ABORIGINES.


To the Honorable,
THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, &C. &C. &C.

Enquirer, Lake Macquarie, New South Wales, December 30, 1857.

Sir,

The period having arrived at which I am directed by the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department annually to report progress, it would afford me great pleasure could I make a more favorable statement than I am now enabled to do; the progress of the Blacks in this District, induced me, in order to address a letter to His Excellency the Governor, stating the circumstances, and requesting the influence of the Colonial Government in the Colonies, for the years 1855, 1856, and 1857; in order to ascertain whether the decrease was more general, and to consider whether better means could be devised, than those at present adopted, to make more effective my employment amongst the Aborigines. Two modes of proceeding presented themselves, namely: to remove to a more populous part of the Colony, as respects the Blacks, or, to alter my original plan of proceeding, on which I have hitherto acted, in the interests of the Mission. His Excellency was pleased to favor me with the official documents, from which a literal and correct general Return of the Aborigines, within the four divisions of the Colony, has been compiled, and is attached to this Report. It appears clearly from the Return, that the decrease of the Black population is not local and temporary, but general and annual. The returns show that the greatest portion of the Aborigines are found in the North and North-west Districts of the Colony, the majority being within my sphere of action, whilst their language differs materially from the District in which I have made some progress. Such being the case, it seemed preferable not to remove, but rather to await the translating for the present, and endeavor to render available to the Natives the works which are finished, and have been mentioned in last year's Report.

It would be very gratifying to possess printed copies of the four Gospels, and the Acts, as originally contemplated, previous to any attempt at oral instruction being extensively made; but the unsatisfactory and deplorable state of the Blacks, and the conviction that a further advance in the knowledge of their tongue will improve the translation, reconcile to the postponement of an application to The British and Foreign Bible Society for aid to print, until some future period, when it may be found necessary to furnish the objects of our attention with the inspired Epistles, which are "The Commandments of the Lord," and the "Hebrew and the Greek". After having therefore deliberately considered the peculiar state of affairs, the only course that appears suitable to the prevailing occasion is, to ask you "To do the work of an Evangelist," in visiting the neighboring Districts during the coming year, and endeavor to meet, as stated periods, or on occasion serve, the various Tribes at Fort Stephens and its vicinities, the Returns of which contain about 300 Blacks, the number of the whole, and its dependents, having about 300, and other contiguous Tribes, consisting of about 200 more, with whom direct I am acquainted, and really teach them "The first Principles of the Oracles of God." The dialect of the District, being different to those of the northward, the Southern District is not contemplated in the present infantile arrangement. A circumstance occurred recently which induced me to hope that the attempt may not prove vain in their behalf. At all events, no possible loss of time or labor can arise, should disappointments ensue on the part of the Aborigines, but good may result, situated as we are among so many of our own countrymen, who do not refuse to have imparted to them and their dependents "The Words of Life." An unforeseen event occasioned my visiting Malabar last month, and being requested to preach at Mopar. I consequently met at Hinta, the junction of the River Hunter and Passawenno, a small Tribe of Blacks, who exhibited much surprise at being addressed in their own tongue. After a number of confidences, they concluded that the speaker must be the person of whom Mr. O'Briain, the Aborigine, had spoken, and they appeared to be acquainted with the nature of my pursuits. After some conversation they were requested to attend again at the same place on the next full moon, in order of the "Chief of Chiefs," whose dwelling is in Heaven. Whether the refusal to accede to their petition for money to drink may prevent the fulfilment of their promise to assemble, the event must determine. I trust also to be enabled to visit Fort Stephens, and surrounding Districts, early in the next year, to make, if possible, similar arrangements with other Tribes. Could my Aboriginal assistant be induced to act with propriety, and accompany me in such efforts, the result might be more pleasing, but, like Pilgrims in America, my most useful Aboriginal is the most inscrutable in drink. Years of patiently close application have been sacrificed to the injury of his sight and health. In endeavoring to acquire a knowledge of the Natives' language, with a view, ultimately, of pursuing the same course, which at this juncture it becomes necessary immediately to adopt, to save, if possible, the scaffold remains of the native Tribes. The monuments of the past, so dear to my mind, are an object ever dear to my heart, and I have a great deal of patience to possess and endure without complaint against hope that in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. The present decreasing state of the
Aborigines, whilst it urges promptness in our measures, presents a far from pleasing prospect for Missionary enterprise, while speedy satisfaction being denied, unless God quickly condescends to accompany with the influence of His Holy Spirit, the means used of his own appointment to save them. But how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

During this year one only has arisen from the Trial in the Supreme Court, the which I attended as Interpreter, "Moolooana," an Aboriginal belonging to the Interior, near Port Macquarie, was charged with being concerned in the murder of four Europeans. The Court humbly appointed Counsel for the prisoner, and I visited the subject in goal to ascertain his defence. The dialect spoken by him being different, I could only elicit through the means of my assistant Black, Mr. Hill, and he communicated partly through another Black belonging to Port Macquarie, who was under confinement at the time. He happened from his disclosures that the murder was committed by a strange Tribe which he named, he looking on, in revenge for two Blacks who were killed in a Lookout-house, defend with speaking and slaughtering cattle; that the Tribes were collecting for the purpose of further retaliation in the Wits, but, that, he only took part of the spot. His Excellency the Governor was immediately apprised of the movements likely to make place in that District, that means might be adopted to secure the lives of the unprotected. We thus accreted to the casual of a dreadful murder by various named, elicited the occasion of such a murder, and discovered designs for further atrocities; but when the same means of interpreting were suspended in open Court, the Black could not be sworn with myself as assistant interpreter, and ultimately the prisoner was discharged. Thus that just and available principle which discloses that the Aborigines are subject to and under the protection of British Laws, because a mere Legal Fiction, in consequence of no means being duly provided to establish the case, and afford Legal protection to its subjects in its own Courts; and thus the strictness of the administration of the Law becomes the height of injustice to all. It cannot be denied that our circumstances, as a Civilized People in connection with these Aboriginal Barbarians were never contemplated by the British Constitution, but it remains to be ascertained, whether this Age of Intellect will provide a suitable remedy in cases of specific enactment, or suffer year after year, the Aborigines to be fled away from the Land by private vengeance for injuries publicly committed; which injuries the Executives at present cannot punish but by the horrors of Martial Law. Surely it is a matter worthy the prompt attention of Legislators belonging to a professed Christian Nation, lest there be found "Those who shed innocent blood," and our "Hearers become barren, and our Earth barren, and the rice of our land be made powder and dust," through the voice of a Brother's blood crying aloud for vengeance unto God. The very weakness of the Blacks, forces to noble minds, the strongest appeal to Justice, nor should Equity forget the price of the Land of their Blood which falls for a place of our Foundation with Gold, adorns British amongst the nations, and establishes Colonial in the destruction of the Native inhabitants thereof, and thus presents a powerful claim to the tender sympathies of the Christian Charles; whilst the certainty of legal punishment to the guilty, would save the Innocent, "Be a terror to evil doers," and ultimately prevents the increase of crime. Under present circumstances the guilty escapes; and human justice can only control the Law as it is, which is the door of Equity against the Blacks, and leaves them in public vengeance; or to the private revenge of favored Europeans, which steadily in its purpose, will surely, secretly, and speedily incalculate the Aborigines from the face of this land.

Generally speaking, however, there is a kindly feeling, a friendly disposition, manifested towards the Blacks by the Colonists, and many of the out-stations prove places of refuge in cases of danger, whilst other stations are dotted on account of the alleged barbarity and violence inflicted by the Aborigines. A Black refused to conduct a European to one of these stations was so abhorrent to the feeling that he might be shot, as many of his companions had, without any provocation on their part. But representations have been made to the Colonists in the Interior, in destroying cattle, and in the destruction of human life, and a severe retaliation has been made. In this mode of surrounding a herd of cattle, the slaughtering of the beasts, the preserving of the flesh by smoke, and the plucking of wigs from the blacks, were the instances of a convict steempton; and under such tests, so numerous scattered amongst the Tribes in the Interior, it is not more than probable that they become apt to commit such acts. Upwards of eighty were shot in retaliation for this affair.

In accounting for the very great decrease in the Black Population, it is essentially that the very means used by many to express their kindly feeling towards the Aboriginals, tends to their destruction, namely—supplying their wants with wanton spirits, as the wages most acceptable for any little service which they are often required to perform. Thus a debt is created for more; they are then urged to consider retaliation, the breasting sin of this Colony, too often to the loss of human life. A determination, from the formation of this Ministry, not to adopt the prevalent practice, may be assigned as a potent reason why the Missionary Establishment is least likely to become the favourite object of the misguided Aboriginals in their pagan state—Divine authority forbidding "Do evil, that good may come." The prevailing circumstance of the frequent desertion of the few Aboriginals left alive from this station, must be borne with patience in the exercises of just and consideration principles. We are responsible for the wickedness committed in these parts, but we are not for success. Another cause of decrease amongst the Tribes, may be traced to the swelling tide of emigration which has universally swelled up the petty streams of Barbarism, and the Aboriginals have generally been either driven back to the Interior by force of arms, or have become amalgamated with the overpowering people who thus "Instruct, Repopulate, and Subdue the Earth." In this Colony, local circumstances have occasioned the total destruction of the Tribes within its limits to be fast impedit, but not more completely certain than when martial force has been employed. The unchangeable state of the thousands of male prisoners scattered throughout the country amongst females, though of another colour, lends them by turns, friends or frenzies, to further the Aboriginal women from their own proper mates, and disease and death are the usual consequences of such improper relations. The official return from one district gives eighty-nine women to twenty-eight men, two boys, but no girls. The continued ill treatment and frequent slaughter of the Black women can only be deplored, perhaps without remedy. One Black of the number sentenced to work in furs at Port Jackson, had previously that several females and children to drink with his landlord. On his return from confinement he joined his Tribe, sat with them around a fire in
the Bush, island a woman, was about to dispatch her; when a Black started up and clat his skull with a hatchet, whilst mother was buried in his heart. Frequently have I noticed in this generation which have taken place amongst the Aboriginals, the fulfillment of that Divine decree, which declares — You blood of your foes will I require, at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of men. Of the sorrowing effects it is pleasing, and satisfying, to state, that no complaints have been committed by them on Europeans since their release from terror in Great Island for which reasons they are indebted to the humane consideration of His Excellency the Governor Sir Richard Fremantle. The territory of their punishments, which necessity required, was much to them, that several died whilst under confinement on the Island.

The last, but not the least, item to mention, as occasioning the rapid diminution of the Aborigines of this Territory, is far above the control of mortal man, and not confined to the limits of the Colony. The who "increase the nations," or "destroy that there shall be no inhabitants," has visited the land; and the Malaria, the Sleeping-sickness, and the Influenza, have stricken the Black victims in hundreds on the earth, until, in some places, scarcely a tribe can be found. Of one large Tribe in the interior, four years since, there were one hundred and sixty-four persons; there are now only three individuals alive! Many suffered from the loss of human veneration, for slain ones of aggression, many were slain by the sons of God. An old farmer residing on the Lake, upwards of sixty Blacks lie mouldering into dust, of whom many were destroyed by the effects of homeliness, but more by the epidemic of the time.

The Freelanding of God having brought many on the roads of iniquity, and amidst many discouragements, through evil report and good report. In humble, but firm, dependence on his opening a door of usefulness, and a small remnant of the Aborigines being yet preserved, to whom the gospel may be reported, we can only hope, "That a little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation," and that "the Lord will hasten it in due season."

Having thus endeavored briefly to report the affairs of the Mission to the Aborigines, and stated the plans of operation for the ensuing year, which the present exigencies require in order to carry into effect the benevolent intentions of the British Government towards the Blacks, it is, with the highest assurance of respect, hoped that the object stated of the decreasing Aborigines of the Colony may not be forgotten in the considerations and gracious sympathies of Her Majesty the Queen, whose reign may the Aborigines God prosper, bless, protect, and govern in the happiness of the nation, and her own Royal Person, to the Glory of God, and to the peace and good will of all.

I have the honor to subscribe myself,
Your most obedient Humble Servant,

LANCLOT EDWARD TRELWELD.
must happy to make the amends honorable, and to bid the Missionaries God speed. Their Report is a very interesting one."

The grand or the centre of the business in the Coloured are now of little consequence, because truth is never adored to whatever that wills in presently considered. The very sentence, that "Their cattle and sheep are grazing under the care of some third persons, along with the Rev. Mr. McGartis, for up the Hanitik," is a perfect falsehood; nor am I in any way connected with that Gentleman. I have not a single head of sheep to supply us with mutton; I have lost the produce of twenty-six head of cattle dyed to my wife more than fourteen years ago, which does not yet supply us with beef I together with a few, the gift of my esteemed colleague John Williams, Missionary, to my children, some sixteen or eighteen years since; these foreclosed themselves of all my stock, which is managed by me, for the benefit of my numerous family of nine children, and I have yet to learn that Missionaries have not Divine authority "to eat and to drink," and, "to lead about a sister, a wife," as well as the Apostles and the brethren of the Lord and the Apostle Peter (Cephas). Nay, without this assistance which God has given me, I could not have continued the Mission to the present time. It is astonishing, that a Protestant writer should so far allow his passions to blind his reason, as to advance in effect the Romanist doctrine, that the believers of Christ "Have no right to common or personal property, nor Franciscan doctrine, that the believers of Christ "Have no right to common or personal property, use Franciscan doctrine, that the believers of Christ "Have no right to common or personal property, thus: the world is subjected to a power of selling, or alienating any part of it!"—but, are to be held up to the world as heretical a power of selling, or alienating any part of it!—but, are to be held up to the world as heretical characters to be abominated! What with the law of Christ in opposition to the prophetic doctrine; etc., characters to be abominated! What with the law of Christ in opposition to the prophetic doctrine; etc., revolts, misrepresentations, and falsehoods. Thus saith the Lord—"If any provide not for his own, and specially for them of his own house, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." Acknowledging therefore, as I do, no other cause as the real for members of Christ, than "The Commandments of the Lord," contained in the Divinely Inspired Epistles, I ought to scorn the miserable договы that are opposed thereto.

LANCELOT EDWARD THRELKELD.

September 18, 1806.