

(No. 713)

3rd Dec 41

Chief Protector

His report on the Aborigines

Chief Protectors Office

in conduct of the Department

Melbourne Dec 11th 1841-

for past year

Sir

No. 4772/

I have the honor in compliance with
yours of July 23rd to submit for the
information of the Government the following
brief particulars relating to this Department.

Various circumstances have conduced
necessarily to render the present Report
shorter than I could have wished; the
principal is that much of the information
obtained has not been sufficiently matured
to lay before the Govt. - I trust, however,
I shall be able satisfactorily to submit

Yrs Honor

C. J. Latrobe Esq

Superintendent

W. H. W.

in my subsequent Report, an ample, and
valid detail of all matters of interest
connected with this branch of Her Majesty's
Service. —

I would briefly premise, that hitherto
I have been mainly guided, in the direction
of the affairs of this Institution, by the
general instruction, contained in —

Lord Glenelg's Despatch to His Excellency
Sir George Gipps the Governor of this
Colony. — To me that instruction as a general
outline appeared quite ample, it embraces
the most important points for the moral

and

1. Each Protector should
attach himself as closely
and constantly as possible
to the aboriginal tribes who
may be found in the district
for which he may be ap-
pointed, attending them if
practicable in their movements
from one place to another
until they can be induced
to assume more settled
habits of life, and encourage
to conciliate their respect
and confidence, and to make
them feel that he is their
friend. —

2. "He must watch over the rights and interests of the natives. Protect them as far as he can by his personal exertions and influence from any encroachment on their property, and from acts of cruelty, oppression, or injustice, and faithfully represent their wants, wishes, or grievances if such representations be found necessary, through the Chief Protector to the Government of the Colony. For this purpose it will be desirable to invest each Protector with a Commission as Magistrate."

3. "If the natives can be induced in any considerable numbers to locate themselves in a particular place, it will be the object of the Protector to teach and encourage them to engage in the cultivation of their grounds, in building suitable habitation for themselves, and in whatever else may conduce to their civilization and social improvement."

4. "The education and instruction of the children as early and as extensively as it may be practicable is to be regarded as a matter of primary importance."

5. "In connexion with the engagements, and as affording the most efficient means for the ultimate accomplishment of them, the Chief Protector should promote to the utmost extent of his ability and opportunities, the moral and religious improvement of the natives, by instructing them in the elements of the Christian Religion, and preparing them for the reception of teachers whose particular province it would be to promote the knowledge and practice of Christianity amongst them."

and physical improvement of the Aborigines and leaves very judiciously, the details to be worked out from circumstances.

In conformity with that instruction I in March 39 assigned to each Assistant Protector certain Districts or tracts of country as the scene of their labour. Vide copy of letter to the Hon^{ble} The Colonial Secretary, &c. as also appendix B. - and on the 1st of April 39, issued for their guidance instruction No 6 C. in the appendix.

The information sought for in that document was deemed essential to enable me

me to determine as to the most eligible situation
for fixed localities.

Reserves for the Ab Natives have been
sanctioned by Govt. and occupied as
hereunder mentioned.

The Godden Reserve containing one
square mile of country was sanctioned by
the Govt. in June 40. and occupied in
September, but owing to the arid nature
of the soil, was removed in June 41.
to "William-be-parramel-parrn" its present
situation. For the short period this
establishment has been formed, the results
have

6. "In reference to every object
contemplated by the proposed
appointment it is exceedingly
desirable that the Protector
should as soon as possible learn
the language of the natives, so
as to be able freely and familiarly
to converse with them.

7. "He must take charge of and
be accountable for any money
or clothing which may be placed
under his care for distribution
to the natives.

8. "He will obtain as accurate
information as may be practicable
of the number of natives within
his district and of all important
particulars in regard to them.

These appear to me the prin-
cipal points, which demand
attention in reference to this
subject. But it is of course not
my intention to restrict you
in the instructions which you
will have to issue to the Protector
within the topics on which I
have touched, as your local
knowledge and experience
will doubtless enable you
to supply omissions in the
outline which I have given.

I am, Sir, &c.

(Signed) (Henry J.)

have been beneficial. - The number of Natives in attendance have been from fifty to two hundred and fifty.

The improvements in cultivation and in buildings, though limited are suitable and consist as set forth in Schedule D.

Intervals of labour have been set apart for the Aborigines and a School has been commenced. On the Sabbath Divine service is performed by the Sub-Protector when present, and in his absence, Prayers read by the Overseer.

The Reserve on the Goulburn
consisting

consisting of one square mile of country
was occupied in Nov^r 40. Cultivation has
been done to some extent at this Station and
the Natives have been encouraged to manual
labour. The buildings and fences are of
temporary construction. A school is about
to be commenced. The number of Natives
in attendance, have been from forty
to three hundred. —

The fertile Reserve for the Melbourne
or Westernport District was occupied in
October 1840. The improvements at this
Station are limited. The buildings and part
of

of the fences are of temporary construction.
A School has been commenced. The
number of Natives at this Establishment
averages (when present) as Mr. Schmale announced
from thirty to one hundred and fifty.

Four Reserves have been sanctioned for
the Geelong or Western District and the
Central Station is about to be occupied.

The Homesteads of the Assistant
Protectors are intended to serve as the Centre
of operations for their Districts and as an
Asylum for such Aboriginal Natives as
are disposed to settle. - Agricultural and
Horticultural

Horticultural operations are to be carried on
at those stations for the exclusive benefit
and advantage of the Natives. Those who
are able are expected to give an equivalent
for what they receive. The sick, the aged,
and young children are to be rationed.

No settler is allowed to occupy
land within five miles of the A.S.T. Protector's
station. These Establishments are not in any
way to interfere with the itinerating duties
of the A.S.T. Protectors but on the contrary
are meant to render their services more efficient.

They are to travel among and sojourn
with the Native tribes and by every possible
means.

means in their power, endeavour to induce them to a settled mode of existence. —

In adverting to the fixed establishments I have thought it desirable to do so, generally rather than in detail, as at this juncture it might and with some propriety, considering the brief period of their formation be deemed premature. —

Now that the establishments are formed and the aborigines in tolerable numbers frequent those institutions, I would respectfully bring under notice the propriety that properly qualified persons

persons, as recommended, in the R. Hon
The Secretary of State's Despatch, be
appointed for the purpose of imparting
religious instruction, and of administering
to this hapless race the blessings of Christianity.

This aid is necessary and I feel
assured that the civilization of the
Aborigines cannot progress unless it be
conceded. The Australasian Aborigines
like all other Savage nations, are Superstitious
and I know of no other means so effectual
for removing those prejudices as the one
submitted.

The Aborigines are capable of being

being instructed and if their condition
be not improved, the fault I feel
assured, if I may so speak, can not
be wholly attributable to them, for from
my personal intercourse with the tribes
I have found them in general intelligent
possessing intellect and capacity of no
ordinary description and in this respect
fully equal to a large majority of the
peasantry of civilized communities.

All the tribes even the most ferocious
can be communicated with. This I assert
with confidence, having myself personally
conferred

conferred with a large majority of the
Native inhabitants of this province.

During my late expedition of five
months in the Western Interior I was
never without Natives, and on my previous
expeditions to the Northward North Eastern
and North West, was always in commu-
-nication with them. It is therefore
practicable and must be the obvious
duty of the Assistant-Protectors to —
attach themselves as closely and constantly
as possible to the Ab. tribes who may
be found in their Districts, attending
them

" them so long as they continue to wander
" from one place to another, until they
" can be induced to assume more settled
" habits of life and endeavour to conciliate
their respect and confidence and to
make them feel that he is their friend.

Vide Secy of States Despatches
to His Excellency Sir Geo. Gipps.

Of the four Districts into
which this province has been subdivided, the
Goulburn River in point of importance is
paramount, a thousand Native inhabitants
at least can be readily communicated with
and by well directed efforts by Native
agents incalculable benefits may be conferred
on

on the tribes in the far distant Interior.

The "Goulburn," the "Murray," and the "Darling,"
rivers, being the great lines of communication

Next in importance as regards Native
population, is the Loddon. This and the
Goulburn River District occupy the whole
Northern frontier of Australia Felix
containing large tracts of arid country
inhabited only by savage men, and which
they on account of its sterility will
doubtless be left in undisturbed possession.

The aboriginal natives
of the Portland Bay and Western ^{Port} Districts
are

Decrease of the ab-
Population -

are rapidly on the decay. Their decrease is
attributable to several causes, viz, Collisions
with Hostile tribes, Collisions with White
men, Infanticide, Domestic quarrels,
Indigenous and European diseases, assassinations.

Medical aid -

The severe state of bodily affliction, under
which the Natives were suffering, induced me
to apply to Your Honor for medical relief,
which was immediately responded to and
conceded by His Excellency the Governor
in the appointment of a Medical officer
Mr. Baylie, to the Department, and from
what I have seen, there is every reason to believe
that

that this appointment will be found of great
utility to the Natives. This Officer has
Medical charge of the Goulburn and
Loddon Stations. His report for the
Month of November, contains One hundred
and fifty one cases treated at the former
Station alone, fifty cases cured and one
death, a male infant two months old, of
inflammation. - On the subject of Disease, the
Medical Officer thus writes. - "I have had but
one case that terminated fatally since I arrived"
here. The Disease, excrescence I alluded to "
in a late Report, is I find the most prevalent "
among "

"among the local diseases, while Fever
"attacks the constitution internally."

The Surgeon's Reports are made
monthly and comprise the Diseases,
the treatment, and termination. —

The Male aborigines of Australia
are for the most part a fine race, and
among tribes remote from White men, the
same amount of disease and I may add
of crime also, does not exist as among those
in the settled Districts. I regret I cannot
now lay before the Government a correct
statistical return of the numerical strength
of the entire aboriginal population of the

the province. The returns from my
Assistants relate only to certain tribes
Vide appendix. C. I however, trust
that I shall be able from information
personally obtained during my several
Journeys into the Interior to submit in
my next, the information requisite.

The following by returns, are the number
of Natives with whom the Asst. Protectors
are in communication

Asst. Protector of the Loddon 300.

Ditto, Ditto, of the Western District 260.

Ditto Ditto, of the Melbourne & Westernport Dist^y 190.

Asst. Protector of the Goulburn River Dist^y 310.

Every

Every endeavour is made at the several establishments to induce the natives to habits of Industry and I am happy to state that the Reports of the Asst. Protectors on this head are perfectly satisfactory. The natives in all cases are taught to feel that their occupation is for their own advantage, and this with untutored men is the great incitement to industry. The Asst. Protector at the Loderen thus writes. "The aborigines" "were employed in every description of" "labour that could be created and the" "results"

"results as will be indicated by subsequent"
"statements were very satisfactory. Since"
"the occupation of the present Station on"
"the upper branch of the Ladder, ample"
"employment has been furnished, in"
"cultivating the ground, building,"
"fencing, and other labour incident to"
"a new Station." Where great bodily
exertion is not requisite, the aboriginal
Natives are fully equal to Europeans,
but in severe labour they are inferior.
They have sufficient capacity for
acquiring knowledge, but a want of
Stability

stability, especially with the adults is much felt. To each Central Station an Overseer has been appointed to conduct the farming operations and take charge of the Stores, and it is expected ere long that the produce raised will be sufficient for the support of the inhabitants.

Every endeavour as far as the means at my disposal permitted, have been made to improve the moral and social condition of the aborigines. Religious services are performed by the Sub-Protectors on the Sabbath, at the Central Stations and

and in their absence, by the Overseers. Persons
of moral and religious character have been
invariably recommended for subordinate situations
but notwithstanding these endeavours I do think
I should still discharge my duty to the Aborigines
and to the Government, if I failed to represent
the necessity that exists for properly qualified
persons being appointed to impart to this portion
of the human family the blessings of Christian
instruction, and to superintend the scholastic
duties. — On the subject of encouraging Natives
to engage in the service of Settlers. I at present
do not think I could consistently recommend
as a general principle, even were it practicable
such

such a measure; for although many of the
Settlers to my knowledge are kind and humane
and highly respectable, and who would be very
proper persons to take an interest in the affairs
of the Natives (had we a better class of
Peasantry). yet I do think it would be
extremely injudicious under existing circumstances
to do so, for although this province has
not ranked as a penal colony, still a large
proportion of the men employed, until very
lately, once belonged to those classes. Van
Diemens Land, and the middle Districts
supplied a large proportion and these
for the most part were of the worst
character

many convicts
assigned to Settlers
have also been
introduced into
this District.

character; of this class were the greater part
of the men I met on my late and protracted
Journey into the Western Interior, and it
grieved me to observe with what perfect
recklessness and impunity Profane Swearing
was had recourse to: by them the Sabbath
was not only disregarded, but desecrated and
from their animosity to the Natives, for it was
too apparent to be misunderstood it was
easy to imagine the kind of treatment the
Natives would receive when the opportunity
offered for perpetrating it. The saying
was common with the Settlers, that the men
and

and not we, are the masters." If therefore the
Settlers could not control their men in matters
where they were personally concerned it was
scarcely to be supposed they could do so in
matters regarding the Natives, and on that
account many of the respectable Settlers
assured me they kept the Natives from their
run and prohibited their servants from
holding any intercourse with them.

The men in the Interior are completely
acromen, at least those I met were so.

I invariably have endeavoured
to enlist respectable Settlers in the cause
of the aborigines and I am gratified
in stating that instances of mutual
attachment between Settlers and Natives have
been met with, and I have no doubt
were