

THE ABORIGINES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRONICLE.

SIR—To put myself right with those interested in the treatment of the two aborigines—Camperdown George and Charlie—I must mention that in reply to a circular dated 15th April, 1876, I received from the Board for the Protection of the Aborigines, requesting me to state the requirements of these two aborigines, I sent a price list of articles necessary for their comfort, but, as up to the 17th inst.—a period of over sixteen months—no attention was paid to my letter, I addressed the following communication to the clerk to the Board :—

Wuorong, Camperdown,
17th August, 1877.

Sir,—On the 15th of April, 1876, I had the honor to receive a circular BA | 76, marked urgent, requesting me, as Local Guardian of Aborigines for the Camperdown district, to forward with the least possible delay a list showing the quantities and kind of stores and clothing which I would require for the aborigines under my care for the year ending the 30th of June, 1877, and the estimated cost at which I could buy them in the district. I delayed supplying the Board with the required information until I made the necessary inquiries, and on the 11th of May following I furnished you with a list of prices obtained from the principal storekeepers of Camperdown, and at same time stated that there were only two old men to be supplied. From that time till the present—a period of 15 months—I have received no further communications from the Board on the subject of supplying the wants of the aborigines, and any little trifle I have given them has been at my own expense. I very much regret the unpleasant position the conduct of the Board has placed me in, because the people of Camperdown cannot understand how it is that under my guardianship the poor fellows are allowed to go about in rags, without a decent blanket to keep them warm, and to subsist by begging. I have therefore, respectfully to request that stores and clothing be at once sent up to me for the support of the two aborigines, "Camperdown George" and "Camperdown Charlie," or that authority be conferred on me to purchase such things as they may require. I may as well remark that these two men will not go to the native village of Framlingham. I advised them recently to go there, but found them resolute in their refusal to leave Camperdown. As they are suffering from chest complaint, produced by insufficient clothing, I beg of you to instruct me without delay—I have the honor to be, yours respectfully,

JAMES DAWSON,
Local Guardian.

To this I received the following reply :—

Office of the Board for the Protection of the
Aborigines,
Melbourne, 24th August, 1877.

Sir,—In reply to your letter of 17th August, with reference to clothing and food for two aboriginals, I have the honor to request that you will purchase what is necessary for them and send in the account on an L 2 form to me. I am sorry there has been such delay in this matter, but as it happened before my time, I cannot explain the reason.—I have the honor to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

A. M. PAGE,
General Inspector.

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James Dawson, Esq.,
Local Guardian.

In furtherance of these instructions, I have furnished Camperdown George and Camperdown Charlie with full suits of good substantial clothing, blankets, &c., and made arrangements for a regular supply of food, that they may not be dependent on charity and begging for that support which they are well entitled to from the public treasury. In acting thus, I feel confident that the people in Camperdown will aid me in bringing to punishment any person who may be mean enough to rob the poor creatures of clothing and rations, which in this case are the property of the Government, and as it may not be generally known that it is illegal to purchase or take any goods or chattels from the natives issued by the Government, the act for their protection distinctly states that any one found guilty of doing so, or supplying them with intoxicating liquors, can be fined £20, or imprisoned for three months.—I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

JAMES DAWSON,
Local Guardian of the Aborigines.