REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSION

APPOINTED TO INQUIRE INTO THE ADMINISTRATION

OF

CERTAIN DEPARTMENTS

IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE.

Ordered by the Council to be printed.

PERTH:
BY AUTHORITY: RICHARD PETRES, GOVERNMENT PRINTER.
1878.
Report of the Commission appointed to enquire into the Administration of the Medical Department, Gaols, the Poor House, and the Native Prison Rottnest, etc.

Minute:

During the last Session of the House I appointed to report on the Excess of the Public Expenditure in connection with the Medical, Gaols administered as economically as they may, the Governor praying him to appoint Commissions to report on the Administration of the poor, and the Prison of Rottnest, and such others as His Excellency might think it expedient to have. I appointed a Commission, consisting of the Members of the Legislative Council, and the late Auditor General, me.

It is very gratifying to me, and I believe to every member of the House, to be able to say, that the matter is one for the consideration of the House, and that the Heads of those Departments have concurred in the views expressed in the report.

I have, accordingly, placed the report in the hands of the Minister for Public Works, who has been instructed to lay the report upon the table of the House, for the information and consideration of the members.

When the report is printed, a copy will be sent to each member of the House.

I have to express my sense of the value of the services rendered by the Committee, and of the valuable information they have furnished to the Government, and of the value of the recommendations they have made, which will be the subject of future consideration.

Report:

Sirs,

I have the honor to enclose herewith the report of the Commissioner for the year 1872, and the report of the Commissioner for the year 1873, which have been laid upon the table of the House. The report of the Commissioner for the year 1874 is also enclosed.

Your Commissioners having conducted their inquiry, and having made their report, I am now content to lay it before the House, and to leave the matter in the hands of the Government.

The position of the Commissioner for the year 1875 is also enclosed.

I have to say that the report of the Commissioner for the year 1876 is not yet ready, and that it will be presented to the House as soon as it is completed.

Respectfully,

[Signature]

Commissioner for the Year 1872.
Report of the Commission appointed to inquire into the Administration of the Medical Department, Gaols, the Poor House, and Native Prison at Rottnest, etc.

Minutes by His Excellency the Governor.

During the last Session of the Legislative Council a Select Committee, which was appointed to report on the Excess of Expenditure Bill, expressed an opinion that the services in connection with the Medical, Gaol, Poor House, and Rottnest Departments, were not administered as economically as they ought to be, and they recommended the House to address the Governor praying him to appoint a Commission to enquire into the administration of those Departments and such others as His Excellency might deem expedient. They further suggested that the Commission should contain one person experienced in finance. The Legislative Council did not think fit to act on this recommendation, but on its being brought to my notice, I appointed a Commission.—consisting of one Government Official, three Members of the Legislative Council, and the late Auditor General of the Colony,—whose report is now before me.

It is very gratifying to me, and will be equally so to the Heads of those Departments whose administration of them was deemed by the Select Committee to be wanting in economy, to find, that, after the very strict investigation held by the Commission, they are of opinion that the Heads of those Departments are not liable to any charge of administering them without regard to economy.

I have minutely in the margin of the Commissioners’ Report my views on all their recommendations, and in some instances have directed that they shall be carried out; in other cases the matter is one for the consideration of the Legislature; and the Colonial Secretary will be good enough to lay the report, with all the papers connected with it, on the Table of the House.

When the report is printed, a copy is to be sent to the Heads of all the Departments reported upon, for their information and guidance.

I have to express my sense of the able and careful manner in which the Commission has conducted its enquiry, and of the value of the recommendations it has made. The best thanks of the Government are due to the Chairman and Members for their services, and I beg that they will accept them from me.

H. Sr. GEORGE OER.


Perth, 22nd May, 1873.

I have the honor to enclose, herewith, the Report of the Commissioners, whose names appear in the margin—Malcolm Fraser, Surveyor General; Sir Luke Leake, Kt.; Geo. Shenton, M.L.C.; William E. Marshall, M.L.C.; William Knight, J.P.—appointed by Your Excellency in a Commission, dated the twenty-seventh day of December, one thousand eight hundred and seventy-seven, for the purpose of investigating into the administration of the Medical Department, Gaols, the Poor House, the Native Prison Rottnest, and also into the working of the Telegraph Department. Your Commissioners having concluded their investigations and completed their Report, I have now mercy to draw Your Excellency’s attention to one or two matters which were considered surely within the scope of their enquiry, but which it might be desirable that Your Excellency should be made acquainted with.

The position of Dr. Barnett as regards the Lunatic Asylum is a somewhat anomalous one, as it appears that he has never been regularly appointed as Superintendent Medical Officer, but only received some years back an intimation by letter that he was to visit and superintend the management of this...
Institution. Since which, his responsibilities have greatly increased, and we think it would be of advantage to the Public Service if he was properly appointed, and his duties clearly laid down. It was the opinion of your Commissioners that, as the Government is now in possession of the Commissariat Store, Fremantle, it would be advisable that all the stores, clothing, &c., imported from England for the various Colonial Public Institutions should be obtained in wholesale quantities, sufficient to meet the wants of the succeeding year, and delivered in such quantities as would meet the monthly requirements of the different establishments. In conclusion, the members desire to express their general satisfaction at the state and efficiency of the various departments they have inspected.

I have, &c.,

MALCOLM FRASER,
President of the Commission.

His Excellency Major General Sir Harry St. George Ord, K.C.M.G., G.B., &c., &c., Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Western Australia.

REPORT OF COMMISSION.

To His Excellency Major-General Sir Harry St. George Ord, K.C.M.G., Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Commander of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Territory of Western Australia and its Dependencies, &c., &c., &c.

We, the undersigned, having been appointed by Letters Patent, dated the twenty-seventh day of December, in the Year of Our Lord One thousand eight hundred and seventy-seven, under the Public Seal of the said Colony and under the hand of Your Excellency, to be Commissioners for the purpose of making a full investigation into the administration of the Medical Department, the Poor Houses, and the Native Prison, Fremantle, and Your Excellency having by the said Letters Patent further wished and directed that we should report in writing to the Governor of the said Colony for the time being the result of the said investigation when completed and perfected; Now humbly beg to report accordingly to Your Excellency that we have on various occasions met together for the purpose of investigating into the management and administration of the said Institutions. We have personally visited and inspected the Hospital, Perth, the Lunatic Asylum, Fremantle, the Poor House, Mount Eliza Invalid Depot, and the Geal, Perth, and also the Native Prison, Fremantle; and having carefully examined and considered into the administration and management of those Institutions, now report to Your Excellency the result of our investigations.

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT.

In order to facilitate our enquiry, we obtained from the Auditor General a statement of the expenditure on this department for the years 1873 and 1876, individualising the expenses of each Local Hospital throughout the Colony.

The amount voted for the year 1876 was £5932 Is., whereas the actual expenditure reached the sum of £6076 18s. 9d., being an increase of £1467 7s. 9d. over that of 1873. We find that this large increase is due in a great measure to the fact that in late years a considerable number of convicts, through age and debility, have become a burden to the Colony. With the view of determining whether any reduction can be made in the expenditure, either as regards the salaries paid or in the number of the staff, we have carefully examined the accounts of the medical expenditure, and having in mind the requirements of the various Hospitals, Lunatic Asylum, &c., and the large extent of the different outlying districts, we deem it undesirable that any reduction should be made in either the staff or in any of the salaries at present paid to the various officials. We would recommend that, if possible, the services of some of the discharged pensioners should be obtained as Hospital Ordeals, &c., in order that a better and more permanent Hospital Staff may be organised throughout the Colony; at the same time care should be taken that only men in good health, and of sufficient strength to stand the work connected with the duties of an orderly, should be engaged. Where the services of prisoners under long sentences can be secured, it would not be advisable to make any change. It has been found, however, that but little dependence (c) On the part of medical attendance at the various Hospitals, &c., for the benefit of the patients and the public.

EXPERIENCE.

can be placed upon the staff of officers of the Public Service of the Colony, especially where the patients are not properly supervised and under proper medical care and treatment. It is desirable that the Commissioners, at present serving, shall be continued, if possible, the Governor and this House. (d) We concur with the Commission that there should be, if possible, a staff of permanent officers, with special duties in the Hospitals, and that duplicate should be made to ascertain whether suitable persons can be found amongst the pensioners on the terms recommended.

The Hospital, Perth.—The improvements in this Institution are in our opinion clean and well ventilated; the rooms, and the whole state of the premises connected with it. We have a system of management adopted from Waylen, as well as the order of the Hospital is kept. We have a system of management adopted from Waylen, as well as the order of the Hospital is kept. We have a system of management adopted from Waylen, as well as the order of the Hospital is kept. We have a system of management adopted from Waylen, as well as the order of the Hospital is kept.
REPORT OF COMMISSION.

can be placed upon the steadiness, or the due fulfilment of the duties of orderly, by prisoners under short sentences, and as constant change of orderlies is most undesirable, we recommend that, if possible, a permanent staff should be organized, and in order to obtain a better class of men than heretofore the sum of thirty pounds per annum and rations (as a minimum) should be offered, and steps taken to ascertain what number of military pensioners are available for the post. The system of admission to the various Medical Institutions at present in force, is to obtain the patient's signature to an engagement to pay for his maintenance while under treatment, and, if possible, that of a surety; but as there is no properly appointed officer whose duty it is to enforce the payment, the object of these Institutions is greatly abused by many persons who are known to be sufficiently well off to be able to pay. To remedy this abuse we respectfully recommend that a short Act (s) should be passed, empowering the Resident Magistrates to take such steps as may be necessary to compel payment of the debts due to the Local Hospitals in their respective districts. We would also suggest that the Resident Medical Officer should be called upon to render to the Resident Magistrate of his district a monthly return of the patients discharged during the previous month, who have not paid for their maintenance, in being understood that such patients are not paupers. We are also of opinion that it would be desirable that all the contractor's accounts for the supplies to the different Hospitals should be costed by the Resident Magistrate, as well as by the Resident Medical Officer of each district, as thereby there would be insured a more salutary check and supervision over the local contractors than has been heretofore the case (c).

There has been for some time a doubt as to whether public officers are entitled to demand professional advice, free of expense, from Resident Medical Officers of other districts than that in which they reside, and as we were desired by Your Excellency to take this matter into our consideration, we have agreed to the following recommendation—that in all cases Government officers, with or without their families, travelling on duty, shall be entitled to receive from the Resident Medical Officer of any district professional attendance free of charge, but the cost of the medicines supplied by such Resident Medical Officer should be refunded by the Government. If at any time the services of a Resident Medical Officer should not be required, or from any other cause the services of such Medical Officer are not available, the Resident Medical Officer of a district shall be bound to give his services to the district when called upon by the Resident Magistrate of his district, unless prevented by urgent professional duties in his own district. He shall, however, be entitled to claim from the Government payment for any professional service he may give to that district. Such payment, in the event of vacancy in a district, shall be charged against the vote allowed by the Estimates for the said district. In all cases travelling expenses to be calculated in accordance with Rule XXV of the Rules and Regulations of the Medical Service (d).

With regard to the condition and order of the Medical Institutions visited by us, we beg to report as follows:

The Hospital, Perth.—The internal order and management of this Institution is in our opinion satisfactory. The wards are kept clean and are well ventilated; the staff apparently a very efficient one, and the whole state of the Hospital reflects great credit on those connected with it. We have desired our approval of the system of management adopted by the Colonial Surgeon, Dr. Waylen, as well as of the order and cleanliness in which the works of the Hospital are kept. We think it might be a matter for Your Excellency's consideration, whether it might not be advisable that a piece of ground lying to the north of the building and appertaining to the reserve, should be enclosed and added to the garden and recreation ground at present walled in (e).

Leucite Asylum, Fremantle.—We found this Institution in excellent order, and scrupulously clean, and apparently in all respects well managed.

We are informed, that during the year 1879, certain arrangements were concluded between the Imperial and the Colonial Governments, which, although of general advantage to the Colony,
in other respects will for some time to come considerably add to the expenditure in connection with this Establishment, and we fear, that instead of any reduction being effected, there will in the future be a gradual yearly increase in the expenses. The staff is at present quite sufficient to carry on the duties of the Establishment; and should the number of inmates still continue increasing, it will soon be necessary to appoint one or two more warders.

In the year 1865, there were only eleven females, and seventeen males; in all, twenty-eight colonial patients; since which, the number has gradually increased, and at the end of last year, the numbers had risen to thirty-two females, and twenty-three males,—in all, fifty-five such patients. The cost of maintenance of each patient, amounts to about Thirty pounds per annum; and after having carefully gone through the various items of the expenditure, we regret to state, we are unable to point out how any further saving can be effected. The books of this Institution are all in good order, and a careful supervision over all supplies received and issued is kept by the Superintendent, and by the Medical Officer in charge of the Asylum, Dr. Barnett.

Our attention was drawn to the fact, that in consequence of the present inadequate accommodation, the temporary and bastardy lunatic patients (c) are compelled to associate with the violent and intractable cases, this unfortunate association often retarding the recovery of these patients who are perhaps only temporarily affected. We sincerely trust that Your Excellency will be able to utilise some of the buildings lately handed over to the Colony by the Imperial Government, in such a manner as to remedy to some extent this evil.

We consider it a matter of regret, that from motives of economy (g) the patients are dressed in convict attire, as in the case of such patients as are capable of realising the associations connected therewith, it cannot but be most painful to them, and we would respectfully recommend that in future all the Colonial Lunatic patients should be dressed in some appropriate costume, other than that of a felon.

The duties of the Medical Officer supervising this Institution, we are informed, have of late become so onerous, that should the number of inmates go on steadily increasing, it may soon be necessary, to appoint a Resident Medical Officer, (h) who should have the whole charge, and whose whole attention should be devoted to the care and management of the Lunatic Asylum alone.

Poor House, Perth, and the Mount Helena Invalid Depot.

Both these Establishments were visited and inspected by us; and we have to express our approval of the state, and of the general management, which we consider most creditable to Mr. Dale, and to the officers under his control. A marked increase of late years has taken place in the admissions into the Invalid Depot and Poor House, the total number of the present inmates being ninety, of whom only nine are capable of doing light work, and are employed at the Poor House; the remaining eighty-one, being utterly unfit for any kind of labor, are kept at the Invalid Depot. Most of these men are so infirm, that it is only with difficulty that they can take the slightest exercise, and it is therefore a fortunate circumstance that the position of the depot is so admirably situated, as to afford the majority of the inmates some means of recreation and amusement with but little fatigue. Many of these poor people have attained a great age, and, excluding those young men, who have been repeatedly convicted, and who, on being sentenced to penitentiary, have been transported to the Colony, the average age of the "free" men is surprisingly high, being sixty-eight and one-third years. As previously stated, the number of inmates has been yearly growing greater, partly owing to the fact that many of the most improvident of the convict class are gradually becoming unfit for work, and are sent to this place from all parts of the Colony, who, if kept in their respective districts, would entail a much greater expenditure to the Colony. Of the total number of the inmates, two-thirds were originally Imperial Prisoners.

In some instances the friends of the pumper contribute to their maintenance; but the difficulty we have referred to previously, exists also in the collection of the amounts promised, there being no officer empowered to enforce payment.

Mr. Barnett, by H. E. V. Ewing.

The annual cost of maintaining five pounds per annum; and of whom would gladly return not be cut of place here to be granted to defray the expenses of these institutions; and that a material saving will therefore be effected. After a critical examination expenditure upon these "Rehabilitation," we consider that they are carried on at a saving, in the expenses can be effectuated as the inmates become less numerous.

This year we have to express our management and also of the Colonial Lunatic Institution, and the Mount Helena Invalid Depot. The expenses, offices, cells, store-rooms, and building, are exceedingly efficient. The female division average number of inmates, cells should be added (g), and the prison are too much exposed to suggestion that timber fishes should with the view of effectually secure the sum of £70.

The labor of the prisoners is thereby some expense avoided. The average cost of prison cells and the average in 5s. 4d. per diem. Those figures are not apparent that no records may here refer to the fact that the figures are carried on in the employment of those who are in the employ the prison labor which is in the interest of the institutions; and should this practice continue, these steps should be taken to secure for the empty of colonial markets to England as heretofore. A certain number of these cases, were anxious to effect a reduction, after taking into account those lockups are carefully attended, and in which they are recommended any reduction.

The deficiency of the prison since the year 1875, but we are of opinion that the various arrangements that are concluded between the Imperial Government and the fresh requirements in certain portions of the Colony.

It appears to us that the system be improved, the expenses of those lockups are carefully checked, and are afterward Magistrates.

We would here respectfully the want which has for some time existed in the absence of a small building for those who have been repeatedly convicted. Instead of, as at present, for the association with hardened criminals in latter places cannot but have a detrimental effect on their future career.

With the view of remedying the want that Your Excellency so kindly for the small building, to those of stockade and clerks of the amount promised, there being no officer empowered to enforce payment.
The annual cost of maintenance of each inmate, is about Twenty-five pounds per annum; and as it occasionally happens that some of them, chiefly returning from their friends in England, it may not be out of place here to suggest (f) that in such case a sum should be granted to defray the cost of passage of any inmate who may be desirous of returning to England; and by this we deem that a material saving will ultimately be effected to the Colony. After a critical examination into the details connected with the expenditure upon those "Emigrant" Establishments, we are of opinion that they are carried on as economically as possible, and that no reduction in the expenses can be effected, until such time as the inmates become less numerous.

The Gaol, Penzance.

We have to express our satisfaction at the order and good management and also of the discipline in force at this establishment. The officers, cells, store-rooms, etc., in fact the whole interior of the building, are exceedingly clean, and the system of supervision effective. The female division is unfortunately too small for the average number of inmates, and it is desirable that a few more cells should be added (g). The windows of this quarter of the prison are too much exposed to the public view, and we would suggest that a timber fence should be erected to screen them, and with the view of effectually securing and completing the enclosure round the gaol. The Sheriff informs us that this could be done for the sum of £170.

The labor of the prisoners might be utilised in this work, and thereby some expense avoided.

The average cost of prisoners in gaol is at present about £20 per annum each, and the actual cost of rations issued to a prisoner is 6d. per diem. These figures speak for themselves, and it will be apparent to all that no reduction can be made in them. We may, however, refer to the fact that as leather manufacturers in various branches is carried on in the colony, it might be desirable to employ the prison labor which may be available, (h) in the manufacturing and making of boots and shoes, for the inmates of the various institutions; and should this be found practicable, we think steps should be taken to ascertain if contracts could not be made for the supply of colonial made boots and shoes, instead of sending to England as heretofore. As regards the lookouts throughout the colony, we found the subject (i) one of great difficulty, and although we were anxious to effect a reduction, if possible, in the expenditure thereon, after taking into consideration the great area over which these lookouts are scattered and the requirements of the various districts in which they are situated, we cannot see our way to recommend any reduction in either the number or in the expenditure.

The yearly expense of this department has gradually increased since the year 1874, but we are of opinion that this is due to the various arrangements which from time to time have been concluded between the Imperial and Colonial Governments, and to the fresh requirements in consequence of the gradual growth of the settled portions of the colony.

It appears to us that the system of control in force can scarcely be improved, the issues of rations to prisoners in the different lookouts are carefully checked and certified to by the Surgeon in charge, and are afterwards countersigned by the Resident Magistrate.

We would here respectfully draw Your Excellency's attention to a want of which, for some time been felt in the Colony. That is the absence of a small Reformatory for boys, (m) to which those who have been repeatedly convicted of misdemeanors might be sent, instead of, as at present, to the common gaol.

The association with hardened criminals whilst confined in the latter places cannot but have a lasting and very prejudicial effect on their future career.

With the view of remedying this evil, we would respectfully request that Your Excellency would take into consideration the feasibility of a small building being erected at Bottesford, to which juvenile offenders might be sent. The duties of the officers appointed to superintend the Reformatory might be combined with those of storekeeper and clerk in connection with the native prison, to which we shall allude more fully in our report following this.

MINUTES BY H. R. THE GOVERNOR.

The suggestion is a very good one. It has been acted upon and will be again as opportunity offers.

The condition of this Gaol has been the subject of correspondence with the Home Government, and it has been decided that if continued to be used as such, very important alterations and additions will have to be made. Reference the question has been allowed to stand over under the idea that the transfer of the District Establishment at Penzance to the Colony would allow of arrangements being made for accommodating most of the Colonial Prisoners at Penzance, and thus obviate the necessity for enlarging the Penzance Gaol. The prospects of any such transfer are at present very remote, nor does it appear that if it took place, such arrangements could be made as would render it necessary to effect considerable alterations in the Penzance Gaol. I therefore decided on proceeding with this work on the plan approved and an item for £1000, one half of estimated cost, will be inserted in the Estimates for 1879.

This is a matter of very great importance, and the Sheriff is to be instructed to consider and report upon it.

I entirely concur in the views expressed by the Committee, and am only deterred by a consideration of the expense the proposal will entail from bringing it forward this year.
REPORT OF EXAMINER.

ROBERTS'S NATIVE PENAL ESTABLISHMENT.

This establishment was visited by me on the 16th April, without any previous intimation having been given to the Superintendent.

We found the prison to be in a very fair order, the cells being as clean as could be expected when occupied by native prisoners. The discipline of the prison appeared to be excellent, and the staff efficient. The rations for prisoners and the arrangements for cooking, as well as the distribution, seemed satisfactory.

The Salt Works, which we minutely inspected, were in good working order, and the salt in store of superior quality.

It has, however, since been suggested by the Director of Public Works (a) that a considerable saving might be effected in fuel by an improved system of boilers and furnaces other than that now in use; and for that purpose he has drafted a plan of the suggested alteration, which we append to our Report.

The Return of Expenditure and of Receipts for the years 1873, 1874, and 1875, coincident with the Salt Works, shows a net deficiency of £206 8s. 6d. but this amount includes the cost of new boilers, plates, &c., lately purchased, and if this heavy item be deducted there is a balance to credit of £435 12s. 6d. over and above the three years expenditure.

These appear to be but little doubt that these works, with the alterations lately made, are remunerative, and probably with the improved furnaces suggested by the Director of Public Works, even better results may ultimately be expected.

It is naturally a difficult subject how to employ the labor of the native prisoners in a manner which would to some extent reduce the expense on this Penal Establishment, and make it more self-supporting, yet at the same time afford healthy occupation and exercise to the prisoners.

The soil at Roberts is exceedingly poor, and such portions of land as were worth clearing having all been cultivated, and successive crops of wheat grown, the wheat-producing capabilities of the soil are nearly exhausted, and it is therefore a matter for consideration how, in the future, the labor of prisoners is to be employed in a remunerative manner to the Government. This inquiry, although not explicitly expressed in Your Excellency's commission, we considered within the limits of our investigations, and we deem the subject worthy of attention. It is our opinion that, considering the healthy appearance of olive trees planted some years back to the East of the prison, that there is a fair and reasonable prospect, should olive trees be planted and carefully attended to, that a new and paying industry might be fostered on the island.

These trees seem to thrive even in very poor soil, and we therefore desire to draw attention to the desirability of further inquiry being made to obtain information as to the culture (a) thereof, and the extraction of the oil, as it will soon be necessary to utilize the labor of the prisoners otherwise than in cultivating ground, which can give no proper return when sown with wheat.

It appears that even rye and barley give a better return, and as from the evidence of various people on the Island, we gather that pigs are bred and fattened successfully; it might, perhaps, be of advantage that, until the planting of olive trees (if approved) takes up the labor of the prisoners not required at the Salt Works, a larger quantity of rye, as well as pig mutton, should be cultivated, and greater attention paid to the breeding and rearing of pigs. This, we believe, would be more remunerative than the labor at present expended on the cultivation of wheat.

We have now to draw Your Excellency's attention to the absence of any proper system of control over the expenditures or items of stores in this establishment. The Superintendent, of whom in other respects we do regard the performance of his duties, we can only speak in complimentary terms, complains that he has not the time to keep a proper set of books, and that it is only of late that he has been assisted by the foreman of the Salt Works, in keeping such as were submitted to us. We find the system in force, such as it is, extremely lax and unsatisfactory. The record of the issue of rations is not as carefully kept as we should desire, and the monthly 'return' rendered to the Auditor General is

(a) I believe the suggestion of the Director of Public Works is a very sound one, and that the saving in fuel would go far to repay the first cost of the new works. The amount of the estimate for the new works, already prepared, is too high, in my opinion, to pay, and I am unwilling to add anything more to it.

TELEGRAM

Your Excellency having, I am desired that we should also manage the Establishment of Roberts, so that it is in the best possible order, and in my opinion we have made up the system, and that it is in a very good order, the cells being as clean as could be expected when occupied by the prisoners. The discipline of the prison appeared to be excellent, and the staff efficient. The rations for prisoners and the arrangements for cooking, as well as the distribution, seemed satisfactory.

The Salt Works, which we minutely inspected, were in good working order, and the salt in store of superior quality. It has, however, since been suggested by the Director of Public Works (a) that a considerable saving might be effected in fuel by an improved system of boilers and furnaces other than that now in use; and for that purpose he has drafted a plan of the suggested alteration, which we append to our Report.

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It appears that even rye and barley give a better return, and as from the evidence of various people on the Island, we gather that pigs are bred and fattened successfully; it might, perhaps, be of advantage that, until the planting of olive trees (if approved) takes up the labor of the prisoners not required at the Salt Works, a larger quantity of rye, as well as pig mutton, should be cultivated, and greater attention paid to the breeding and rearing of pigs. This, we believe, would be more remunerative than the labor at present expended on the cultivation of wheat.

We have now to draw Your Excellency's attention to the absence of any proper system of control over the expenditures or items of stores in this establishment. The Superintendent, of whom in other respects we do regard the performance of his duties, we can only speak in complimentary terms, complains that he has not the time to keep a proper set of books, and that it is only of late that he has been assisted by the foreman of the Salt Works, in keeping such as were submitted to us. We find the system in force, such as it is, extremely lax and unsatisfactory. The record of the issue of rations is not as carefully kept as we should desire, and the monthly 'return' rendered to the Auditor General is
I believe the suggestion of the Director of Public Works is a very sound one, and that the saving in fuel would go far to repay the first cost of the new works. The amount of the estimate for Public Works, already proposed, is however so high that I am unwilling to add anything more to it.

The expenditures of the Establishment reduce our present revenue and the establishment by the contributions of those who have availed themselves of the facilities for communication in the Island. It is to be seen that the produce of the Island and also of all provisions and stores are not sufficient to cover the expenses of the Establishment. Thus, such a system as the one proposed might be held responsible for the correctness of the reasons to the prisoners. The necessary journals and books, relating to the produce cultivated on the Island, should also be kept by him.

It appears that previous to Mr. Jackson's appointment the former superintendent received from the contractors, in consideration of his having to superintend the killing of the sheep and the weighing of the meat, and afterwards furnishing them with the certificate of the weight, which is called the fifth quarter.

Upon Mr. Jackson's appointment this arrangement continued, but in January, 1874, a different system was adopted by the Government in the purchase of sheep, the Government then becoming the actual owners of the sheep previous to their being killed. In answer to an application of Mr. Jackson's to be allowed to retain this perquisite as formerly, the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Barlow, replied in a letter dated 7th January, 1874, giving a decided and distinct refusal.

During the following year, however, the Government reverted to the former system of buying sheep, namely, by the weight of the sheep when killed and not at so much per head. Since that time Mr. Jackson appears to have considered that he was entitled to the so-called fifth quarter, and has continued to retain to himself the portions apportioned to it.

We are forced to recommend that Your Excellency should be pleased to withdraw any question that may have been tacitly given to this practice, and that for the future the emoluments connected with the post of superintendent, namely, the five per cent. commission, and the so-called fifth quarter, should be done away with, and in lieu thereof we would suggest that a sum of fifty pounds should be added to his present salary.

Other than the saving which might be effected by a more careful superintendence over the same, the drain on the revenue of the Government has not as yet been as great as expected, and the Superintendent's labor in this respect has not been in vain. It is our desire that this establishment may be made self-sustaining in future.

The Committee's views respecting the arrangements under which Mr. Jackson received certain perquisites agree entirely with my own. The Superintendent is to be informed that he will in future receive an addition to his salary of 450 per annum, in lieu of all other emoluments and perquisites which he has hitherto enjoyed; his arrangement to take effect from the first of July next.
view to give, in this respect, increased facilities to the general public; we have now to report, as follows, the result of our inquiries.

Of late, considerable inconvenience has been caused, and consequently numerous complaints made, of the delay in the transmission of messages to the Eastern Districts, owing to the line being so much taken up with the transmission of messages to the North; and in the opinion of Mr. Fleming and others that if a second wire was put up on the line between Perth and Newark, the outlay would soon be recouped by the increased receipts resulting therefrom, we therefore consider it desirable that the additional wire should be erected, and the Council be asked to vote a sum of five hundred pounds to defray the expense (r). In the view of this increased expenditure, we have endeavored to ascertain what steps can be taken to increase the revenue from this department, and it appears to us that the present rates for messages over the Ennul line are remarkably low, and that if the tariff for messages over this portion of the Colonial line was slightly raised, but not to such an extent as to affect materially the community at large) this expenditure would soon be met (s).

The hours at present in which the offices, throughout the Colony, are open, for the dispatch of messages, might, with advantage to the public convenience, and we recommend that the office hours (t) in Perth, Fremantle, Goulburn, Albany, and Ennul, should be from half-past eight in the morning to eight o'clock at night. This alteration might entail a necessary addition to the staff at Goulburn, Fremantle, and Albany, the annual expense of which would be about two hundred pounds. This appears to be no necessity to change the hours at any other stations than those mentioned. All messages received and transmitted, after the proper office hours, should be charged double the usual rates, and we are of opinion that when the clerks have been detained more than half-an-hour after the office hours, it is advisable that they should be paid at the rate of one shilling per hour for such detention.

Some suggestions have also been made that this Department should issue a certain number of telegraph forms (u), slightly bound together, with a counterfoil attached, and sold to the public at a price which would cover the cost thereof; the Rules and Regulations of the Department printed at the beginning of the Book, and the back of each form lined, ruled, and numbered for one hundred words.

We respectfully suggest that steps should be taken, that a supplementary bag (v) should be sent off to the mail steamer for Galleh at a later hour than is now the case, containing the telegrams intended for transmission to England via mail, as it sometimes occurs that the mails are made up and sent on board some hours earlier than the steamer leaves.

In conclusion, we desire to express to those officers whose attendance we required, our thanks for the particular given by them to the gentlemen of their respective departments. To the Auditor (Gen.], and to his chief clerk, Mr. Spencer, our special thanks are due for the very complete, and detailed Returns of the Expenditure on the various Departments, and also for the information which from time to time they furnished us with.

It may not be out of place here to refer to a suggestion made by Mr. Courtbou, (w) which met with our approval, respecting the appointment of an Examiner of Public Accounts, whose duties are explained in a letter from that gentleman dated 26th April, 1878, and of which the following is an extract. "I would suggest that an "Examiner of Public Accounts attached to this office should be "appointed, who would be instructed to make periodical visits to "all the Resident Magistrates and Receivers of Revenue, without "notice, and I would especially suggest that the Island of Rottnest, "be visited every six months. The period for inspection could be "arranged when the Legislative Council is not in session, and the "work of the office is not especially heavy. In any case I think "the inspection should be without notice. I ought to add that the "examination is to be made of the books of account of revenue of "the stations are those of the Resident Magistrate at Fremantle, and "the balances of wines, spirits, and tobacco remaining in Bonding

(c) I have no doubt the erection of the additional wire would be a great public convenience, but in the present state of our finances do not feel justified in recommending the large expenditure it would involve.

(d) I am inclined to doubt whether an increase in the rate of telegraph messages over the Ennul line would much increase the revenue from that source, and it would certainly be obtained at a sacrifice of the public convenience.

(e) I have always been of opinion that the hours during which telegraph stations are required to be kept open are unnecessarily limited, and I should be glad to see them assimilated to those in force in the other Colonies; at the same time I do not see why we should pay £200 a year for this privilege, and I think that the public may be afforded more convenience in this respect, than they now possess, without much, if any additional expense.

(f) The suggestion as to the issue of telegraph forms bound together is a very good one, and the Postmaster General has been instructed to carry it out.

(g) It seems there are difficulties, owing to the way in which the accounts have to be kept, in making up late bags for the mail, but the Postmaster General has instructed to defer sending off his mails to the latest time practicable.

The Honorable Malcolm Fraser, E. W. B.
EXPRESS OF COMMISSION.

"Warehouse at Fremantle, both of which are examined half-yearly. I should further add that there is no uniform system of keeping the various accounts rendered by the Sub-Collectors of Revenue."

The reasons advanced by the Auditor General are, we think, sufficiently important to justify us in reporting favorably of such an appointment, and we respectfully ask Your Excellency's consideration thereof. The duties of this officer might be advantageously combined with those of Railway Accountant or Auditor.

The members of this Commission, who are also members of the Legislative Council, deemed it might be of interest to members of the Legislative Assembly if the returns obtained from the Auditor General should accompany our Report, and desired that Your Excellency should be respectfully asked that these documents might be laid on the Table when the Council meets. In compliance with their desire the said returns accompany our Report, together with the plan of the improved furnaces and boilers for the Salt Works, Rottnest, and the Director of Public Works' explanatory letter thereof.

MALCOLM FRASER, President.
L. S. LEAKE.
Geo. SHENTON.
Wm. KNIGHT.
W. E. MARSHON.

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Report by the Director of Public Works upon the Salt Works at Rottnest.

Western Australia.

Public Works Office, Perth, 9th May, 1878.

The defects in the evaporating appliances at Rottnest Salt Works are owing to the pans being far too deep, and the subjacent fire not distributing its flame equally over the whole surface of the bottom and sides of the boiler, as it should do, the consequence being that a large quantity of the heat that should be utilised, now passes away to the chimney, and the narrow furnace causing the flame to impinge upon one spot, soon furors the iron, buckles the plate, and stains the rivets, necessitating constant repairs to the ironwork.

I forward a sketch of the kind of furnace and pan I should recommend being adopted, the cost of which would be no more than those at present in use, while at least half the fuel now required for evaporation would suffice, and the ironwork last three times the time it now does, without requiring repair.

JAS. H. THOMAS. 
Director of Public Works.

The Honorable Malcolm Fraser, Esq., Chairman of Commission, re Works, &c., at Rottnest.

Memorandum relating to the health of the Prisoner at Rottnest, attached to the Commissioners' Report by His Excellency's direction:

MEMORANDUM.

I have the honor, by direction of His Excellency the Governor, to submit the following details and remarks regarding the post mortem examination which I yesterday made on a deceased native:

Post mortem examination made on body of a native prisoner at Rottnest Island, February 20, 1878—

Lungs congested, diffuse emphysema of right lung, tubercular deposit round intestines, stomach much thickened and full of bilious fluid, spleen enlarged and much congested, liver greatly enlarged, with much tubercular deposit and one large cavumous mass in the centre of the organ, gall bladder greatly distended, full of bile, no gall stones, and no obstruction of duct.

The immediate cause of death was the congestion of lungs and emphysema of right lung.
I believe that the greater number of deaths amongst the native prisoners occur from tuberculous disease of lungs, intestines, or liver. The present case is scarcely a typical one. I would recommend as much and frequent variety of diet as possible, occasional half holidays, the encouragement of amusements, corroborees, quilts, ball playing, foot races, and other similar amusements.

H. C. BARNETT,
*Colonial Surgeon, Fremantle
February 20, 1879.

The Honorable the Colonial Secretary.

Does Dr. Barnett think the quantity of food sufficient? If not, what increase would he recommend? The prisoners complain of not having enough to eat at breakfast and tea. Can he suggest any articles of food to be used in substitution of those in existing diet scales. (Copy of which attached.)

H. Sr. G. O.
2-4-79.

Referred to Colonial Surgeon, Fremantle, for reply to Governor’s minute.

R.G.
4-3-79.

March 8, 1879.

In reply to the question of His Excellency the Governor, I do not consider the quantity of animal food supplied to the prisoners sufficient. I attach some remarks and suggestions, for the consideration of His Excellency.

H.C.B.

MEMORANDUM.

In reply to the questions of His Excellency the Governor, I consider that the amount of animal food allowed to the native prisoners at Rottnest is insufficient, and I would recommend the following alterations:

**Present Scale:**
- Breakfast: ½ lb. bread; 1 pint tea.
- Dinner: ½ lb. bread; 1½ lbs. meat; 6 lbs. rice.
- Tea: ½ lb. bread.

On Sundays an allowance of bread only.

**Suggested Alterations:**
- Breakfast: ½ lb. bread; 6 lbs. meat; 1 pint tea.
- Dinner: ½ lb. bread; 1½ lbs. meat; 6 lbs. rice.
- Tea: ½ lb. bread; 6 lbs. meat; 1 pint tea.

On Sundays the usual breakfast and tea to those who go out for a day’s freedom. Full diet for those detained by accident, etc.

I beg leave to offer the following remarks for the consideration of His Excellency the Governor.

The table of diet generally used in prisions, infernaries, &c., are calculated on carefully conducted experiments in public institutions at home, and on analysis of various foods used; but the usual tables are not quite applicable to the native prisoners at Rottnest. The stomach of the Australian aboriginal is accustomed, from infancy, to a diet of animal food, and the diet used in Rottnest does not supply nitrogen enough to maintain the health and strength. In their wild state they eat insects and reptiles (I speak from experience, for in Queensland I have been forced by hunger to eat the larvae of the white ant, and also the iguanas, the one tasting like shrimp, and the other like chicken), and they also eat quadrupeds and birds. The proportion of vegetable food which they obtain in the bush is very small, and consists principally of seeds and roots.

Fatty and oily substances which furnish carbon, i.e., warm, and animal food supplying nitrogen are necessities to them in their captivity. I think that the only animal food they get is mutton, a diet which soon saps the system, and I fancy that the mutton they get contains very little fat. Mutton contains in each pound of meat 1,900 grams of carbon and 188 of nitrogen.

If animal food, such as they have been accustomed to, was procurable by them each Friday, they would gain improve much in health and strength; and I would venture to suggest to His Excellency that, by impounding from the mainland three or four times a year a supply of epaumes, lizards, &c., and herding them on the Island on Monday—so as to give them a few days’ law in which to find hiding places; they might be sent time to time before being killed, and the prisoners could thus be supplied inexpensively with the diet most suitable to them. The natives on the mainland would, for a trifling recompense, obtain and supply the creatures which their countrymen would most wish to have. I would strongly recommend that a supply of fish should frequently be given to the natives as an extra, not as a substitut for their usual diet. The fish should always be boiled, and in every case the rations should be served out to them on the day the fish are caught. Incidentally, I might remark that sponges might be cultivated in the little natural bays near Blandford, on the North end of the Island. Rewards for good conduct would be a great incentive to cheerfulness among the natives; permission to wear a bright scarf or some special head-dress—such as an old hat with a feather in it, or other visible mark of distinction, would be greatly esteemed by these adult children.

The day’s freedom on Sunday given to them but a small ratio of the week and foibles. On Sundays, over prison they should have a comfort.

The Honorable the Colonial Secretary.

I regret much that there are no details, respecting the present day this morning’s post arrived.

March 8th.

There is much in Dr. Barnett’s report and also some very necessary measures to be taken in the future, and it is impossible to give the Governor all the details, but I feel sure that if the Governor gives the necessary instructions, things will be much better.

The Honorable the Colonial Secretary.

I have read Dr. Barnett’s reports thoroughly, and I am of the opinion that his recommendations are sound and will be of great assistance to the Government in its dealings with the aborigines.

The Honorable the Colonial Secretary.

FOOTNOTE:

For in re native prisoners, Rottnest; &c.
The day's freedom on Sunday is an excellent arrangement, but on that day they have nothing given to them but a small ration of bread. This is too little for the able men, and is sadly too little for the weak and feeble. On Sundays they should have the customary breakfast, and on their arrival at the prison they should have a comfortable warm tea.

H. CALVINIST BARNETT,
Colonial Surgeon, Fremantle,
March 9th, 1878.

I regret much that there has been a delay in replying to the questions of the Governor; but the details, respecting the present diet in use at Rottmetz, did not reach me from the Superintendent, until this morning's post arrived.

March 9th.

H. C. B.

There is much in Dr. Barnett's Report that is deserving of consideration. There would be difficulty in giving three meat meals, but the rations might be increased and given twice. Fish might also be procured with some little trouble. The importation of small game would be difficult. I should be glad to have Dr. Waylen's opinion on this report.

H. Sr. G. O.

9-9-78.

Colonial Surgeon's Office, March 12, 1878.

Colonial Surgeon.—For remarks on the suggestions made by Colonial Surgeon, Fremantle, in re native prisoners, Rottmetz; please submit.

R. T. G.

I have read Dr. Barnett's report, relative to the native prisoners at Rottmetz, and coincide with much that he says as to the advisability of giving them more liberty, instituting games, &c.; at the same time I think that to go to the full extent of his suggestions would tend to make the Island a little paradise for the natives, and to be such there would not, as I believe it does now, act as a deterrent to crime. I do not agree with the suggestion of increasing the meat ration. I think that 1 lb. given, as it is every day regularly, with the exception of Sundays, quite sufficient, always supposing the meat to be of fair quality; but I think that potatoes might be given with advantage, and fish substituted for meat, once or twice a week, if practicable. The living of the Bush natives in this Colony is very precarious; they may catch a kangaroo or opossum, and then eat to relish; they would then go for days of prison or indeed life that does the harm. Such was the case at the Mission at Pooninda, South Australia, when the aboriginals were lavishly fed on animal food, and it is the case among the native children at our own Mission in Perth, whose, notwithstanding good feeling, on which the half-caste children thrive, many of the aboriginal children die of Tuberculosis at an early age.

ALFRED R. WAYLENS, M.D.,
Colonial Surgeon.
19th March, 1878.