

1929
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QUEENSLAND

REPORT

UPON THE

OPERATIONS OF THE SUB-DEPARTMENTS

OF

Aboriginals, Dunwich Benevolent Asylum, Inebriates Institution (Dunwich), Jubilee Sanatorium for Consumptives (Dalby), Westwood Sanatorium, Government Relief, Home for Epileptics (Willowburn), Prisons, Queensland Blind, Deaf and Dumb Institution, Schools for Deaf and Blind, and Diamantina Hospital for Chronic Diseases (South Brisbane).

PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT BY COMMAND.

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A. 42—1929.

Reports upon the Operations of Certain Sub-Departments of the Home Secretary's Department.

Home Secretary's Department,
Brisbane, 7th October, 1929.

TO THE HONOURABLE THE HOME SECRETARY.

SIR,—I have the honour to submit, for presentation to Parliament, the following information regarding the operations of the under-mentioned Sub-Departments of this Department.

WILLIAM GALL,
Under Secretary.

ABORIGINALS (Chief Protector, J. W. Bleakley).
DUNWICH BENEVOLENT ASYLUM (Manager and Medical Superintendent, Dr. F. Challands).
INEBRIATE INSTITUTION, DUNWICH (Manager and Medical Superintendent, Dr. F. Challands).
JUBILEE SANATORIUM FOR CONSUMPTIVES, DALBY (Visiting Medical Officer, Dr. Win. H. Jamison ; Superintendent, Miss M. Nutt).
WESTWOOD SANATORIUM (Visiting Medical Officer, Dr. D. P. O'Brien ; Superintendent, Miss M. Scully).
GOVERNMENT RELIEF (Acting Officer in Charge, J. B. Freeman).
HOME FOR EPILEPTICS (WILLOWBURN) ; Miss M. Conway.
PRISONS (Comptroller-General, W. J. Gall).
QUEENSLAND BLIND, DEAF AND DUMB INSTITUTION (Manager, I. Dickson).
DIAMANTINA HOSPITAL FOR CHRONIC DISEASES (Visiting Medical Officer, Dr. A. Jefferis Turner).

Aboriginal Department—Information contained in Report for the Year ended 31st December, 1928.

POPULATION.

The census taken in June, 1928, by this Department in Queensland, in conjunction with the Registrar-General and the Commonwealth Statistician, showed the aboriginal population in this State to be 17,611, as under:—

FULL-BLOOD, 13,190.

	Male.	Female.
ADULTS—		
Nomadic	1,602	1,417
Regular employment ..	3,101	911
Supervised camps ..	2,123	2,516
Not stated	749	711
Totals	7,575	5,615
Persons	13,190	

HALF-CASTES 4,421.

	Male.	Female.
ADULTS—		
Nomadic	212	154
Regular employment ..	846	588
Supervised camps ..	824	1,121
Not stated	331	345
Totals	2,213	2,208
Persons	4,421	

Although the above figures show a decrease of 388 on last year's census this cannot be accepted as reliable, as the departmental returns actually show an increase of births over deaths. The discrepancy is doubtless due to the difficulty of accurately numbering the nomadic tribes.

LABOUR CONDITIONS ON LAND.

Drought conditions again affected the demand for labour. Although the returns show an increase in the number of engagements for employment, there was actually a decrease of over £16,500 in the amount of wages deductions collected, making, approximately, £25,000 total loss in wages earned.

Most of the cattle stations, which absorb the major part of the labour available, found it necessary to shorten hands and otherwise practise economy in labour costs.

The married labourer, with a family to be fed, was not so much in demand as the single man, and, in a few places, there appeared a tendency to impose on those employed by working them long hours and supplying inferior food.

The slump in the mining industry also made itself felt, and, as the can growers object to pay aboriginal labour the high Sugar Award rates, there was no work offering in that direction.

Many of the primitive natives dislike continuous employment, preferring to be able to "walk about" at will. Others manage to subsist by marsupial shooting and dingo scalping or prospecting for tin. Good living could often be made in these ways, but frequently they are too indolent to properly work them. Generally the native worker has been well treated and, where properly accommodated, has appeared healthy and happy and given satisfaction.

The number of natives employed under agreement was 2,468 (1,950 males and 515 females), and casual permits for short terms were issued for 1,430 (872 males and 558 females). Fifty-

six men were engaged as trackers by the Queensland Police Department and two by the Victorian Police.

LABOUR CONDITIONS ON BOATS.

All available labour, outside of the requirements of the native communal vessels, was readily absorbed by the private companies engaged on the fishing industry.

There is always a shortage of labour in the pearlshell and bêche-de-mer industry, so there is no excuse for unemployment so far as the able-bodied are concerned.

At Thursday Island, 376 men were so employed, their earnings amounting to £3,726, of which the islanders received £1,740 and the mainlanders £1,986.

About 400 islanders are regularly engaged working these communal fishing vessels, their earnings this year reaching the sum of £26,409—exceeding last year's catch, itself a record, by nearly £3,000.

At Cooktown, 55 men, all mainlanders, were engaged, some on Torres Strait vessels, after being recruited from the camps on the Peninsula coast. Their earnings were £1,362. Eight of these recruits deserted afterwards from their ships and three were discharged as unsuitable. Nineteen men were also recruited from Palm Island Settlement.

The employment regulations were generally well observed and no serious trouble was experienced.

The behaviour of the native crews was also satisfactory.

INSURANCE AND COMPENSATION.

Claims were made on behalf of native workers, all of whom must be insured against accident in employment, under the Workers' Compensation Acts, in twenty-four cases, compensation amounting to £480 4s. 2d. being awarded. The claims and payments were made through the Local Protector and the money administered, as intended, by him for the injured natives' benefit.

The State Insurance Commissioner and his Claims Department, with their usual unflinching courtesy, again co-operated with the Department in arriving at satisfactory settlements of the various claims dealt with and deciding the most suitable method of distribution.

ABORIGINAL TRUST ACCOUNTS.

The following statement shows the transactions on the Savings Bank accounts held in trust for natives throughout the State. The store credits of the inmates of the various missions are not included. Some of the more intelligent and thrifty also have small private bank accounts of savings of pocket money and other earnings.

The actual total is £307,593 3s. 9d., as £8,000 of the Settlement Accounts (Barambah £3,000, Palm Island £4,000, and Woorabinda £1,000) is invested in Treasury Loan Inscribed Stock at 5½ per cent.

—	No. of Accounts.	Total Wages Deposits.		Accounts Transferred other Districts, Settlements, &c.		Interest Earned.		Withdrawals for Natives' Benefit.		Balance.	
		£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Barambah	460	5,837	18 8	397	11 11	112	13 6	7,467	5 1	1,083	12 4
Palm Island	587	4,447	6 7	76	9 0	184	18 10	7,092	0 7	3,456	9 11
Woorabinda	249	2,730	13 6	1,262	4 10	107	16 8	4,218	7 2	2,273	0 8
Brisbane	132	3,229	16 4	94	8 1	217	6 0	3,945	16 11	7,840	17 2
Protectors	4,656	84,814	10 2	18,473	3 7	9,103	13 7	78,732	12 6	284,939	3 8
Totals	6,084	101,060	5 3	20,303	17 5	9,726	8 7	101,456	2 3	299,593	3 9

The decrease of 227 in the total number of accounts is due to the closure of a number now inoperative, through death or disappearance of the owner, and the transfer to next-of-kin or to the Aborigines Protection Property Account.

Contributions to the Provident Fund amounted to £2,665 and £796 interest was earned. There is now a balance of £20,888, including £15,000 also invested in the above Treasury Loan.

ABORIGINAL PATROL VESSEL.

As there was no suitable vessel available it was not possible to undertake any systematic patrol. Necessary visits to the stations were undertaken, as opportunity offered, in the native fishing vessels, and in this way 812 miles were travelled.

The inspection of vessels undergoing repair at the Badu boatslips was made possible by the loan of the Harbour Master's launch.

A new auxiliary vessel, also named "Melbidir," 70 ft. long, 15 ft. beam, and 6 ft. draught, with 54-horsepower Gardner crude oil engines, was built during the year, in Brisbane, under the supervision of the Engineer for Harbours and Rivers, for the patrol work of the department in Torres Strait, the Gulf of Carpentaria, and

the East Coast of Cape York Peninsula. She is fitted with cabin accommodation, cargo space, and fore-castle quarters for the native crew.

This vessel will be capable of meeting the requirements of this or any other Government department, besides coping with any situation that may arise in those waters demanding immediate attention.

She was completed at the end of October, and after being fitted and furnished took up duty at Thursday Island towards the end of November.

REMOVAL AND RECOGNISANCES.

Bonds were entered into for the return of 18 aborigines who were temporarily removed by their employers, and 3 permits were granted for the transfer of natives to other districts.

It was not necessary to take action to estreat any of these undertakings.

FOOD AND OTHER RELIEF.

Regular food relief was issued, according to the needs of the natives, in monthly or weekly allowances, from 26 centres, amounting to £1,407.

Casual relief, amounting to £326, was also issued.

The privation caused through reduction of employment and denuding of game resources in some districts, as a result of the drought, was relieved by help from the savings of the workers.

In most districts, except those of the far West, native game was plentiful and the primitive natives were able to maintain themselves comfortably where the able-bodied men were still left to hunt for them.

BLANKETS.

The number of blankets issued was 4,115. Where more suitable, articles such as dresses, trousers, shirts, tomahawks, print, tobacco, fish lines, hooks, &c., were distributed in lieu. The purchase of these goods and despatch of them to the various centres was also carried out by the State Stores Board.

The cost of the issues was £2,795 and the freight and handling charges amounted to £131.

Care was exercised to limit the issues to natives who, by reason of age, ill-health, climatic conditions, or poverty, were actually in need of them.

OFFENCES AGAINST ABORIGINALS.

Offences.	1926.		1927.		1928.	
	No.	Fines.	No.	Fines.	No.	Fines.
Possession of opium ..	17	£ 245	39	£ 488	18	£ 295
Supplying of liquor ..	9	207	8	200	5	130
Harbouring ..	1	5	3	12	1	3
Illegally employing ..	7	41	4	22	1	10

There was a gratifying decrease in all offences of this nature.

The Police officers deserve credit for their vigilance in the protection of the people from abuses, especially as regards the traffic in opium and drink.

OFFENCES BY ABORIGINALS.

Offences.	1926.	1927.	1928.
Drunkenness	33	71	60
Stealing	2	3	6
Creating disturbance	2	8	14
Obscene language	2	9	4
Assault	3	3	5
Resisting Arrest .. .. .	..	2	1
Arson .. .. .	..	1	..
Vagrancy .. .. .	..	1	3
Immoral offences .. .. .	..	1	4
* Attempting to kill .. .. .	..	..	9

* 8 Palm Island boys.

REMOVALS.

The following return shows the number of natives who, for their own benefit or other reasons, were removed to reserves on Minister's orders:—

Place.	Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.
<i>Settlements—</i>				
Barambah ..	20	11	20	51
Palm Island ..	59	18	22	99
Woorabinda ..	3	5	10	18
<i>Missions—</i>				
Yarrabah ..	..	2	6	8
Purga ..	..	..	3	3
	82	36	61	179

HEALTH.

From most districts the reports show that the health of the natives, generally, has been good. As usual, the district hospitals gave free treatment to cases sent to them by the Government Medical Officers or local Protectors, although there has been agitation at certain of these institutions to be allowed to charge in the usual way where the native patients have funds to their credit.

The semi-civilised readily avail themselves of the benefits of the hospitals when sick, but at Cooktown it has been necessary to detain cases of venereal disease in the old gaol compound to prevent them from absconding to the bush.

The Missions also give out-patient and in-patient treatment to wandering natives of the neighbouring districts, and special grants have been made to two of these institutions for the purpose of providing efficient hospital accommodation.

The three Settlements have resident or visiting medical officers and well-equipped hospitals, to which frequently natives from outside districts are also sent for treatment.

In Torres Strait, a commencement has been made with the erection of small cottage hospitals on the larger islands for the treatment of minor complaints. These institutions are directed by the Government Medical Officer at Thursday Island, all serious cases being sent in to the base hospital there.

The usual epidemics of colds and influenza have visited most districts, including the Torres Strait Islands and the Gulf and East Coast Missions. These were mostly of a mild type, but in a few cases, including Ravenshoe, Mossman, Maryborough, and Cunnamulla, the outbreak was somewhat more severe and some pneumonia, resulting in a few deaths, occurred.

An outbreak of typhoid also occurred at Goondiwindi, but there were no deaths. Measles made their appearance at Boulia and Babinda. There was also a mild scourge of boils at Aurukun Mission.

Malaria was in evidence at Weipa and Mitchell River Missions, and coastal fever affected a number of camps on the east coast.

Several of the Mission Stations carried out periodical surveys and treatment for hookworm and report that the benefit of this measure is apparent. At Yarrabah it is claimed that the original species of hookworm has entirely disappeared.

Cases of venereal disease were reported from several stations. Five cases were treated at Cooktown Hospital compound, four of these coming from Laura. Five cases of granuloma were sent to Thursday Island Hospital from Aurukun and two cases from Monamona Mission to Mareeba Hospital.

The exact number of natives treated at district hospitals or by Government medical officers could not be recorded; but the number of in-patients at the main centres—Brisbane 20, Ipswich 7, Townsville 11, Rockhampton 10, Cooktown 14, Normanton 61, Springsure 47, Gayndah 23, Cunnamulla 15, Chillagoe 8, Mackay 12, Boulia 8, Hughenden 7, Goondiwindi 6, will give some indication of the work done.

The numbers receiving treatment at the Settlement Hospitals were—Barambah, 1,172,

including 234 in-patients; Palm Island, 10,553 (consultations), including admission of 285 in-patients; Woorabinda, 167 in-patients, of whom four were sent to Baralaba Hospital.

Mission records of medical work are not complete, but the following figures will show something of the work being done, viz.:—Yarrabah, 87 in-patients and an average of 60 out-patients per week; Lockhart River, 384 cases treated; Mitchell River, an average of 140 cases per week treated.

In Torres Strait, 209 cases received treatment, principally for influenza, which was acute on some of the islands.

The total deaths reported were 341, of which 99 were Settlement inmates, 55 Torres Strait islanders, and 187 natives in other Missions and districts.

The number of births recorded was 346, of which Torres Strait can claim the credit for 122, the Settlements for 86, the Missions and districts 138.

YOUNG WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

It has not been possible for some time to do more in the way of supervision of females in service or in camps, than by inspecting those in situations within the city or near districts.

The work of controlling the engagements in employment, the shopping for the girls in service, and selection of clothing for the various settlements, has made long absences from headquarters impossible. Moreover, the scattered nature of the places of employment make country inspections expensive and difficult. Assistance in dealing with troubles arising in distant situations has, as far as possible, been given by the local Protectors and Officers of Police.

The behaviour in employment has been generally satisfactory, but a few, principally young settlement girls, absconded or became obstreperous and had to be returned or placed elsewhere. This might sometimes be avoided if employers showed more understanding of, or sympathy for, a lonely girl, probably suffering from homesickness.

The number of Savings Bank accounts for girls in service from Brisbane has increased to 121, the total amount to credit being £6,374, with an average credit of over £52.

The proportion of wages collected amounted to £2,754, and the withdrawals for expenditure under the Protector's supervision reached the sum of £3,245. The pocket money drawn direct would probably be 25 per cent. of the total earnings. Some of the girls spend this fairly sensibly, and, in a few cases, have small private savings bank accounts. Usually it is frittered away as fast as it is received.

The girls in service from Brisbane Office numbered 106, of whom 68 were in country situations and 38 in the suburbs of the city.

Owing to reports of unsatisfactory conduct or living conditions, it was found necessary to remove 34 women and 52 children to the settlements and 2 women and 9 children to missions, where they will receive better care and protection and the children will be given necessary schooling.

The maternity allowance was received by 52 half-caste mothers, the money being, in most

cases, paid to them through the local Protector or Superintendent of the Settlement or Mission, who controlled its disbursement, in each case, for the benefit of the mother and child.

Permission was granted for the legal marriage of 20 aboriginal and half-caste women, all to men of their own race. No reliable record of tribal marriages could be kept.

The number of orphan children maintained in homes was 66, as shown in the following return; the cost of their maintenance being £1,361:—

Sacred Heart Mission, Thursday Island	29
Yeronga and Chelmer (Girls)	.. 10
Riverview and Indooroopilly (Boys)	.. 3
Purga (Girls and Boys)	.. .. 24
	—
	66

HALF-CASTES.

From a comparison of the census returns the half-caste section of the population has increased by 211. This, however, cannot be accepted as reliable, owing to inconsistencies in classification by enumerators.

A portion of this increase would be accounted for by birth of children to parents both half-castes or half-caste and aboriginal. The cross-breed element provides the most difficult part of the problem to deal with, as what they inherit of the superior intelligence and tastes of the whites is generally nullified by the retarding instincts of the blacks. In other words, they seldom make either a steady white or a contented black.

The policy is to check as far as possible the breeding of half-castes, by firmly discouraging miscegenation, and, in conformity with this, every effort is made to encourage the marriage of those now with us to people of their own race.

To give opportunity to those of superior character to better themselves, provision is made for the granting of freedom from control by certificates of exemption from the Protection Acts. Very careful examination is made of applications for this privilege, and it is only the minority that can safely be trusted to manage their own affairs. Of 68 applications for exemption only 29 (25 males and 4 females) were adjudged eligible.

RESERVES.

It was not possible, because of absence from the State on special duty, to carry out the usual official inspection of the institutions. The reserves in the Gulf of Carpentaria have not been visited for some years, owing to the lack of a serviceable vessel in Torres Strait for patrol. With the possession of the new auxiliary vessel built and commissioned last year, the means of visiting these distant institutions at an early date is now available.

His Excellency the Governor and Lady Goodwin, with the Home Secretary and party, paid a visit to the Aboriginal Settlement at Barambah on the 3rd of May, 1928. After a full inspection of the institution during the morning, including the official opening by the Governor of the Native Recreation Hall, an interesting programme of sports, including skill with native weapons, was witnessed during the afternoon and a camp fire corroboree at night.

His Excellency expressed himself as very pleased with the settlement progress and the appearance of the people. The inmates, on their part, showed, by the warmth of their greeting and the hearty manner in which they entered into the functions of the day, their keen appreciation of this evidence of kindly interest in their welfare.

TORRES STRAIT ISLANDS AND CAPE YORK
PENINSULA.

Protector of Aborigines, Somerset district—
C. O'Leary.

Health.—The health of the natives, on the whole, has been satisfactory. The usual epidemics occurred, but, fortunately, without any serious results, although on some of the islands the outbreaks were rather acute. The new system of dispensing medicines has resulted in considerable improvement in the health of the people.

A scheme is under consideration for the erection, on Darnley and Murray Islands and probably on some others, of small hospital wards, where patients can be accommodated and treated for minor illnesses or accidents. In this way dangers from spread of infection will be more surely prevented.

Where possible, periodical medical inspections will be arranged and natives be trained in first aid and nursing.

Population.—The census taken in June, 1928, gave the population of the Islands as 3,293—Full-bloods, males 1,295, females 1,051; half-castes, males 508, females 609.

The Peninsula natives numbered 322, being—Full-bloods, males, 170; females, 141; and half-castes, males, 6; females, 5. This does not include the Mission reserves.

The births numbered 122 and the deaths 55.

Schools.—Fairly satisfactory progress is reported, although, until the proposed new system of annual inspection and expert direction by a qualified officer of the Public Instruction Department has been put into operation, it will be impossible to properly judge the standards attained. The syllabus and new reading books for natives, which have just been printed and issued, should ensure much more effective work on the part of the teachers.

A new school, capable of accommodating 140 pupils, was built at Murray Island. The walls of the old school at Yam Island were regressed to renovate it pending erection of a new building. A new building is also contemplated at Coconut Island. When these are completed all the Islands' schools will then be satisfactorily accommodated.

The new schools being erected are well lighted and ventilated, with iron roof and raised wooden floor. The days of the old grass building on ground floor have passed.

Villages.—On most of the islands considerable progress has been made in improvement of the native villages, not only in the type of dwelling, but in the planning of the villages on attractive lines, in which the planting of ornamental and fruit-bearing trees has been a feature.

At Murray Island, much good work has been done in the alignment of the streets, and a new hall is in course of erection.

At Darnley, the remodelling of the streets is being pushed steadily forward and some of the low-lying portions of the village are being drained.

A great number of new houses of improved type have been built by the villagers of Saibai, Dauan, and Boigu.

Island Funds.—The contributions to the various Island funds amounted to £2,583, but the disbursements exceed the income by £135, being £2,719. The balance to credit, however, is £5,688. The funds provided relief and pensions for a good number of sick and needy. The Badu Fund advanced £100 towards the new Scouts' Hall, and the Murray Island Fund provided £220 towards material and cost of erection of a new school. The East Coast Fund contributed relief to the extent of £46 for old natives of the Lockhart River Mission and a further large amount for some of the people in other camps on that coast.

Island Company Boats.—The native fishing fleet has exceeded last year's record catch by £2,921, the total value of produce won being £26,409. The best single vessel's effort was that of the boat "Wakaid," at one time the patrol vessel, "Melbidir," with a catch of £3,175. This vessel was bought by the Badu Islanders, after being taken out of commission as a patrol vessel, rebuilt and refitted, and engaged in the marine produce industry, working down the coast as far as Cooktown. She achieved the creditable result of clearing off her original debt of £950, for purchase, rebuilding, and refitting, within the first twelve months. The captain and crews, in addition, earned more than double the wages possible if employed in any private fishing fleet.

The next best achievement was that of the lugger "Saibai," with £1,540; but an even more creditable one was that of the "Wakemab," the smallest vessel in the fleet, which also worked through to Cooktown and won £1,437 worth of produce, clearing off a debt of £540, and earning good wages for her energetic crew.

The following figures will show something of the improvement in results attained by the more efficient of the vessels:—

Vessel.	Results.	
	1927.	1928.
"Badu"	£ 528	£ 1,062
"Yaza"	853	907
"Yama"	654	946
"Wakemab"	534	1,437
"Saibai"	535	1,540
"Caroline"	663	906
"Tura"	151	531

In consequence, the financial position of the fleet has gratifyingly improved, the debit balance of the working accounts being now only £184, as compared with £2,123 at the close of 1927.

In addition, a small insurance fund has been built up, which, to some extent, covers the vessels against total loss.

The vessels which made the trial of working down the coast to Cooktown and Cairns during the season were "Wakaid," "Wakemab," "Saibai," "Yama," "Manu," "Karabai," "Badu," "Dauan," and "Miriam."

Under the system arranged, they can re-provision and ship their produce home through the ports of Cooktown and Cairns. This proved so successful that the number of vessels working in this way will be increased. Difficulty is experienced, however, in shipping fish from Cooktown, owing to lack of shipping facilities. It may be necessary to hire a local vessel or use the new vessel "Melbidir" in conjunction with patrol work.

The great assistance rendered to these native vessels by the Protector at Cooktown in acting as their business agent was greatly appreciated.

The vessels owned by the half-caste firm, Mosby Brothers, of Yorke Island, the "Kismet" and "Nancy," had a successful year, their earnings reaching £1,652. It is proposed to replace the "Nancy," now ready for scrapping, by a larger and more modern cutter as soon as possible.

Papuan Industries Ltd. (J. C. Harman, Manager).—This company is an industrial branch of the London Mission Society. From its central trading station at Badu it conducts the trading business of the native fishing fleets, receiving and disposing of the produce won, by public tender, at Thursday Island; re-provisioning and refitting the vessels for the fishing trips, under an agreement by which the natives are assured the most favourable local market results and prices and a small share in profits.

The trading business is done under departmental supervision and all accounts are subject to Government audit.

A boatslip was established a few years ago at the station, thus making the native fleet independent of the local boatslips, which are almost entirely tied up with private fleet work. The agreement with the department provides that native labour shall be employed and young natives trained in skilled boatwright work, under the direction of a trained European boat-builder. A dozen apprentices and the same number of labourers are so employed.

A very creditable amount of work was performed. The largest job was the rebuilding of the cutter Roma. This was inspected during progress and passed as satisfactory by Captain Mortensen, the master of the "Melbidir," who acts as inspector.

One hundred dinghies were built and also four motor dinghies, all of which were well turned out.

There is every reason to be pleased with the Department's experiment of training these Island natives to be their own boatbuilders, and there is every promise of their becoming, in time, quite as efficient as the alien tradesmen on Thursday Island.

Insurance.—From the beginning of 1928, an Insurance Fund was inaugurated, to cover loss by accidents to vessels and crews of the Aboriginal Fleet, to which a small contribution is made from all boat earnings. Even in its first year, the Crews' Fund had to meet an unusual number of claims for compensation. Wanewa, a seaman of the "Miriam," died from sharkbite; Asai, of the "Wakaid," died suddenly aboard.

Both the mother of Wanewa and Asai's father, who were dependent upon the deceased, were provided for. Joe Ruben, of the "Erub," was also permanently crippled by sharkbite and will probably be a regular pensioner. Four other seamen received help during temporary disablement.

The fund was established at an opportune time, as the assistance in above cases has inspired confidence that the Department, while urging the men to work to greater advantage, is providing for help to their dependents when misfortune overtakes them.

The Boats Insurance Fund has a credit balance of £661, and that for the crews has £193.

Recreation.—Troops of Boy Scouts and Rovers and a company of Girl Guides have been formed on Badu Island, and this has developed into a very popular and successful movement. Already a new troop of Scouts and a company of Guides have been started at Poid Village, and others are being formed at Murray, Darnley, and Saibai Islands. Some of the teachers at these and other islands are actively assisting in the extension of the movement.

A spacious recreation hall, with stage, dressing rooms, &c., has been erected by the people of Badu, thus showing the interest of the parents.

The value of the influence and training upon the lives of the young people was at once evident, and every encouragement is being given. It provides a healthy outlet for their youthful energies and has proved of a highly educative and disciplinary value. The growth of the movement promises to foster a better moral tone amongst the young people.

Much of the credit for inaugurating this useful movement is due to Mr. A. V. Windsor, now at Poid, and Mrs. Harman, of the Papuan Industrials Limited.

For the first time in the history of the Department's operations in Torres Strait, a carnival for Torres Strait natives was staged in Thursday Island, being held on 1st and 2nd January, 1929. Two silver cups and a flag were donated by the Hon. the Home Secretary, as prizes for shore and aquatic events. The dancing championship was won by Badu Island. The costumes of the ten teams which competed for this event surpassed anything previously seen.

The Boy Scouts and Girl Guides also gave interesting displays. The enthusiasm of the natives and the interest evinced by the white residents gives encouragement to the suggestion that the carnival be an annual event.

Patrol.—Lack of a suitable vessel made it impossible to carry out the usual patrols of the Islands, so essential for the effective direction and supervision of the administration.

Credit, however, is given to the teachers, the officers of the Papuan Industries Limited Industrial Mission Station, and also to the native councillors, police, and captains of the fishing vessels, for their assistance towards the very successful working during the year.

GOVERNMENT SETTLEMENTS.

Barambah (Superintendent, W. Porteous Semple).

Palm Island (Superintendent, R. H. Curry).

Woorabinda (Superintendent, H. C. Colledge).

Labour.—The prevailing drought again reduced the demand for station or farm labour, but all domestics available found no difficulty in obtaining employment.

The number of engagements entered was:—

Barambah—114 under agreement, 570 casual permits.

Palm Island—79 under agreement only.

Woorabinda—83 under agreement, 3 casual permits.

In addition to above, 19 men from Palm Island obtained work as seamen on pearling vessels.

The sum of £12,695 was collected as wages deductions and banked to the individual workers' credits, and £18,777 was withdrawn from their savings for cash spending and purchases through the retail store.

Settlement Revenues.

Collections.	Barambah.	Palm Island.	Woorabinda.
	£	£	£
Wages, fares, produce, &c. . .	6,934	5,464	3,741
Interest on bank accounts . .	182	290	134
Native contributions . . .	207	313	175
	£7,323	£6,067	£4,050

Population.

Settlement.	Total.	Full-blood.	Half-castes
Barambah	729	220	509
Palm Island	827	596	231
Woorabinda	395	192	203

Crime.—Two serious offences by aboriginals were reported. At Woorabinda, two natives broke into the office and store, stealing money and goods. Practically all the stolen property was recovered. They were dealt with in the neighbouring Police Court.

At the same place, another native forcibly broke into the single girls' dormitory at night. He was also dealt with by the neighbouring court.

General conduct has otherwise been satisfactory at all three settlements. The usual minor offences, such as breaches of regulations, family quarrels, &c., have been dealt with by the officials.

Retail Stores.—The following table shows the business transacted at the settlement retail stores, which were established with the object of enabling the inmates to profitably use the

wages earned by them in employment in obtaining food, clothing, and such needs to augment the supplies issued by the Department. Profits made are used in settlement improvement.

Settlement.	Cash Sales.	Bank Orders.	Free Issues.	Total.
	£	£	£	£
Barambah	711	3,654	800	5,165
Palm Island	697	6,274	429	7,400
Woorabinda	985	1,467	147	2,599
				£15,764

Schools.—Very satisfactory progress has been made. At Barambah the vacancy of headmaster has been filled, and it should now be possible to develop the rural school side of the work more thoroughly. The school roll numbers nearly 200 pupils.

At Woorabinda, the teacher has carried on patiently under difficulties, through lack of proper accommodation and proper assistance, as the large number of children (66) is too much for one teacher to effectively instruct.

At Palm Island, the white teacher still perseveres in the native-built school with the help of his two half-caste assistants.

It is hoped to provide the necessary buildings for both the above schools at an early date.

Industrial and Agricultural.—At Barambah, the farm operations were handicapped owing to dry weather during the latter half of the year. In spite of this the potato crop did well. About 250 bushels of maize were harvested and used as horse feed. The lucerne crop was also fairly good, about 80 tons of hay filling the shed to its full capacity. The oat crop was only fair.

Fairly good supplies of mixed vegetables were produced, including 18½ tons of potatoes, 19 tons of pumpkins, half a ton each of tomatoes and sweet potatoes, 2,735 cabbages, several tons of mixed vegetables, such as turnips, marrows, peas, carrots, beans, squashes, kohlrabi, lettuce, beetroot, eschalots, and rhubarb.

The good hay crop enabled the dairy cattle to be fed during the winter months, and this had to be continued during the spring, owing to very dry weather. As a result the milk supply suffered, but 4,000 gallons were issued to hospitals, dormitories, babies' home, and old people.

The sawmill has worked steadily, cutting timber for the new boys' home, the babies' quarters, and buildings at Woorabinda. New boundary fences have been erected.

At Woorabinda, it was not possible to do any farming beyond kitchen gardening. The land was cleared for cultivation, but the work of transport of machinery from the old site had to be completed.

The main boundary fence was completed; the reserve has also been subdivided and a paddock of 1,000 acres enclosed. The transfer of stock and material from Taroom has been completed.

At Palm Island, the very dry weather caused failure of the farming operations, but 13 tons of sweet potatoes, 3 tons of pumpkins, 3,000 pines, and 500 watermelons were gathered and issued to the inmates.

The sawmill worked under some difficulties, but provided the timber for two residences, besides several additions and repair jobs.

Stock.—Despite the dry season the stock thrived. At Barambah 249 calves were branded and 52 cows speyed. Eighty-one young heifers were added to the breeders, and two good Hereford bulls acquired as sires. The herd provided 83 killers for the settlement butcher shop. The total number of cattle is now 1,236.

At Woorabinda, the herd is comfortably settled on the new reserve, which is now ready for the introduction of additional good breeders, to enable the cattle-breeding operations to be developed. The country is being further improved by ringbarking and fencing.

The present herd numbers 547, including 21 working bullocks and 8 bulls. Seventeen killers were used for beef from this herd.

At Palm Island, the cattle number 135, and there are also 4 pigs and 55 goats.

Building and Village Development.—At Barambah, the babies' home was completed and furnished, and a large home for 50 young boys has also been erected. A number of native cottages have been added to the village.

A new drainage system has been installed, to serve the dormitories and quarters, and the sanitary service has been improved by a large new wagon and proper air-tight pans.

The hospital has also been repainted. The trees planted in the streets are all doing well.

At Woorabinda, the superintendent's and assistant superintendent's houses have been erected and the quarters for the storekeeper are under way. The main street and entrance are neatly laid out and planted with ornamental trees.

The installation of a sawmill for building purposes, and a water service, are greatly needed.

At Palm Island, residences for the medical officer and the school teacher were erected and additions made to the superintendent's and storekeeper's quarters and to the General Hospital.

Social Improvement.—Progress in this direction has naturally been most marked where it has been possible to provide the means for improving the living conditions.

These cottage homes, which ensure greater family privacy and give opportunities for cultivating home occupations and recreations, prove the most effectual means of combating the old vices of gambling and camp quarrelling.

Religious Instruction.—Regular religious services have been held, either by visiting clergy or by some of the officers of the Settlement, who also arrange for Sunday school instruction.

A Church of England clergyman from Rockhampton gave monthly ministrations to the Woorabinda Settlement and the Bishop also visited the institution.

Weekly services and Sunday school classes were similarly arranged, by the Church of England Rector at Murgon, at the Barambah Settlement.

The district missionaries of the Aborigines Inland Mission have regularly attended at all three settlements, holding services and visiting the people in their homes.

The natives are said to take great interest in the services and meetings held.

Recreations.—A spacious recreation hall has been built at Barambah, entirely from funds raised by the natives, by sports, concerts, &c., and has proved of great value in providing healthy amusement for the evenings and a safe gathering place for the young people. Picture shows, dances, concerts, and religious services and classes, keep the building fully used.

At Palm Island, the money is already in hand for a similar building.

At both these settlements the native brass bands are still alive and keen and are often in request for functions in neighbouring districts.

The football and cricket teams of all three settlements have played matches with white teams around the district and have given a good account of themselves, in conduct as well as sport.

The annual sports day has also been held, and at Christmas and New Year the usual festivities, during which Christmas-trees with gifts, prizes for sports, extra rations, and delicacies were supplied.

The heavy work and worry of providing for and arranging these enjoyments was cheerfully undertaken by the officials, although it meant considerable sacrifice of their own holidays, but the evidence of the hearty enjoyment of the natives was some recompense.

LOCK HOSPITAL—FANTOME ISLAND.

Dr. C. R. Maitland Pattison, Medical Superintendent.—With the completion of the necessary buildings for male and female wards, irrigation chambers, laundries, native officials' cottages, wardsman's quarters, store and kitchens, and the appointment of an experienced ex-naval man as wardsman, the work of installing the necessary equipment was commenced and the hospital opened its doors to patients early in the year.

The cases received for treatment comprised:—Gonorrhoea, 51; granulomata, 15; syphilis, 3; elephantiasis, 1. Total, 70.

Operations were performed in 14 cases under general anaesthetic.

Patients discharged cured, 44; patients died, 6; patients still under treatment, 20. Total, 70.

A heavy storm, with torrential rain, caused damage to the large concrete reservoir, necessitating repairs and strengthening.

A vegetable garden was cultivated, thus providing a very necessary article of diet for the patients and also some light occupation for the convalescents.

MISSIONS.

- Yarrabah, Cairns (Superintendent, W. McCullough), Anglican.
- Monamona, Cairns (Superintendent L. Borgas), Seventh Day Adventists.
- Cape Bedford, Cooktown (Superintendent, Rev. G. H. Schwarz), Lutheran.
- Lockhart River, Cape York Peninsula (Superintendent, H. Rowan), Anglican.
- Moa Island, St. Paul's, Torres Strait (Superintendent, Rev. J. W. Schomberg), Anglican.
- Mapoon, Gulf of Carpentaria (Superintendent, Rev. P. R. Currell), Presbyterian.
- Weipa, Gulf of Carpentaria (Superintendent, Rev. C. D. Sydney (pro tem), Presbyterian.
- Aurukun, Gulf of Carpentaria (Superintendent, Rev. W. F. McKenzie), Presbyterian.
- Mitchell River, Gulf of Carpentaria (Superintendent, J. W. Chapman), Anglican.
- Mornington Island, Gulf of Carpentaria (Superintendent, Rev. R. H. Wilson), Presbyterian.
- Purga, Ipswich (Superintendent, Commandant W. Perrem), Salvation Army.

Conduct.—Practically no serious crime occurred. Three or four cases were serious enough to require reference to the local police court, but, generally, the minor cases of trouble occurring were disciplined in the institution itself.

The more intelligent seem to be striving to set a good example, and even the old primitive people assist to maintain order. A noticeable decrease in minor offences and tribal quarrels is reported in some places and, amongst the Mission trained residents, quite a good moral tone is evident.

Religious Training.—The usual religious services and instruction have been given and are generally well attended. Attendance at these services is usually quite voluntary, the intelligent interest and keenness displayed being regarded as proof of the wisdom of not using compulsion.

Frequently, the educated ones take a leading part, as lay preacher, organist, or teacher.

The Missions claim that religion is proving an influential factor in both their social and industrial life.

Education.—School has been held as regularly as circumstances allowed, although a difficulty in obtaining suitable officers as teachers has been experienced in some of the outback places. The children are said to have made satisfactory progress; but, as experienced school inspectors are seldom able to visit, something in result is probably lost for lack of expert advice and guidance.

The right system is followed in using, as far as possible, native assistant teachers and monitors, and in giving importance to the manual and domestic branches of instruction. That the natives are better understanding the objects of the Mission is seen in the fact that voluntary recruits for the school keep coming in from the primitive people in districts beyond the reserves.

INDUSTRIAL AND AGRICULTURAL.

The following notes of operations in the above branches will show that proper importance is being attached to the development of self-dependence in these institutions.

Yarrabah.—The sawmill has worked continuously and has cut several large orders for building timber for stations in Torres Strait. New staff buildings also were erected and a new hospital partly completed.

Floods and drought hampered farming operations, but the farm at Buddabahdo supplied fair crops of maize, sweet potatoes, pines, and bananas for Mission consumption.

Bad weather and sickness amongst the crew spoiled the fishing venture. The home reefs are not very profitable, and it will be necessary to go further afield.

Some of the growing lads have been placed out at suitable trades, to get training, and the girls taught basket making, needlework, and native cooking and housewifery.

Monamona.—The work performed has been sawmilling, road making, and general farming. Sixty acres are under cultivation and twenty more have been felled, of which seven have been cleared and planted with bananas. The crops harvested were 10 tons of maize, 30 tons of sweet potatoes, and 2,500 bunches of bananas, all valued at £500. This was apart from the private kitchen gardens of the inmates.

A new dining-room, a native cottage, a school-room, and new brick bakery oven have been erected.

Twelve acres of land has been sown with grass and 1½ mile of fencing built.

Cape Bedford.—The appointment of two assistant Missionaries has enabled important development of the Melvor River farm settlement to be made and the concentration there of the small settlements previously scattered around the reserve. It is hoped, at an early date, to acquire some more profitable farming land for this community.

Although some of the old cultivations had to be spelled, about 12 tons of potatoes were raised. A fair crop was also gathered from 2 acres under bananas. Good crops of cassava were also grown.

Five hundred seed cocoanuts were planted and, besides nuts used for food, 1½ tons of copra were sold. Four tons of grass-tree gum were sold, but at an unprofitable price.

The fishing vessels got good catches of chalk-fish and bêche-de-mer, but as the market was low it was not as successful as wished. There has been considerable expense also for repairs to vessels.

Lockhart River.—Fair results were obtained by the natives in sandalwood cutting and raising other produce, paying all wages, clearing off their old debt, and finishing £67 in credit.

Some of the young men signed on to the pearling fleet and the elderly ones worked on the Mission. Good progress was made in the building of the new church, and there has been activity in enlarging and repairing other buildings, making furniture, &c.

Two large buildings were completed for a teacher's residence and a girl's dormitory.

Concrete wells are being installed, and a concrete cistern, 5,000 gallons capacity, is being built to ensure ample water supply.

Mapoon.—The bêche-de-mer vessels earned £313, the timber getting yielded £56, copra-making £50, sandalwood £30, and shell £13.

Garden produce was grown for home consumption. The cattle number 400, and provide the meat and milk needs of the station.

Wcipa.—The land is poor and only crops for home needs can be grown. The gardens produce sweet potatoes, peanuts, &c.

Fifteen acres have been cleared and 150 seed coconuts planted.

All timber cut by the sawmill was used for home building purposes. Sandalwood-cutting returned £99 in revenue.

Aurukun.—Early planting was found successful and good crops of maize, sweet potatoes, cowpeas, watermelons, pumpkins, and peanuts were harvested. The mango crop was a heavy one, lasting for over three months.

Some young coconuts have been successfully planted, and lily roots, pancee nuts, and swamp grass introduced from the Kendall River district, as a trial in the local swamps.

The bench and shed for the sawmill have been completed and the plant has been working continuously cutting firewood and building timber. The irrigation service has been extended, and the banana, papaw, and pineapple plantations have benefited. A quarter of a mile of antbed road has been laid, and a raised track laid across the swamp.

Mitchell River.—The native earnings amounted to £668. The new village has cleared a good area of land and built some very decent houses. The first of a series of new buildings for the school farm village has also been finished. The old village buildings are in bad repair.

The settled inmates have worked their gardens well and carefully.

The cattle now number 2,421; there are also 58 horses and 40 goats.

Mornington Island.—Owing to trouble with white ants the foundations of all buildings have had to be replaced with concrete blocks. A new dormitory for boys and several outbuildings have been erected from timber cut at the Mission mill. There is not much suitable timber growing on the island.

The stock number 160 head of cattle, 13 horses, and 8 pigs.

Bêche-de-mer fishing was good, but the quality is poor. The return for first shipment was £144, but a larger shipment of ninety-nine bags is still to be sold.

Floods spoilt the food crops, only 5 tons of sweet potatoes and 12 tons of other vegetables and fruit being harvested.

All inmates are employed on productive work in the gardens, farms, fields, sawmill, fishing vessels, buildings, and domestic duties.

Purga.—The year has been successful—industrially—the farm, dairy, and pig-raising doing well. The inmates, when not in employment on neighbouring farms or stations, work on the Mission for their keep, but otherwise buy their rations from their earnings.

Cowal Creek.—This settlement has progressed steadily. Visits have been paid as opportunity offered to assist with advice and give encouragement.

The people are very orderly and manage their own village affairs through their council and police.

Some new houses have been built and improvements made to the streets. The trees planted have made good progress.

NATIVE PROVISIONAL SCHOOLS.

Gayndah (Teacher, C. Turner)—Roll, 15 (boys 6, girls 9.)

Myora (Teacher, P. L. Benstead)—Roll, 11 (boys 7, girls 4).

Thursday Island (Teacher, H. G. Simpson)—Roll, 57 (boys 23, girls 29).

Progress has been satisfactory, but at Gayndah and Myora the attendances have suffered through movements of the families to other districts or settlements.

The conditions of poverty from which often these children come makes a serious handicap to effective work. School garden work and tree-planting have been encouraged, and at Gayndah the children won some prizes for exhibits at the local show of vegetables and flowers grown.

Games and sports have been encouraged.

Religious instruction has been given by visiting clergy and missionaries.

RECREATION.

The natives are fond of their play and all games and sports are keenly entered into. Splendid spirit is usually shown, the roughest knocks and bumps being taken with good humour. Every encouragement is given to healthy outdoor games, such as cricket, football, tennis, &c., and especially their native sports and practice in the use of weapons.

Fishing and hunting are always favourite pastimes, especially with the elderly people. The young people are also fond of picnics and, frequently, week-end camping parties are arranged under the chaperonage of kindly disposed white families. Music, by means of gramophone or wireless, is greatly enjoyed, but the native corroboree is always an unflagging attraction.

SOCIAL IMPROVEMENTS.

There are many encouraging evidences of a growing desire for the settled life and better conditions. The families take an interest in improving their homes and making simple articles of furniture and in having their village in good order. Much of the restlessness is disappearing and the settled life is becoming more popular.

In the Mitchell River Reserve, during the last year, sixty of the bush blacks voluntarily settled in the villages.

Once weaned from the wandering life, they soon begin to take an interest in themselves. No undue restraint is exercised; they enjoy freedom under the system of protection.

The Missionaries have found that taking a friendly interest in their language and customs, their hunting and corroborees, does much to promote confidence and good relations besides assisting to relieve the strained feelings that often exist between different tribes in the neighbourhood.

