1880-81.
VICTORIA.

POLICE COMMISSION.

PROGRESS REPORT
OF THE
ROYAL COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY
INTO THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF
THE KELLY OUTBREAK,
THE PRESENT STATE AND ORGANIZATION OF THE POLICE FORCE, ETC.

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

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[Signature]
ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE POLICE OF VICTORIA.

PROGRESS REPORT.

To His Excellency the Most Honorable George Augustus Constantine, Marquis of Normanby, Earl of Mulgrave, Viscount Normanby, and Baron Mulgrave of Mulgrave, all in the County of York, in the Peerage of the United Kingdom; and Baron Mulgrave of New Ross, in the County of Wexford, in the Peerage of Ireland; a Member of Her Majesty's Most Honorable Privy Council; Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George; Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Colony of Victoria and its Dependencies, &c., &c., &c.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY:—

A Royal Commission was appointed on March 7th 1881 under Letters Patent by Your Excellency—

1. To inquire into the circumstances preceding and attending the Kelly outbreak.
2. As to the efficiency of the Police to deal with such possible occurrences.
3. To inquire into the action of the Police authorities during the period the Kelly gang were at large.
4. The efficiency of the means employed for their capture; and
5. Generally to inquire into and report upon the present state and organization of the Police Force.

Subsequently a memo., dated 10th May 1881, from the Honorable Graham Berry, Chief Secretary of the colony, was received by your Commissioners as follows:—

"The Chief Secretary will be glad if the Police Commission will submit separately and at their earliest convenience such of their recommendations as have reference to Mr. Inspector O'Connor and the black trackers under him; as, in the projected re-organization of the Police arrangements for the North-Eastern district, it may be found necessary that Mr. O'Connor should be re-appointed."

The Commission, in pursuance of the powers thus assigned to them, have held thirty-eight meetings, and examined over forty witnesses. It was felt that, apart from the courtesy due to the Queensland Government, who had so promptly responded to the application of the Victorian Police authorities for the temporary service of native trackers to assist in the pursuit of the outlaws, it was due to Mr. O'Connor that he should be afforded every facility for the production and examination of witnesses, and, consequently, the evidence taken on this branch of the inquiry was more than
ordinarily voluminous. Your Commissioners have now the honor to present the following Progress Report, viz.:—

1. That the evidence before the Commission is not of such a character as to warrant your Commissioners in recommending the Honorable the Chief Secretary to appoint Mr. Stanhope O'Connor to the position of Inspector of Police in the Victorian service.

2. Your Commissioners are of opinion that the Government should make provision for the permanent employment of black trackers as an auxiliary branch of the Police service; care being taken that they shall be trained to habits of subordination, and made amenable to the general discipline of the force.

Your Commissioners would recommend—

1. That, as far as practicable, a thorough system of Police patrol shall be established throughout the colony, more especially in the North-Eastern district.

2. That immediate steps be taken by the Government to arm the Mounted Police of the colony with the Regulation Pattern Martini-Henry carbine; that the entire force shall be instructed in the use of the weapon by means of regular drill and periodical target practice; and that a reasonable quantity of ammunition shall be served out to each man for such practice.

FRANCIS LONGMORE, Chairman;
WILLIAM ANDERSON,
GEO. R. FINCHAM,
JAMES GIBB,
JAMES H. GRAVES,
GEORGE WILSON HALL,
E. J. DIXON,
GEORGE COLLINS LEVEY.
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