would you encourage them to deposit that in any way—the money they earn.—Yes, for that purpose there should be certain articles kept for sale on the station.

389. But suppose they have a surplus would you encourage them to put it in the savings bank?—If they are willing to do so.

390. Would you desire to encourage that?—Yes.

391. Have you been able to do that?—There is one case I have referred to.

392. Have you known one?—There was one man who had between £20 and £30 in the savings bank.

393. In your hands?—No, altogether in his own hands.

394. Where is the savings bank?—Portland or in Melbourne. I think in Portland.

395. And you believe it was between £20 and £30.—No, he told me himself.

396. Do the others not see the advantage of that? Have there been any attempts to follow his example?—There was another who had money in the savings bank, but he drew it out and spent it on clothing. We've got a grant of cloth, and the clothing is made on the stations, but the younger class of the aborigines who get better taste become more fashionable. They think the clothing on the station is good enough for work, but on a Sunday they like a coat made by a tailor.

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independence.

...have for the present, they could not carry on. They would be bound to fall back to knocking about, and the aboriginal labor at a lower rate than white labor, and for that reason the employers should take the trouble to do this.

398. Do you think there would be any opposition on the part of the shopkeepers and the publicans to that mode?—Yes; there might be.

399. They would discourage that?—Yes.

400. Would not that make it so unpopular that it would increase the difficulties in carrying that out?—I don't think so, to that extent. It would not raise them original in regard to civilization, and they would be rescued from the temptations to which they are exposed outside the station.

401. You say you would not board the children out?—No; unless it can be proved that they are not properly trained and well cared for. The children are so much attached to their parents and friends on the station, they should mix with the rest of the population — No; because I think they should be self-supporting on each station; and if part of them were raised on the station, and others brought up outside, they would not agree well together in their future life.

402. Do not you think it desirable that the children, if equally well cared for outside as on the station, should mix with the rest of the population?—No; because I think they should be self-supporting on each station; and if part of them were raised on the station, and others brought up outside, they would not agree well together in their future life.

403. Why so?—Those brought up outside who had been among the whites would consider themselves superior in such cases— the young men from outside selecting wives on the station or the young women getting husbands. Besides, we have sufficient proof, it has been tried, that aboriginals who have been taken away from their native countries and their own people, and educated among whites, have in course of time had to leave the mission stations, or else they have fallen into the hands of the lowest class of the population. An aboriginal will always be considered an aboriginal, and have too little chance to rise in any respectable society, so he must fall back to the lowest class. It is the same with a half-caste.

404. Holding those views you do not approve of aboriginal labor being hired out?—Only in exceptional cases.

405. Suppose a native could get an engagement with an employer who really paid attention to him, do you think that he and his family should be self-supporting than that they should continue on the station?—He would not earn so much as to support his family entirely.

406. You think not?—Not any that I am aware of. Even those who go away, and the most steady, if they had to find their own rations out of the money which they earn, in the way of managing which they have for the present, they could not carry on. They would be bound to fall back to knocking about, and to the present state of the aboriginals who are not located on the stations.

407. To what do you attribute that—inability to earn sufficient wages, inequality, or to unwillingness and reluctance to persevere in work?—We have about three who would really earn the same wages as a white man. Thirty shillings per week is high wages up in our direction, and I do not consider that any aboriginal would be able with 30s. to find himself and his wife and children, and to clothe himself, away from home.

408. Is that from bad management of the money? Supposing that they earned enough, do you think they cannot manage it?—I do not think they are far advanced enough yet, to manage their money in a proper economical way.

409. You said also that there would be no use in teaching them trades, or apprenticing them to trades, because they could not afterwards conduct those trades on their own responsibility?—Yes.

410. Why not?—Supposing a young native had been apprenticed to a shoemaker could not he make a good job in the shoes, but if he were left to himself he would manage badly, for instance lose the run of his tools. To-lay he would not know where he left his hammer last; he would have left it somewhere and not know where to look for it. Their labor requires management. I have to look after their tools. There is a certain carelessness or thoughtlessness about them, which shows plainly that they would not be capable.

411. To conduct anything approaching a business?—Not on their own responsibility.

412. Though mechanically they would be able to do the work?—I am quite certain of that. They are capable of learning, but not of carrying their knowledge practically.

413. From carelessness or inattention?—Yes.

414. Is it a natural difficulty on their part to continue attention?—I dare say it is, and that it has to do with their original life, their manner of living.

415. No discipline in their early youth?—Just so.

416. But those youths brought up on the stations and well taught would not they be so trained as to be able to manage a business later on?—No, there is not enough independence in them yet. In regard to their education at school, they are better educated than many white children, but the latter would after all find their way through the world in an easier manner and more to their advantage than the aborigines.

417. Would not that arise partly from the fact that the white children would be received more pleasantly?—Decidedly, that is a great point; and the aborigines lack a certain spirit of courage and independence.

418. You think they do not possess that?—Yes.

419. You complain of a want of steady application?—Yes.

420. You think that apprenticing to one particular trade would not be advantageous at present?—Not at present.

421. But rather a general practical knowledge?—Yes, such as would be useful on a station—a little carpentering, masonry, smith work and so on.

422. Would you go so far as smith work?—Yes, any of those things. The hop kiln which you saw, the whole of the building, including the plastering, was done by them, which shows they have a certain taste for carpentering, &c.
423. You complain of want of steadiness and application, do you find this defect existing as strongly in the half-castes as in the blacks?—Yes, just as strongly. The half-castes may be quicker in understanding, but they are not more steady. When I drew the average of our aborigines I could produce as many aborigines as half-castes who showed a certain intelligence and improvement.

424. You see no indication that the mental or physical condition is improved by the cross?—No, at least not in a remarkable and special manner.

425. In regard to those twelve natives in your district not on the station, you say they should be forced to go to some station, you would allow them to make their own selection—how would you practically do it?—I think it could only be carried out by making a law as to it.

426. Supposing there was a law decreed that all those natives should go to some one of the aboriginal stations, how would you carry it out; do you think it would be possible to take them by force?—It would be no force at all. The aborigines have so much respect for the law that if it were made the law that they were to resort to the various stations, there would be no difficulty in gathering them in when the missionary comes and picks them up and requests them to come with him.

427. Do you think you would be able to keep them on the station?—Well, of course, with those brought in from outside, I would have to use special patience, and not deal so strictly as with those who have been there.

428. And you would have to offer them every inducement to stay?—Yes, by special privileges which they do not get elsewhere.

429. And generally bring them to conform to the habits of discipline on the stations?—Yes. In regard to making a law, I think it desirable not so much for its effect upon the blacks, who could easily be got in, as upon the people outside, who for certain purposes encourage them to stop outside. But when any white community knew it was the law, they would not prevent them going.

430. And you think you could induce the aborigines to come to the station?—Yes.

431. How do those natives obtain a living outside?—By hunting and fishing, and knocking about.

432. They are really leading their savage life?—Yes, knocking about, making their mis-mis here and there. Some were found lately near Coleraine drunk, and in a most miserable state. One was lying all night in the rain, drunk, in a wretched condition. We had two natives who were on the station last year in a dying state through knocking about till their life was ruined. On their death beds they expressed their sadness that they did not come earlier to the station, and their appreciation of the care and kindness shown.

433. Are they all men outside the stations?—Men, women, and children.

434. What do the women do?—Make baskets and, cook for their husbands; and very often if they are young they are exposed to many and temptations.

435. Are the women induced to remain outside by the white men—has that come within your knowledge?—I cannot say much about that.

436. You do not know it?—No, I have no particular knowledge whether they are intentionally encouraged to stay out.

437. I suppose in your long experience at the different stations you have seen some of the aborigines either on their death beds or at other times in such a manner as to enable you to say whether they become thorough Christians at heart?—I am most happy to state that several cases of that kind have come under my notice, where in the hours of death they have been really in a state of comfort and joy. Even those two to whom I referred as coming to the station suffering and sick, though they had had no influence of religion or Christianity before they came, in the short time before their death through the sermons and other means they gathered so much knowledge that it was very encouraging.

438. Were they fully aware they were dying?—Yes, one man told me a couple of hours before that he felt he was going to die.

439. In the management of them do you find that they appreciate kindness?—Yes; kindness and firmness.

440. You think they are to be managed in that way?—Yes.

441. Much better than by more severity?—Yes, decidedly.

442. Were you at Coranderrk for a time?—Yes.

443. You think that the management in a missionary way is in every way more calculated to improve the condition of the aborigines?—I am certain of that as the result of my own experience. I have seen Ramahyuck, where I have been at the Wimmera, Coranderrk, and my present station, and my sure conviction is that the way in which the mission works is the only method suited for the aborigines.

444. In what points or upon grounds do you say that?—Just the two points—kindness and firmness—love and firmness is the course found in the real teaching of Christianity. The two must be connected, and, with a true missionary, the work is really a labor of love. He studies their condition, and takes regard to every circumstance in dealing with the natives.

445. How long were you at Coranderrk?—I was one year in charge and six months teacher.

446. As to the position of the place and the climate, do you consider Coranderrk suited for an aboriginal station?—I think according to the experience of the last two or three years it has rather appeared as if it were not a healthy place, but I think during the very last year there have been no special cases nor numerous deaths.

447. I speak with reference to your own experience of the station, did you see any ground for believing it to be suitable or unsuitable for a station?—I do not think it is unsuitable. The natives might catch colds by going to the Yarra to fish, but that could be remedied by proper management.

448. Do you think the situation damp?—Yes, it is damp.

449. About the conduct of the natives there, was it influenced at all by the neighborhood of Healesville?—Yes, they were greatly influenced by Healesville.

450. Did it produce any immorality?—Yes, in regard to drink.

451. Only with regard to drink?—I am not aware of anything otherwise.

452. Did it produce any immorality?—Yes, in regard to drink.
455. Only three in eighteen months?—That is three in twelve months; and, in two cases, the
publicans were fined; in the other it could not be proved.
456. The opportunities of spending their money were freer?—They spent their money very suitably.
The hawkers used to come to the station and offer their goods. Some of them have taken away as much as
£50 or £80 at one time. The natives get paid every three months, and on the Sunday after their purchases
it was very pleasing to see them in their new suits coming to church.
457. What years were you there?—1865 to 1869.
458. Did you observe any difference in the capacity for learning between the children at Coranderrk
and at Lake Condah?—I have observed that at Condah the children are altogether further advanced in
education.
459. Ramahyuck and Condah seem to be further advanced than any of the others?—Yes, all the
people at Condah are advanced further in civilization and Christianity than at Coranderrk.
460. Is that partly to be attributed to the fact that at Coranderrk they have been brought from
different tribes, and at Lake Condah they are nearly all one tribe?—Yes, that is one point. The next
point is their manner of treatment.
461. You think the missionary style of management is more adapted to bring out their good
faculties?—Yes, I decidedly.
462. When you were at Coranderrk I suppose you had a fixed amount of bread and meat? They
all got a certain ration?—Yes.
463. Did they run up butchers’ bills in addition to that?—No. Sometimes for sick people there
might be such a thing as a leg of mutton, but that was quite exceptional.

The witness withdrew.
Adjourned.

TUESDAY, 21st MAY 1877.

Present:
His Honour Sir W. F. Stawell, in the Chair,

F. B. Goffrey, Esq.,

A. W. Hewitt, Esq., P.M.

C. E. Strutt, Esq., P.M., examined.

464. You are a Police Magistrate?—Yes.
465. You have been some time living in the Murray district?—Yes, several years.
466. You have had opportunity of seeing the aborigines there and also at Condah?—Yes; I
was Guardian of Aborigines on the Murray. I had, consequently, considerable intercourse with them, and
I have also seen them at Coranderrk.
467. First of all the chief object of the Commission is to ask you for any information with regard to
the natives about that part of the country, in the Murray district, and then to hear any suggestions you may
have to offer on the subject generally. How long have you lived in that district?—It is eight or nine years
ago since I left the district; I had lived there about ten years.
468. Up to that time were there many blacks that might be said to be Victorian blacks living along
the Murray?—Just on the frontier there is no very great distinction between the Victorian and the New
South Wales blacks; they go to either side of the river indifferently, but at the same time they have
all a certain district beyond which they do not go.
469. What was the style of life of those natives?—Well, they used to live in their own camps, but
they were mainly dependent on the whites. They would do a little work now and then, but not keep it
regularly. There were a good many employed as shepherds and stockriders, for which class of work they
were particularly qualified. The natives are not fond of hard work. Some of them would do some fencing
and do it very well, but only for a time. After doing a small amount of work they would invariably go
home for a change. They like to wander about in the woods, hunting and fishing and so on.
470. Was the money they earned generally squandered in drink?—No doubt it was to a degree.
We always had to regret that. We prevented it as much as possible, but it was not always possible.
471. How many blacks were there in that district, say within fifty miles of Echuca on both sides of
the river?—The number has decreased a good deal. I suppose when I was first there there might be
perhaps a couple of hundred, as far as I can tell, but when I left there were not more than half that number.
472. Do you think, from what you have seen of the natives there and at Coranderrk, and at other
places, it would be a desirable thing to establish a station, any lower down on the Murray than Echuca, and
try and bring them in?—The further any such station could be from any large place the better, and also
the further back from the banks of the river, on account of their getting drunk and other vices.
473. Can you suggest any means for preventing their getting drink?—I do not see that we can do
much. We have done all we can to prevent their getting it at the public-houses, and we cannot prevent such things, because the blacks have their camp in
any places they find favorable for fishing, and these travelling men find them out. That cannot be remedied,
as there was no means of ascertaining that the natives had had the drink till after the damage was done,
or imprisonment, and the blacks imprisoned for getting drunk and committing assaults or other offences.
474. Do they not obtain drink from other places besides those men you speak of?—No doubt; for
instance, sometimes from the bush publicans.
475. If a station were formed on the Murray, lower down, away from civilization as far as possible,
— the place proposed by the Inspector was about 40 or 50 miles below Swan Hill—and back from the
river, would it be possible to get them to go to the station there?—In my opinion the success or otherwise
of such a station would depend on the tact and management of the superintendent in charge of it. I
have had blacks in the service of my family for a long time, and I have had every reason to be satisfied
with them.
21st May 1877

C. E. Strutt, Esq., P.M., continued,
necessary in the conduct of any station for the blacks is to gain their affections; that is not done by
Yes, the usual supply. I have, but with a mixture of kindness and firmness they generally get on very well.
harshness or knocking about, nor, on the other hand, does it do to give way to all the whims that they may
proof is sufficient; but then we punish the blacks for drunkenness. The main thing that appears to me
think it is very often broken at Coranderrk. At any rate not so frequently as elsewhere; we had some
cases, but we always dealt with them pretty sharply.

I have known several of the black women very good laundresses.

not work get just as much benefit as those who work, it is a direct premium upon idleness. I think there
for them to work; and if the gross profits of their labor are divided amongst the whole, and those who do
worked that liked, but there was no means of paying them.

I have known several of the black women very good laundresses.

the same as the white people do. Even the whites do not stop very long in one service unfortunately.

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cases, but we always dealt with them pretty sharply.
409. Did they avail themselves of them?—Yes, regularly.

500. Do you think they were in the habit of pawning those goods in any way, selling them?—Now and then, but generally not. Of course to remedy any evil of the sort it might be rendered illegal to buy or receive the blankets from the blacks; for that purpose they should have some particular stamp or pattern worked on them, something that could not be taken out of them.

501. Do you think it advisable that the men should be encouraged to go out and obtain work?—Those that could be trusted, I think so; some are very decent men; some at Coranderrk I think might be trusted safely.

502. Would you let them out on certain terms or as they please, like any other men?—If they are capable of looking after themselves I would not make any difference between black and white; but otherwise, and as most of the blacks are at present, I think that it would be preferable for the Superintendent of the place to have something to say in the matter, it would be well for him to see that there was an agreement properly drawn up, and for him to witness it.

503. You would, in fact, place them in the same position as the white laborer?—If they are capable of being so dealt with, but others not capable of looking after themselves I should treat as cattle, and put it aside in the bank as a gradual accumulation for their old age.

504. How could that difference between them be known?—It could only be known by the Superintendent of the place, he is in the best position to estimate the character of the men.

505. The Principal would you pay them in money, or partly in money and partly in goods?—I should prefer to pay them in goods, not in money.

506. He may be sober and industrious, but do you think it would be fair to him to allow him to go out and engage perhaps say with a dishonest employer?—No, certainly not; he should consult the Superintendent first, and inform him of his intention, and if the Superintendent objected to the character of the employer, he might advise the aboriginal, and refuse to furnish him with the printed form of agreement.

507. How could you protect him from that?—As I have just said, the Superintendent should have a voice in all such matters; for instance, his signature as a witness might be required to every agreement to make it valid.

508. In what form should the payment of the man's wages be made, under those conditions?—A great deal depends on the character of the employment. If he can be permanently employed on the stations round about, the native would be in the same position as a white man.

509. And he would have the money paid to him direct?—Yes, and then he would provide for his own living, and these few in that position need not be on the station at all; at the same time Coranderrk, or any of the other stations, could be looked upon by them as the places for them to have a right to go to in case of sickness or other causes.

510. You would only permit those who came within the class you define to go out for work?—Yes, those who are fit to be allowed out, and the Superintendent is to be the judge of that, as I have said. Those who are able to go out I should allow to go out, with the option of returning in case of sickness or any special or extraordinary cause.

511. All others you think should be kept on the station?—I think there might be between what I may call the full labor class, with others not capable of looking after themselves I should treat as cattle. At shearing times the men might take a turn out, get their wages for the time, and return; and if the Superintendent finds that they are not safe to be trusted out, he should keep them in as much as he could.

512. Then for this second class of men, would you have the money paid direct to the men?—No, part of it should be paid to the Superintendent, and it would be a good thing if he could induce them to put it aside in the bank as a gradual accumulation for their old age.

513. Can they understand it?—I think they might if they are in the hands of a man who has gained their confidence, and one who will explain the advantage of it to them, they would see they will have the benefit of it afterwards.

514. Did you form any opinion of Coranderrk as a station for aborigines from what you saw of it, as to its suitability of climate or otherwise?—I have thought that a warmer part of the country would be more suitable first, and inform him of his intention, and if the Superintendent objected to the character of the employer, he might advise the aboriginal, and refuse to furnish him with the printed form of agreement.

515. Do you think they would, as a rule, be better on a station on the banks of the Murray?—I think so. I think the neighbourhood of Healesville is too wet and damp for them in winter; I think from their habits and tastes they would much prefer a warmer part of the country, and it would be better for them.

516. Have you seen any other stations besides Coranderrk?—No.

517. And have not had an opportunity of comparing with others?—No; but I have seen a good deal of the blacks in their native state at their own encampments and elsewhere.

518. I think you said you thought it desirable to pay the men for work that they did on the station; would you pay them in money, or partly in money and partly in goods?—I should prefer to pay them in goods, not in money.

519. Why so?—Because if they have the goods it is the best expenditure that can be made for them, and if they have the money they may more likely spend it in getting drink.

520. Do you think in that case it would be desirable to have a store on the station?—I think it would.

521. A store supplied with all sorts of goods, where they could be supplied to the natives at the Melbourne rates with the carriage added?—Yes, what I think they like and pay them as they would at the store, or at a shop in Melbourne.

522. And you think they would take up a thing of that sort?—Yes, I think so. If a man had earned £5, he could spend the money at the store as he liked. Some would like sugar, some tobacco or anything else; in this way they could get any £5 worth of goods, of such articles as were permitted to be sold at the store. The store would be, of course under the supervision of the manager of the station, and they would not be allowed to sell any articles that were considered inappropriate. The Superintendent might receive a certain per cent. earned, and the man be allowed corresponding credit at the store.

523. What kind of things do you think would be appropriate?—Nearly everything except spirits and beer; such things as clothes and shoes, and food of various kinds.
21st May 1877.

C. E. Strutt, Esq.,

continued,
P.M.,
y 1877.

principle to educate them in Scripture truth, to teach them pure morality, to train them to act at all times as responsible and immortal beings,

aboriginal heathen here, the same as in the reclaiming of the heathen in other parts of the world, is to make it a fundamental

tered, and above all the religious superintendence exercised. The essential thing to be aimed at in the management of the

of any small township, particularly if it is well conducted, seems to me to be a subordinate point. The greater question, and

As a general principle it appears desirable that aboriginal stations should not be situated too near a township, especially if it is

difficult to convince them of the necessity in order to good health of constant care in regard to food, raiment, and atmospheric as well as other influences.

diffused, and which did not expose them so much to draughts.

While I express my full concurrence with the paper forwarded to this Commission by the Heathen Missions Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, of which I am joint convener with the Rev. M. McDonald, yet it was deemed advisable

paper on the Aboriginal Station, Coranderrk, for the Commission of Enquiry appointed by the

Govermnent of Victoria, By Robert Hamilton, Minister of Presbyterian Church, Fitzroy.

In regard to the proximity of Coranderrk to a population of white people, this question can only apply to Healesville.

Previous to the congregating of the aborigines at Coranderrk they had their health in many instances undermined by intemperance and exposure. They became thereby unable, in some degree at least, to sustain without injury sudden climatic changes. Besides, their habits were altogether changed through the loss of their lands and the capture of their liberty to roam wherever they pleased and obtain the food on which they had been accustomed to subsist. Hence, from a variety of causes, the natives settled at this station with their constitution in many cases seriously injured.

Then, when they did make up their minds to exchange a wandering for a settled life, the huts which they erected with

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826. Can you suggest any occupation of that kind, any work?—They make very good baskets, very useful baskets.

The witness withdrew.

Rev. Robert Hamilton called and examined.

The Witness stated that he was the convener of the Presbyterian committee on aborigines, and that he had prepared a statement which was separate and independent from the one to be presented by the church committee, and testifying to what he had himself seen.

At the request of the Chairman the witness read the following statement:—

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SETTLEMENT SHOULD BE MISSIONARY.

With a view to these all-important ends, I regard it as indispensable to successful civilizing of the aborigines that they be in every case put under the teaching and management of a Christian missionary.

MISSIONARY'S WIFE.

The manager's wife should also have the spirit and qualifications of a missionary. This seems to me indispensable, in order that the usefulness of her husband as a Christian teacher may be manished. She requires to take a careful and faithful care of all manner of household work. The utmost vigilance ought to be exercised in regard to adults as well as to children. The large schoolroom used as a place of worship was filled from Sabbath to Sabbath. A minister's wife, or one of our converted aborigines, as a rule, would have everything to learn in the arts of civilized life, and require to be taught by patient self-denying example. The manager's wife would require to be not only a man who can humbly adapt himself to the low social condition of the aborigines, in order to take them by the slow process of teaching them lessons which are to them very irksome to learn, and also one who is capable of instructing them in sewing, carpentering, house building, gardening, agriculture, hog-growing, the cultivation of arrowroot, or any kind of industry which the peculiarities of the station may require. Of course a skilful superintendent will always plan so as to keep the aborigines regularly and systematically at work. Then they will not be so easily tempted to wander from the reserve, become unsatisfied in mind, and be drawn into temptation. I would suggest, also, that they be requirned at their labor at rates which would encourage industry and secure attachment to the settlement.

VENOMOUS RECOMMENDATIONS ARE TO BE EXPECTED.

From long correspondence and intercourse with missionaries laboring among the aborigines, I have the utmost confidence in the good results which we are warranted to expect from earnest Christian work and skilful management. The children, according to age, need instruction and rapid progress in acquiring the elements of education as those of English character. They have capacity for excelling in drawing, and have a special aptitude for music. One of the most remarkable changes I have seen in my bands of aborigines, in the past five years, is that in the character of the women. She sings in the church choir, and has become a certificated member, having passed successfully all the examinations required on the tonic-sol-fa system.

Mr. Joseph Parker called and examined.

Mr. J. Parker.

350-2. What are you?—I am in the Government service at present.
353. Residing in the country?—My residence proper is Echuca; at present I am stationed at Castlemaine.
354. You have some acquaintance with the aborigines?—Yes, more particularly in the early days of the colony.
355. You were residing on the Loddon?—At Mount Franklin.
356. Your father was assistant protector of aborigines?—Yes, for a number of years.
357. You have had much acquaintance with the natives since?—I have seen a little of them along the Murray, and conversed with a few of them.
358. Have you any idea what the number of aborigines there are about, within a few, residing in that district in and about the Murray?—I could not say with any certainty. There appears to be a party or tribe about Lake Moira, roaming from one side to the other. They frequent the Honorable John O'Shannassy's station on the Murray, and I am informed these three tribes never meet.
359. About how many?—Including adults and children, I should suppose about 150 altogether.
360. What is the style of life they lead generally?—Those on the Upper Murray are generally engaged in fishing. They catch quantities of fish, but got very little for them. The fishing companies take their fish, and do not return them to Melboume, Ballarat, and other places.
361. What are their habits?—Most of them, I am sorry to say, are rather intemperate when they can procure drink.
Mr. J. Parker
21st May 1877

420. Do you know the lower Murray down below Swan Hill?—No; I have not been there since 1858.
421. Have you been told that a desirable thing to form stations anywhere on the Murray, say below Swan Hill?—I am under the impression it would be. The Murray district appears to be a remarkably healthy district.

422. If a station were formed there, do you think that the natives roaming about as you have described could be induced to go to the station?—I think the younger members of the tribes could be induced, but I do not think many of the older ones would care to leave their own locality. In fact, there are some about Sir John O'Shanassy's station that appeared to me to be permanent cripples, hardly able to move.

423. They would be the sort we ought to secure?—I had a talk with a few at Gannawarra. I asked them if they would like to go to the Coranderrk station, but they did not appear to like leaving their own districts.

424. Is there not a private station on the Murray?—That is done away with. The building is there, but no interest is taken in them.

425. How did that answer?—I do not think the party had the means of carrying it out. It was commenced before I went into the Murray district. I knew Mr. Matthews, and he told me he had to abandon the idea. He intended to have formed a mission station, but he had no encouragement.

426. From what you know of the habits of the blacks, do you think that it would be desirable to allow them to go out as laborers, apprentice them out—not, of course, the blacks on the Murray, those that are more civilized, those that have been on the aboriginal stations for some time?—I think if they could be kept in a central position, and their labor turned to account, the institutions might be made self-supporting. Some of the Coranderrk natives at Wynne, and my impression was, if they got mixed up with those roaming about it would not be beneficial to their habits.

427. They go back, in fact?—I think they would if they were left.

428. In fact you do not think it would be safe for them to be trusted out?—I do not think you could in any country district. It would not be an advantage to them; even the influence of the young stockkeepers and station hands; it would not be beneficial to their welfare at all; at least, when I say that, I speak from experience. I have no knowledge of the progress the natives have made at Coranderrk; I have never been there.

429. Those natives you have seen were natives that came from there?—Yes.

430. Lately?—Yes, during the last shearing. Most of them were very steady, with one exception; but there were one or two as Moira from the school for a time. They were with the others, and it did not do them any good. They were strangers to me, but they told me they were from Coranderrk.

431. What sort of labor (for instance, if the station on the Murray were formed) would they be suited for?—The only labor that I could suggest would be grazing or agriculture. I do not think there is anything else. Below Swan Hill would be too far to encourage fishing—fishing as a source of profit.

432. For amusement and food only?—Yes, they can get plenty of that.

433. If the station were formed there for grazing, and they had some sheep?—I think that it could be made ultimately self-supporting.

434. And they are quite fit to work at that kind of employment, shepherds and stockriders?—Yes.

435. They make very good shearsers?—They are fair shearsers and reapers, but bad ploughmen. As a rule I have found them so.

436. Do you know any of the other stations?—No, I have never visited any of the stations.

437. Have you ever met any of the old aborigines that were on your father's station?—Yes, I have met two or three on the Murray.

438. Did you observe whether they were better or worse than those who had never been on the aboriginal station?—There was one; he was a comparative stranger to me, but the squatters told me he was very steady, and never drank at all; about the only one, they said.

439. Do you think that the hope could be entertained of those men ultimately being absorbed in the population generally, or that they will always require a certain amount of supervision?—I think if they will always require supervision as long as the original natives are in existence. It may not be so as regards the half-castes.

440. I am afraid they are as difficult to deal with as the others?—My experience has been, that whenever they have been left to themselves they have gone back to their old habits.

441. You have known some brought up on your father's place partially civilized?—Yes.

442. We have been told that an aboriginal who has learnt a trade, and who can execute the work of that trade skilfully and efficiently, will still not have sufficient energy and perseverance to conduct the business himself?—I think that too.

443. What do you attribute that to?—They do not seem to have the power of endurance.

444. Perseverance rather?—Perseverance.

445. Suppose a man can make shoes, would he have capacity to carry on the trade, to buy and sell and support himself?—I have known instances of that in farming, a few about Mount Franklin, they supported themselves entirely for years.

446. There was a supervising power?—No, not any. My father, or the aboriginal schoolmaster, had nothing to do with them; they did it themselves entirely, disposed of the produce themselves, invested themselves, and bought and sold.

447. What became of them?—They died from consumption and various internal diseases, all with the exception of one, Tommy, who is at Coranderrk now.

448. Where do you draw the distinction as to what they could conduct and what not?—I am under the impression they might be taught tailoring and shoemaking; some easy trade like that, where their physical strength will not be tested.

449. My question is rather in reference to their mental capacity to organize or carry on a trade?—I cannot say positively whether they would stick to anything. They have a roaming disposition. Those I speak of were there seven or eight years; there were five or six, and four of the men died of consumption.
575. It was suggested to us that a native might make a pair of boots very well, but he would not know where he had left his awl or his waxed, and in that way he would make them, in short, be so careless and indifferent that he would not make a profit. They would be attentive to work so long as there was novelty in it. They are naturally proud of mechanical work. I have known some of them to be fair carpenters, and certainly I have not known them to be particularly careless as regards their tools.

576. And give it up?—Yes.

577. Then as a livelihood it would fail?—Yes. They seem to me to take well to mild work, like cultivation and grazing.

578. In those instances you spoke of how long did it continue?—Seven or eight years.

579. How did they end?—They all died, with the exceptions I have alluded to. 580. Did they continue working their farms till they died?—Yes; and their children were removed to Coranderrk.

581. Were those farms any way their own?—No; they reverted back to the Crown. They were granted to them for the time they occupied them only.

582. Those persons of whom you spoke as decrepit along the Murray, how are they supported? I am under the impression that they are supported by the station proprietors, and selectors generally. I talked to several, and asked them if a home were built for them would they like to go to it, they said no.

584. Say a station was formed along the Murray?—They might be induced in that case. I asked those natives 20 miles west and others 20 miles east of Echuca, and they said they had never met each other, and they were only 40 miles apart.

585. You spoke of the young being likely to come, would you separate the children from the parents?—The children seem very willing to go where they get clothes and attention.

586. What age were the children?—From six to ten, most of them. When older than that they are employed on the stations.

587. Do their parents express themselves as willing for them to go?—Yes, they said they were willing for them to go to school as they called it. I am under the impression that they would be controlled with far less trouble if we could only keep the influence of the white people from them. These bushmen and people in the country persuade them that everything that is done for them is done for the interest of the superintendent, or management of these stations, and that they will be cheated and robbed, and they are in a great fear something is going to happen to them.

588. And the natives believe them?—In many instances they do.

589. You find that drink has a very bad effect upon them?—Yes, it is very bad up there.

590. You think they are less capable of resisting the inclination to drink than whites?—I think so, but the older men are decidedly affected by drink, they rush to it. They get their living by fishing, and in some cases making rugs and different things.

591. What do they do with the money?—They buy clothes and food, but most of them in fact spend it in drink.

592. Those natives are on the New South Wales side?—No, on the Victorian.

593. At Gumbower?—Yes.

594. Those others receive a certain amount of food and clothing?—Yes, those that are on the Moira.

595. Not those at Redbank?—They are not receiving directly. It is a matter of suffrage at the discretion of those who like to give. The Moira natives are, I am informed, well supplied by Sir John O'Shanassy's station people, although I have no proof of this.

596. If they came across the river they could get supplied?—Yes, they come across in the flood season in their canoes, and fish and sell the fish to the Murray Fishing Company, and the money generally goes to the public-house.

597. They are very good at catching those fish?—Yes, very good indeed.

598. If they were 30 or 40 miles below Swan Hill they could catch fish there, there would be no great difficulty in getting those fish to Echuca?—No, but it would be a long way to travel.

599. They are very good at catching those fish?—Yes, very good indeed. It was one case I might mention in reference to a native woman, a widow with two little boys. She had two horses running about the forest, and she used to hire these horses out at 10s. a day. She was very good at hitting the money, and would get the money before they took the horses, and she seemed to manage the money very well and clothed her children.

600. Where she reside?—Near Gumbower or the Gannewarra station. They have no settled home, and just roam from one place to another. I am under the impression that a station on the Murray would be much more beneficial as far as regards their health.

601. That must be pastoral, you could not cultivate there?—European selectors are cultivating and getting fair crops down there, near the junction of the Loddon and the Murray. I presume what can be done with Europeans may be done with the Aborigines under proper management.

602. They could not live there?—I cannot say anything about the country below Swan Hill, because I have not been there. The locality about Swan Hill is rather poor.

603. What trades would you particularly recommend that they should be taught, taking into consideration their aptitude and their disposition?—I think for the men tailoring and shoemaking, and brush or basket-making, the same as in the Blind Institute. Some of them are very good with the carpenters' tools. I have seen them make very useful things, boxes and yokes, and anything of that kind, and even a window sash; but they do not do very well with the blacksmithing. It is rather too laborious for them.

604. Any light trade?—Yes.

605. Requiring some skill?—Yes.

606. Are there any other small industries besides basket-making that you would recommend?—No, not except shoemaking and tailoring, and things of that sort. Those that I had to do with were very fond of tanning and working up skins.

607. And net-making they are good at?—Yes, they are very good at that, at least the older natives were.

608. In their wild state they made beautiful nets?—Yes, those on the Murray make beautiful nets.

609. That would be a useful occupation?—Yes; but it is hardly a thing that would pay in itself. People prefer making their own.
Author/s:
Victoria. Royal Commission on the Aborigines; Stawell, William Foster Sir, 1815-1889

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