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1916.

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QUEENSLAND.

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ANNUAL REPORT

OF

THE CHIEF PROTECTOR OF ABORIGINALS

FOR

THE YEAR 1915.

PRESENTED TO BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT BY COMMAND.

BRISBANE:

BY AUTHORITY: ANTHONY JAMES CUMMING, GOVERNMENT PRINTER.

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1916.

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Native Village—Mabuig Island.

ANNUAL REPORT, 1915.

TO THE UNDER SECRETARY, HOME SECRETARY'S DEPARTMENT.

Office of the Chief Protector of Aborigines,
Brisbane, 30th April, 1916.

SIR,—I have the honour to submit my report upon the working of this Department for the year ending 31st December, 1915.

Early in July last year, on conclusion of a departmental inquiry held at Thursday Island, which will be referred to in another part of this report, I visited and inspected the schools on Torres Straits and the Missions and Settlements on the East Coast, but, owing to an unexpected delay in benzine supplies created by war conditions, I was compelled to omit the Missions in the Gulf of Carpentaria, and arrange for them to be visited and reported upon by the Master of the "Melbidir." A full report upon these inspections was furnished, and various matters dealt with therein will be commented upon in the separate reports upon each of these stations.

The institutions generally showed good progress, particularly in the industrial branches, though the results of agricultural operations were in most cases disappointing owing to the drought.

EXHIBITION OF ABORIGINAL HANDIWORK.

The Aborigines' Court in the National Association's Exhibition has now become an annual feature, and, as this exhibit always attracts a great deal of attention, it is eagerly sought after by the Association, who willingly grant every facility for the successful conduct of the stall. Despite the war difficulties, the various institutions are to be complimented upon their excellent display of school work, agricultural and industrial products, and native implements; and it is pleasing to record that some fine models of native outrigger canoes were afterwards sold by auction, at the request of the makers, for the benefit of the Belgian Fund.

The usual small money prizes and certificates were awarded by the Department, and are keenly looked forward to by the competitors.

LABOUR CONDITIONS ON LAND.

The demand for aboriginal labour has been good, and no difficulty has been experienced in finding employment for all willing to work—in fact, in places the labour available has been insufficient to meet the needs of employers, as, at some institutions, the requirements for maintenance and development work have first to be considered.

The increased uniform scale of wages introduced at the commencement of the year has now fallen easily and smoothly into operation, and, as the returns will show, has not in the least affected the amount of employment offering—in fact, in some Western districts, the stock-owners willingly offered more than double the regulation rates to obtain men to cut scrub for the starving cattle, and, without this aboriginal labour, many of the stations would have fared badly.

As the wages scale provides for practically all classes and conditions of labour, very little trouble has arisen over the minimum rates fixed, and what few cases were submitted for consideration were easily adjusted on their merits. The gratifying result has been the entire absence of the usual dissatisfaction over rates and conditions in neighbouring districts.

The usual number of trackers, mostly married, have been supplied to the Police Department for police work, and two fresh boys were sent to relieve the trackers supplied to Victoria. The districts of Ayr and Bowen, previously included in the Townsville Protector's district, were formed into separate protectorates, thus dividing and easing the work at the latter place. To meet the domestic servant difficulty at Thursday Island, an experiment was made with a number of young Torres Strait Islanders as house-boys, but the work did not prove congenial.

The number of boys engaged in sandalwood cutting was lower than during the preceding period, as most of the Europeans have returned to the lower Gulf district.

LABOUR CONDITIONS.

TABLE I.—RETURN OF ABORIGINALS EMPLOYED UNDER AGREEMENT OR PERMIT DURING 1914 AND 1915.

Issued in the Petty Sessions District of—	Protector stationed at—	1914.				1915.			
		MALES.		FEMALES.		MALES.		FEMALES.	
		Permanent.	Casual.	Permanent.	Casual.	Permanent.	Casual.	Permanent.	Casual.
Part of Herberton comprising the Licensing District of Atherton	Atherton	161	4	20	..	134	7	28	..
Beaudesert, Brisbane, Caboolture, Cleveland, Dugandan, Esk, Gatton, Goodna, Harrisville, Ipswich, Laidley, Logan, Marburg, Maroochy, Nerang, Redcliffe, Rosewood, South Brisbane, Woodford	Brisbane*	33	50	131	..	44	20	57	26
Boulia	Boulia	64	17	15	..	70	8	26	5
Burke	Burketown	66	3	4	..	51	..	1	..
Diamantina	Birdsville	19	1	10	..	18	..	10	..
Coen	Coen	101	11	..	..	102	..	6	..
Cardwell	Cardwell	55	3	4	..	20	..	3	..
Charters Towers, Cape River	Charters Towers ..	137	..	31	..	145	..	31	..
Adavale, Augathella, Charleville	Charleville	35	3	8	..	41	9	8	..
Cloncurry, Camooweal	Cloncurry .. ..	..	13	..	..	84	..	22	..
Croydon	Croydon .. ..	..	12	..	..	..	11	..	..
Cunnamulla, Eulo, Hungerford, Wooroorooka ..	Cunnamulla	16	15	16	..	8	4	7	..
Cairns, Mareeba	Cairns	263	..	78	..	291	..	74	..
Cook, Palmer	Cooktown	288	15	26	..	229	22	19	..
Chillagoe	Chillagoe	6	4	1	2	17	3	2	..
Etheridge	Georgetown	60	4	6	2	45	..	3	..
Part of Herberton, Licensing District of Herberton	Herberton	272	46	40	..	80	23	22	..
Hughenden, Richmond	Hughenden	95	10	8	..	114	12	21	..
Ingham	Ingham	68	15	7	..	87	9	14	..
Mourilyan	Innisfail	147	..	12	..	159	..	17	..
Part of Herberton, Licensing District of Irvinebank	Irvinebank	2	..	2	..	2	2	2	..
Mackay	Mackay	44	..	4	..	64	10	5	..
Norman	Normanton	84	..	9	..	67	..	6	..
Biggenden, Bundaberg, Childers, Eidsvold, Gayndah, Gin Gin, Gladstone, Gympie, Kilkivan, Maryborough, Nanango, Tennin-gering, Tiaro	Maryborough	45	1	9	..	43	..	9	..
Aboriginal Settlement, Barambah	Barambah	308	84	23	17	*223	..	*51	..
Port Douglas	Port Douglas	19	102	5	..	27	101	5	..
Banana, Clermont, Emerald, Mount Morgan, Rockhampton, St. Lawrence, Springsure, Alpha	Rockhampton	95	13	27	..	89	3	21	..
Bollon, Condamine, Mitchell, Roma, St. George, Surat, Taroom, Yeulba	Roma	8	16	3	..	14	..	10	..
Aboriginal Settlement, Taroom	Taroom	37	..	13	..	..	..	..	..
Somerset	Thursday Island ..	408	7	30	..	575	5	31	..
Ravenswood, Townsville	Townsville	167	10	28	..	56	8	11	..
Burke (west of 139° east long.), Turnoff Lagoon	Turnoff Lagoon	28	..	2	..	28	3	1	14
Allora, Clifton, Crow's Nest, Dalby, Goondiwindi, Highfields, Inglewood, Killarney, South-wood, Stanthorpe, Texas, Toowoomba, War-wick	Toowoomba	1	..	1	..	3	..	2	..
Chillagoe, Etheridge, and Norman, comprising the Licensing District of Thornborough	Thornborough	9	..	..	..	7	..	1	..
Aramac, Barcardine, Blackall, Isisford, Jundah, Longreach, Muttaburra, Tambo	Longreach	50	..	7	..	30	..	10	..
Thargomindah, Nocundra, Eromanga	Thargomindah	63	3	16	..	52	4	15	..
Winton	Winton	12	36	4	..	13	38	5	..
Windorah	Windorah	31	..	10	..	27	..	8	..
Ayr	Ayr .. ..	..	..	..	..	36	..	2	..
Bowen	Bowen .. ..	..	..	..	..	65	..	12	..
Hull River .. ..	.. ..	..	..	..	..	62	77	..	..
		3,197	498	610	21	3,222	379	568	45

* Engaged from Chief Protector's office.

LABOUR CONDITIONS ON BOATS.

Five hundred and thirty-seven aboriginals were signed on to fishing boats at Thursday Island in the bêche-de-mer and trochus shell industry as compared with 408 in 1914.

No complaints of a serious nature were entered either by employers or employees. The number of desertions reported is lower than in previous years, the men in charge of the boats appearing to realise that better treatment of their crews means steadier work by the boys and a consequent increase of profit to those sharing in the venture. A question raised as to the rights of employers to insist on boys working for marine produce on Sundays was referred to the Crown Solicitor for opinion, who upheld the Protector's contention that this could not legally be done under the existing articles of agreement.

There was a great demand for mainland labour during the year, as many of the pearling luggers are being fitted out to work bêche-de-mer and trochus shell, their occupation as pearling boats being practically dead owing to the war having closed all the usual markets.

As the supply of labour from the East Coast is not equal to the demand, applications have been made to allow recruiting between the Archer and Mitchell Rivers; but the Protector urges that, to avoid repetition of the abuses practised on the East Coast, such recruiting, if allowed, should entirely be under Government supervision. He proposes to first visit this part of the district with the Coen Protector to inquire as to conditions and labour available and endeavour to gain the confidence of the natives.

The wages earned by Torres Straits Islanders in the fishing industry was £3,924, and by mainlanders £1,058; and if to this be added £6,277, value of produce won by the native "company" boats, it will be seen that aboriginals engaged in the fishing industries in this district earned £10,201, equal to 21.7 per cent. of the total declared value of produce exported from Torres Straits. As an experiment, a few half-castes, who proved capable of taking charge of boats, have been allowed to work on a share system; and, if energetic enough, the results should encourage them and act as a spur to the crews of Island boats.

The Protector again urges the need for a Government Recruiting Dépôt on the East Coast, to properly protect the natives engaged from there for the fishing fleets. This should receive early attention; and, as outlined in the proposal already submitted, the wages earned by these natives and the recruiting fees collected by the Station would go far towards paying the expense of management and enable regular rations to be supplied to the workers and their relatives on the reserve.

ABORIGINAL TRUST ACCOUNTS.

One tangible result of the improved uniform rates of pay now in vogue for aboriginals has been a noticeable increase in the banking operations; 419 new accounts were opened, and £12,475 has been added to the total amount to credit, notwithstanding that £12,947, more than half the total collections, was returned in various ways to the earners. As the portion banked varies from one-fifth to two-thirds according to circumstances, averaging less than half the earnings, and more than 50 per cent. of that is again returned to the worker, it cannot be complained that the regulation is a hard one.

When the natives' well-known habit of squandering their money—often before it is earned—is remembered, the fact that the larger portion of the £12,947 allowed them has been spent in clothing and relief when out of work, which would otherwise have had to be borne by the Department, will indicate what such a system for the care and control of their money is worth in saving to the State.

As the accumulation of large sums of money to lie idle is not the Department's aim, the question arises as to in what directions these funds can best be utilised, while still respecting the rights of ownership.

It is quite consistent with present-day ideas that the self-supporting members of a community should understand and bear their fair share of the responsibility for the maintenance of the helpless and indigent class. The policy of the Department is not to pauperise or spoonfeed the aboriginals, but to educate them and raise them to higher planes in the social scale. At the present time between £1,500 and £1,600 a year is issued in regular relief, from about 40 centres, to old camp blacks, most of whom are aged or helpless relatives of men earning wages in employment. This relief represents the minimum allowance necessary to supplement supplies from other sources and sustain life. To yield to the demands of some people with little knowledge of the aboriginal character, and allow these workers the free control of all their wages, would not result in any material improvement in the conditions of their dependants, for in most cases the balance would be extravagantly spent and very little, if any, be saved to assist the old people.

The establishment of a fund to which all workers should contribute—say, 10 per cent. of the compulsory banking deduction, which would yield about £2,500 a year, for purposes of general relief—would ensure these old people a larger portion of the benefits they are entitled to from their own relatives, who, in most cases, are quite content to let the Department bear the burden. The scheme is not new, for a similar fund is in existence in the Torres Strait Islands, where

7½ per cent. is contributed, and on the Government Settlements, where 20 per cent. is deducted. By taking the bank deduction as a basis for assessment, the circumstances of all workers, pro-

vided for in the schedule of wages and deductions now in vogue, will be most fairly met, as the fund would be available also to contributors in distress.

TABLE 2.—ABORIGINES' WAGES HELD IN TRUST BY PROTECTORS ON 31ST DECEMBER, 1914 AND 1915, SHOWING DEPOSITS AND WITHDRAWALS DURING THE YEAR.

District.	Estimated Population.	Credit Balance, 1914.	1915.			
			Number of Accounts.	Deposits.	Withdrawals.	Credit Balance.
		£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Atherton	340	547 1 9	267 22 C.P.A. of	399 16 5	42 3 5	1,017 7 6
Brisbane	284	1,281 6 4	9 P.A.	632 19 9	589 14 7	1,324 11 6
Brisbane (Aboriginal Girls) ..	..	2,852 1 11	155	1,818 0 10	1,447 5 1	3,222 17 8
Barambah (Aboriginal Settlement)	530	2,638 2 0	479	2,078 11 8	2,162 5 8	2,509 4 10
Boulia	350	2,005 1 7	134	796 5 9	220 1 6	2,800 16 8
Burketown	450	1,167 5 1	186	472 12 0	153 17 0	1,486 0 1
Birdsville	100	889 16 7	40	231 3 5	24 0 0	897 0 0
Coen	1,000	1,075 8 0	145	1,099 6 0	447 14 3	1,887 5 4
Cardwell	250	295 6 2	27	71 5 4	4 10 0	217 2 8
Charters Towers	200	4,029 9 6	179	1,770 10 11	682 12 11	5,101 4 2
Charleville	90	387 2 0	46	333 4 7	222 19 9	493 1 11
Cloncurry	300	2,158 3 9	208	1,243 2 10	574 6 0	3,119 8 0
Croydon	75	253 18 2	26	245 19 8	126 0 1	375 8 4
Cunnamulla	116	88 9 1	14	48 11 7	32 10 0	136 11 2
Cairns	550	1,674 16 11	434	1,005 7 10	209 5 0	1,819 14 11
Cooktown	450	1,068 13 2	226	553 0 0	180 8 10	1,643 17 11
Chillagoe	50	622 2 3	90	225 3 7	35 17 9	811 9 1
Georgetown	130	1,195 12 6	76	822 1 3	457 1 4	1,485 11 2
Herberton	210	547 7 1	145	701 14 3	136 0 0	1,237 15 4
Hughenden	156	2,156 11 9	142	2,078 3 1	430 18 2	4,112 6 11
Hull River	250	.. .. .	76	134 9 3	8 2 8	126 6 7
Ingham	300	2,153 16 0	150	404 2 8	274 3 8	1,748 10 7
Irvinebank	30	39 1 8	5	50 5 3	17 1 8	73 18 4
Innisfail	250	1,301 16 5	267	982 19 9	180 9 1	2,263 12 11
Longreach	90	2,252 5 9	73	628 8 4	753 11 7	2,127 2 6
Mackay	170	517 15 7	79	358 18 7	215 13 9	646 8 8
Maryborough	300	244 14 8	41	276 9 2	55 10 2	468 4 10
Normanton	550	844 15 11	181	418 7 0	164 17 0	1,232 15 2*
Port Douglas	180	715 11 1	98	186 11 0	30 16 2	891 15 6
Rockhampton	544	1,162 10 9	95	404 1 0	103 9 8	1,566 11 9
Roma	372	247 9 2	23	108 5 11	97 17 7	275 16 7
Turn-off-Lagoon .. .. .	.. .. .	Savings Bank	Accounts kept at Normanton.	.. .. .	.. .. .	.. .. .
Thursday Island	5,060	2,411 0 0	285	2,128 0 0	1,403 0 0	3,136 0 0
Thornborough	70	12 19 4	13	28 16 11	27 18 8	25 0 4
Townsville	500	3,035 6 9	67	328 1 2	204 3 3	787 0 7
Toowoomba	134	69 14 8	13	39 13 9	16 0 0	101 4 0
Thargomindah	200	428 7 7	54	178 11 0	79 19 0	569 0 4
Taroom (Aboriginal Settlement)	270	443 11 3	148	359 17 0	234 13 6	568 14 9
Windorah	80	1,093 19 1	38	358 18 0	227 15 2	1,225 1 11
Winton	40	672 4 1	37	462 6 2	265 1 1	824 9 2
Ayr	130	.. .. .	67	326 9 10	311 16 9	833 5 10
Bowen	200	.. .. .	102	345 13 10	156 6 6	1,665 6 10
	15,351	44,380 15 4	4,961	25,136 6 4	12,947 18 3	56,855 2 4

* Including Turn-off-Lagoon accounts.

AUXILIARY KETCH "MELBIDIR."

The ketch was released by the Naval authorities in March of last year, and resumed her usual duties, patrolling as far as Townsville, conveying 22 half-caste waifs, removed from Coen district to the Yarrabah Mission, and other natives to the Hull River Settlement. On my instructions, the Master inspected and reported upon the numerous camps of natives on the east coast of the Peninsula as far as Cape Bedford. From July the ketch had heavy work, in rough weather, collecting witnesses from the islands on the east coast and in the Strait in a departmental inquiry, visiting Gulf Missions, collecting war census returns, conveying teachers, &c. The Master had to be invalided to Brisbane in Sep-

tember suffering from effects of severe malaria; and the ketch, when in use, was navigated by Constable Pickering, of the Thursday Island Water Police. In December the vessel was brought to Brisbane for engine repairs and general overhaul.

CERTIFICATES OF EXEMPTION.

Certificates of exemption from the provisions of the Aboriginal Protection Acts were granted to 22 half-castes—19 males and 3 females; and one certificate, issued in 1911 to a half-caste girl, was revoked, the holder having shown herself as incapable, when free, of protecting her own interests as any other aboriginal.

In each case, full and strict inquiry was made into the character and circumstances of the applicant; and only where it was evident that the half-caste was legally eligible and capable of managing his own affairs was freedom granted.

REMOVALS AND RECOGNIZANCES.

Twenty-four permits were granted to employers to remove natives to other districts, and, in 26 cases, bonds were entered into for their return. It was not found necessary in any case to enforce the undertakings.

FOOD AND OTHER RELIEF.

The following are the centres from which regular relief rations were issued during the year and the average monthly amount allowed:—

Station.	Amount per month		
	£	s.	d.
Annandale	5	0	0
Ayr	2	0	0
Badu Island	0	7	9
Bedourie	3	2	9
Betoota	4	0	0
Birdsville	5	5	6
Boulia	5	0	0
Bowen	1	0	0
Buckingham Downs	2	0	0
Burketown	6	10	0
Cape Bedford	7	0	0
Chatsworth	3	6	8
Childers	1	0	0
Cloneuray	1	10	0
Coen	3	0	0
Craiglea	1	10	0
Croydon	10	0	0
Diamantina	5	10	0
Duarina	0	13	4
Ebagoolah	2	10	0
Georgetown	2	10	0
Glengyle	3	10	0
Keeroongooloo	3	6	8
Kuranda	0	10	0
Laura	3	13	6
Maytown	4	0	0
McDonnell	3	10	0
Miriam Vale	0	15	0
Moreton	1	0	0
Mount Carbine	5	0	0
Musgrave	0	7	0
Normanton	2	0	0
Percyville	0	15	0
Ripon Island	1	0	0
Roxburgh Downs	1	10	0
St. George	5	0	0
Thargomindah—Durham Downs	11	0	0
Thornborough	2	10	0
Tinnenburra	5	0	0
Townsville	2	0	0
Urundangie	5	0	0
Valley of Lagoons	3	15	0
Winton	1	5	0

Six centres were closed where the need for the issue lapsed, and two new centres were opened.

BLANKETS.

The work of distribution of blankets was, as usual, last year, conducted by the Government Storekeeper, the distributors mostly being police officers, who apparently satisfactorily followed the instructions.

The usual issue of tomahawks, fishing-lines, hooks, knives, calico, Turkey twill, and tobacco was sent to Claremont Island Lightship in addition to the blanket requirements.

The number of natives benefiting were:— 2,370 men, 2,042 women, 956 children, and 128 unspecified; and to these 4,464½ pairs were issued.

Owing to the demand upon the mills, the usual blanket contract supplies were cut off, and consequently only an inferior article could be obtained for supply to many of the places.

As the frequent removals and wanderings of aboriginals made the past system of supplying blankets on the basis of previous year's distribution unsatisfactory—often surfeiting one centre and starving another—it has now been arranged that the allotment shall be controlled entirely by this Office, where information as to actual requirements can be obtained and a proper supervision exercised over the distribution.

By ensuring that only such as are actually in need of them receive the blankets, that each centre receives sufficient, that serviceable articles only are supplied, and that there is no waste, it is hoped to derive a maximum of benefit at a minimum of cost.

OFFENCES AGAINST ABORIGINALS— DRINK, OPIUM, Etc.

The returns of prosecutions for breaches of the Aboriginal Protection Acts show a gratifying decrease, especially in the traffic in opium and drink. This is doubtless due, as in the past, to the zeal of the officers of the Police Department, by their vigilance accomplishing the more creditable, but less noticeable, service of preventing offences than in punishing offenders.

The small number of convictions of aboriginals for drunkenness (57) is also a fact that reflects credit upon them.

As expected at the outset, on the new Settlement at Hull River some trouble has been experienced with a number of the natives, addicted to opium and drugs, who were removed there during the year; but sympathetic tact in dealing with these cases and vigilant supervision of the aliens outside, who still try to carry on their old traffic, have done much towards reducing the evil. Unfortunately, some whites—themselves not above suspicion of exploiting these unfortunate wretches—often do much to make the task of protecting the natives from abuses more difficult.

As evidence that the natives on reserves generally are in sympathy with the efforts of the officers to restrict the drink and opium traffic, it is often noted that, where these forbidden luxuries find their way in, it is almost immediately reported to the officials, and frequently has enabled them to seize and prevent the consumption of them. It will go a long way towards reducing these evils when it is made a punishable offence for aboriginals to be found in possession of drink and opium.

The following successful prosecutions were instituted:—In possession of opium, 68; supplying opium, 39; supplying drink, 25; harbouring, 25; illegally employing, 16. The total fines inflicted for these offences was £1,351 11s. 8d.

OFFENCES BY ABORIGINALS.

The following comparative statement of offences committed by aboriginals speaks for itself. The cases of drunkenness, and offences resulting from drink, are remarkably low; while there is almost a total absence of serious crimes:—

	1914.	1915.
Drunkenness	49	57
Desertion from hired service ..	37	44
Desertion from ship	19	..
Illegally on premises	2	2
Unsound mind	2	2
Stealing	12	8
Murder	2	1
Manslaughter .. .. .	..	1
Arson .. .. .	..	1
Rape	1	..
Indecent assault	1	..
Assault	13	7
Receiving stolen property .. ..	..	2
Illegally using horse .. .. .	..	2
Obscene language	12	5
Creating a disturbance	2	1

The following return shows the number of natives removed to the various institutions by Minister's order for disciplinary reasons or for their relief and protection:—

—	Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.
Barambah ..	57	61	26	144
Deebing Creek ..	3	2	6	11
Hull River ..	138	120	7	265
Monamona ..	59	59	10	128
Taroom ..	19	19	4	42
Yarrabah ..	27	26	4	57
	303	287	57	647

Crime of a serious nature is practically unknown upon the reserves, though, as pointed out in previous reports, legislative power is required to make more stringent regulations for dealing with breaches of discipline and minor offences. The usual tribal or domestic quarrels occur, but are, as a rule, satisfactorily settled by the officials. The chief difficulty is the suppression of gambling and immorality, and enforcement of the regulation as to regular work. To meet the first of these evils, as far as possible, the circulation of money is restricted, and men returning with accumulated pay are encouraged to spend it in the retail stores. To cultivate a higher moral tone, legal marriage is encouraged, the loose ideas, which the more intelligent now attach to the old tribal marriage, being as firmly as possible discountenanced.

Loafers and malingers are punished by the stoppage of rations and other privileges;

but something more drastic is required to effectively deal with all these troubles, and the new legislation foreshadowed will, it is hoped, provide for this.

HEALTH.

Health has been generally good throughout the State. Reports from Protectors show that 519 cases of sickness received medical treatment, of which 180 were influenza and venereal 58.

Slight outbreaks of measles were reported from Birdsville, and an epidemic of dengue at Hughenden. Beri-beri made its appearance also at the latter place and Georgetown, and it became necessary to send a few cases to the coast for treatment. Venereal is reported to be very prevalent in the Burketown, Coen, and Somerset districts; and several deaths from this disease occurred in these and at Birdsville, mostly amongst the old people.

There is urgent need for the establishment of, at least, two Lock Hospitals, where not only this disease, but other malignant incurable diseases, can be properly isolated and treated. A site on Fitzroy Island has been chosen for one, and plans and specifications prepared for the buildings, and only awaits the necessary provision in the Vote.

By terms of their agreements, aboriginals in employment are entitled to receive medical attention from their employers; and, in most cases, this was faithfully carried out. Other minor ailments amongst camp natives were treated at local hospitals, but many institutions still object to admitting chronic malignant complaints. The natives' superstitious fears and want of perseverance often made successful treatment difficult, if not impossible. At the Barambah Settlement the Visiting Medical Officer paid 53 visits and examined 957 persons, of whom 429 were indoor patients of the hospital there.

The health of the Torres Straits Islands natives was good, and will be dealt with at greater length in the later report given.

The number of deaths, and particulars of causes, throughout the State were as follows:—

Diseases.	Deaths.
Accidents	2
Acute cerebral symptoms	1
Asthemia	1
Beri-beri	1
Cancer	1
Consumption	1
Convulsions	2
Drowning	1
Dysentery	1
Elephantiasis	16
Gastric influenza	4
Heart disease	1
Hemiplegia	1
Hydrocephalus	1
Malignant disease	1
Malarial fever	3
Marasmus	3
Morbiscordis	2
Natural causes	33
Nephritis	1

Diseases.	Deaths.
Not specified	3
Ophthalmia and gastritis	1
Pernicious anæmia	1
Phlebitis	1
Phthisis	2
Pneumonia	5
Premature birth (asthemia)	1
Rupture	1
Senile decay	24
Suicide	1
Syphilis	9
Tubercular meningitis	1
Typhoid	3
Venereal	2

YOUNG WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

The number of women and children removed from the unhealthy surroundings of the camps and towns to various Settlements and Missions, where they would receive some care and training, was as follows:—Barambah, 61 women, 26 children; Deebing Creek, 2 women, 6 children; Hull River, 120 women, 7 children; Monamona, 59 women, 10 children; Taroom, 19 women, 4 children; Yarrabah, 26 women, 4 children.

The number of orphan children now maintained in Industrial Schools and Homes other than the Government Settlements are:—Sacred Heart Mission, Thursday Island, 19; Salvation Army Industrial Schools, Yeronga, 11; River-view, 4; Industrial School at Mapoon Mission, 3; at Deebing Creek Mission, 5.

Employment was found for any girls removed to settlements who were over school age and under marriageable age; and particulars of operations on their behalf will be found in the succeeding report on aboriginal females in service from Brisbane Office.

Permission was given for 14 aboriginal and 16 half-caste women to marry men of other nationalities, the welfare of the women being watched as closely as possible, by strict inquiry into the character and circumstances of the intended husbands, whose nationalities were as follows:—Pacific Islanders, 13; Cingalese, 3; Indians, 2; Malays, 5; Filipinos, 1; Europeans, 6. On the Settlements 18 women also entered into legal marriage with men of their own nationality, in most cases going out to service with their husbands.

In addition to the orphan children maintained at homes, quadron children, often showing little trace of aboriginal blood, are sometimes found in camps and, as soon as possible, removed. It is very desirable that such children should be as early as possible rescued from the aboriginal atmosphere and brought up by the State Children's Department as Europeans. The difficulty under the present system is to find suitable foster-mothers to receive them. Inquiries are being made as to the number of such children on reserves, eligible for removal, and the best means available for carrying out the suggestion for separating them.

No applications to adopt young aboriginal

children were granted, such practice not being sanctioned by the Acts.

Under the Commonwealth Maternity Allowances Act, half-caste (semi-white) women are eligible for that benefit; and, during the year, a large number of such women received the bonus, the Department as far as possible supervising the proper utilisation of the money.

Arrangements have now been made with the Registrar-General's Department, in addition to registering these children of half-caste women, to also register the half-caste (white) children of aboriginal women.

ABORIGINAL FEMALES AND CHILDREN, BRISBANE.

The number of girls now in service from the Brisbane Office is 121, being half-castes 97, full-bloods 24. Of these, only 47 are employed in the city or suburbs, the remaining 74 being in country situations, where it is found that conditions are healthier in every way. Agreements are renewed yearly, and practically no trouble is experienced in collecting wages, the major portion of which is banked to their credit and controlled by the Department. The total wages so collected was £1,818 0s. 10d.; and, of this, £1,447 5s. 1d. was withdrawn by the girls for clothing and other personal needs. The number of accounts now in operation is 155, with an amount to credit of £3,222 17s. 8d., averaging £20 1s. 6d. per head.

Applications were received from 154 intending employers for these servants; and, in the placing in service and supervision afterwards, 294 mistresses and 614 girls were interviewed, 100 visits of inspection were paid, 779 shopping orders were attended to or issued, and 1,180 letters inwards were attended to, necessitating 1,226 outwards.

Ninety of these girls were accommodated at the Salvation Army Women's Shelter, for various terms, while waiting or passing through to employment; and 4 were inmates of the Shelter at the end of the year.

The regular inspection by a travelling Protector has done much to improve both the conduct of the girls and conditions of employment; and very few serious complaints were received, the principal causes of such being—uncleanliness of bedroom, insufficient clothing, unsatisfactory sleeping accommodation, and insufficient wages. Threat of removal usually accomplishes the desired improvement.

Thirteen illegitimate children were born, 9 of the women being confined on the Barambah Settlement and 4 at the Salvation Army Maternity Home. A few of these were by aboriginal or half-caste fathers, who afterwards married the mothers. In 3 cases we were successful in proving paternity and obtaining maintenance from the fathers. Most of these girls have since married men of their own nationality.

TABLE 3.—RETURN SHOWING THE NUMBER AND CLASSIFICATION OF ABORIGINES ATTENDING SCHOOL DURING THE YEAR 1915.

Situation and Teacher's Salary.	Quarters of the Year.	ANROLMENT.			CLASSIFICATION.										No. of School Days.	ATTENDANCE.			
		Boys.	Girls.	Total.	Boys.				Girls.				TOTAL.			AVERAGE.			
					Infants.	I.	II.	III.	IV.	Infants.	I.	II.	III.	IV.		Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.
ISLAND SCHOOLS, TORRES STRAIT.																			
Adam Is' d (£242) ...	2	25	47	72	20	5	...	...	...	33	14	...	...	...	105	1,000	2,162	9.5	20.5
Badu Is' d (£120) ...	4	156	155	311	...	26	41	43	46	...	32	23	43	57	175	6,531	6,592	37.6	37.2
Darnley Island (£150)...	4	196	131	327	...	127	21	32	16	...	72	24	19	16	204	9,406	6,332	46	31.1
Mabuiag Island (£150)	4	94	124	218	8	61	21	5	...	7	75	32	9	...	190	4,280	5,650	22.3	29.8
Murray Island (£200)...	4	196	230	426	...	87	73	36	...	...	132	47	51	...	138	5,275	6,521	28.4	46.3
Saibai Island (£120) ..	4	117	128	245	60	34	19	4	...	60	22	38	8	...	146	3,789	4,493	25.7	30.5
Thursday Island (£150)	3	69	96	165	...	52	11	6	...	...	60	21	15	...	168	3,389	5,045	20.1	29.9
Yam Island (£120) ...	4	61	36	97	...	42	12	4	3	...	16	8	8	4	191	2,848	1,642	14.5	8.5
York Island (£120) ...	4	52	44	96	...	46	6	...	...	...	38	6	...	...	180	2,279	1,966	12.5	10.8
MISSIONS.																			
Aurukun	2	20	38	58	...	20	...	...	...	...	31	6	1	...	83	658	1,522	8	18
Cape Bedford	4	62	83	145	...	55	7	...	...	...	75	8	...	...	219	3,346	4,476	15.3	20.3
Deebing Creek	4	58	52	110	...	42	8	8	...	...	44	4	4	...	204½	2,516½	2,421½	12.2	11.7
Mapoon	4	92	138	230	...	31	31	26	4	...	12	23	31	72	205	4,137	6,961	20	34.2
Mornington Island ...	3	43	6	49	...	43	...	...	...	...	6	...	...	...	150	824	63	5.3	1
Monamona ... ..	...	7	18	25	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	16
Moa Island ... ..	...	...	...	45*	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Trubanaman	3	57	30	87	18	21	18	...	...	16	7	7	...	...	134	2,317½	1,050½	17.1	7.8
Weipa	4	73	103	176	...	61	12	...	...	...	63	20	20	...	192	2,718	4,162	14	21.7
Yarrabah	4	153	186	339	...	99	57	...	...	...	113	70	...	...	235	7,934	8,655	33.6	36.8
GOVERNMENT SETTLEMENTS.																			
Barambah (£100) ...	4	232	187	419	...	178	34	20	...	...	140	34	13	...	183½	9,118	7,275	49.6	39.5
Taroom (£84)	2	62	42	104	...	62	...	...	...	...	42	...	...	...	84	2,175	1,294	26.5	15.5

* Average attendance, 43.

TORRES STRAIT ISLANDS.

In 1914 serious allegations were made by the Government teacher at Yorke Island against a local trading firm of fraudulent dealings with a family of native fishermen, with whom they were trading, by paying them less than ruling prices for produce received and charging in excess of contemporary prices for goods purchased. The Department decided to institute a full inquiry into this matter, and also, at the same time, into certain charges by the above teacher against the local Protector and other charges by the Protector against the teacher.

These inquiries were conducted early in July by Mr. H. T. Macfarlane, J.P., the Chief Protector being present on behalf of his sub-department. Evidence was taken and reports furnished; but at the termination of the period under review the matter is still *sub judice*.

The regrettable result of these disclosures and the long delay in taking action has been a cause of serious disquietude amongst the natives of this district, making effective administration very difficult.

The following is taken from the report of the Protector at Thursday Island, Mr. W. M. Lee Bryce:—

“Population.—This year's census shows the total population of the Torres Strait Islands to be 2,410, an increase of 96 on the figures for 1914; 112 births were recorded, equivalent to 46.47 per 1,000; the deaths number 33, or 13.73 per 1,000; the corresponding rates for 1914 were 46.67 and 29.38 respectively. Curiously enough, the female births for 1915 greatly exceed those of males, the respective figures being 65 and 47.

“The following figures may be of some interest:—

	Births per 1,000.	Deaths per 1,000.
1912	.. 38.46	.. 24.10
1913	.. 31.51	.. 16.21
1914	.. 46.67	.. 29.38
1915	.. 46.47	.. 13.73

“In my last report I estimated the mainland population to be 2,700; this year, taking into consideration the probable natural increase and the death rate, the total is set down at 2,650.



Type of Coconut-leaf House—Murray Island.



Native Road—Murray Island.

Health.—The islands were remarkably free from sickness during 1915; mild epidemics of influenza and colds were experienced, but they did not cause any great anxiety. At some stations many cases of skin eruptions occurred; they were successfully treated by the use of simple remedies and insisting on frequent applications of soap and water. One of the greatest difficulties teachers experience is the disinclination of patients to attend regularly for their medicine. When matters are more settled in the Straits, I hope to induce the residents of each island to erect a small hospital, adjacent to the teacher's quarters, where the simpler cases may receive regular attention.

“On the whole the observance of sanitary rules has been fairly good, and persistent hammering in the required direction will ultimately produce the desired result. At one or two places the people are difficult to deal with, Mabuig being a notable instance. If there was a penitentiary close at hand to which individuals who persistently refuse to obey instructions could be immediately removed, the influence of the idler and the bush lawyer would soon wane and the comfort of the community be greatly advanced.

“Healthier conditions have followed the construction of well-ventilated dwellings with the floors above ground level, and built in regular order with a space of about 50 ft. between each structure; the system was initiated at Saibai about six years ago, and has been adopted as a pattern for other islands.

Schools.—There were few interruptions to attendance this year; and the work exhibited at schools I had an opportunity of visiting was in most cases encouraging. The teachers aim at a solid grounding in the elementary subjects capable of application in after life, and, while the systems differ, the results are practically similar. Close attention is paid to the personal cleanliness and appearance of the pupils, and it is unusual for them to attend in an uncared-for condition.

“The Badu school was completed and occupied during the year. It measures 60 by 24 ft., with lofty walls of grass, has a roof of galvanised iron, and is fitted with ample means of ventilation. The Department supplied stumps, flooring, and a few timber fittings; the balance was provided by the residents, who also supplied all labour for its erection. Like all native buildings, it took a long time to erect; but there is no doubt it is a source of pride to the people, and probably this example may induce other islanders to voluntarily provide suitable buildings for their children.

“At Adam and Coconut Islands, temporary native teachers are paid small salaries to instruct the children; their efforts are fairly successful, and, although the work is decidedly elementary, the youngsters are able to read, write, and do simple arithmetic. In addition to

this groundwork, they are, to a certain extent, under discipline, which is preferable to lolling about in an aimless fashion on the sand beach. Should the attempt prove reasonably successful, there will be a double benefit; it will open up a new avenue of employment to a limited number of smart boys and girls, and, at the same time, provide a practical demonstration of what we are continually endeavouring to instil into the native mind—viz., that part of our policy is to train them up so that in course of time they may be self-contained in all respects, and capable of administering their own affairs.

“At the suggestion of the teacher I arranged for a number of Hammond Island children to attend the Thursday Island school; the result is encouraging, and the regular attendance indicates a desire on the part of both parents and children to better their condition. The inspector from the Education Department has again reported very favourably on the conduct of this school.

“Repairs were effected to the teachers' dwellings at Darnley and Mabuig; but suitable school buildings are urgently needed at Darnley, Yorke, Yam, and Saibai.

Island Boats.—The returns from the 10 native boats working direct to this office are undoubtedly encouraging, but I am not satisfied with the working of some boats. A remarkable recovery was made by the ‘Cissy,’ largely due to the energy of the new captain (John Kinnell, a half-caste Stephens Islander); her returns prove beyond any doubt what can be done if the boys will only do a fair amount of work. The ‘Erub,’ ‘Masig,’ and ‘Poruma’ also show increases on the previous year's figures. The total produce won was £2,414 7s. 1d., of which £1,777 1s. 8d. was earned by the boats' crews and £637 15s. 5d. by dinghies working from shore. A feature of this year's work is the quantity of produce sold for dinghy-owners at Murray and Darnley, and locally known as ‘passenger’ fish. The teacher at Murray points out that the women are largely responsible for these good results and probably received very little for their labour, their lazy male relatives appropriating the earnings; so this system is now being inquired into. During the past two or three years the craze to possess dinghies has increased. I have refused to allow any more to go out, as they interfere with the proper workings of island boats, which were allowed to lie at anchor for months, and were only used to convey produce to Thursday Island. As a result, one was in such a shocking condition that she sank at anchor when loaded up. After repairing, I handed her over to a crew from another island, who will work her for a few years; if necessary, others will be similarly dealt with. Dinghies can only work during fine weather, and that condition is not frequent in Torres Straits. The Yam Island boat obtained £425 for a pearl, sold by me in June last, which

was found in 1914 and held over, as the prices offered here were not acceptable, and no reasonable offer could be obtained in Sydney.

"In the returns of the 11 boats working to the Papuan Industries at Badu, the year's income is slightly better than that of 1914, the respective figures being £1,558 and £1,708, though the income for 1913, when the boats were shelling, amounted to £3,200. The debt of £256 19s. at the end of 1914 has been reduced to £192 19s. These returns furnish other examples of what can be done by natives, the cutters 'Dauan' and 'Yaza' earning £280 and £229 respectively, the latter working with a crew of five. The 'Wakaid' also did good work. The Western Island boys are not accustomed to bêche-de-mer work, and it was well on in the year before I could persuade them to go out for lengthened periods. Fortunately, a good market for trochus shell was established in June, and most of the boats did fairly well at this work. The Mabuiag boats are at the bottom of the list; their efforts in this direction are on a par with those in regard to the comfort and welfare of the village, and there is little hope of improvement until we have power to deal with them in a drastic manner. Again there are a few entries in the 'debt' column, but the total is lower than last year, and, if the slackers can be induced to follow the example of the Dauan brethren, this disquieting record will disappear, as I have informed the boys who deal with the Papuan Industries Limited I will not recognise any further debts by native boats. The five boats rented from Badu earned £533 3s. 3d., enabling them to reduce the debt of £158 10s. 11d. at end of 1914 to £29 14s. 3d.

"In every respect the position shows a decided improvement, a result due mainly to the energy of Olandi, a half-caste Cocosnut Island boy.

"*Income of Torres Strait Islanders.*—During 1915 the gross earnings were as follows:—

Island boats trading to Thursday	
Island	£3,919
Island boats trading to Badu ..	1,797
Boats rented from Badu	561
Wages	3,924
	<hr/>
	£10,201

The figures for 1913 and 1914 were £9,381 and £6,891 respectively.

"*Island Funds.*—Collections amounted to £981, an increase of £235, and the expenditure totalled £803, as against £572 during 1914. The principal items of expenditure are—Repairs to boats, food, clothing, and medicines for residents of the islands. On some islands the supplies of garden food gave out very early, and teachers distributed flour, rice, and other commodities when necessary. On 31st December the credit in Government Savings Bank was £1,220.

"*Boat Insurance Fund.*—Owing to the small earnings of island boats and the high prices prevailing for necessaries of life, I did not collect any contributions on this account; it is probable the scheme will operate again during 1916. One amount of £10 was paid from the fund, and interest amounting to £3 16s. 9d. credited.

"*Patrol Vessel.*—I again draw attention to the necessity for stationing a suitable vessel here

for patrol work and to enable the teachers to be conveyed to and from the islands in some degree of comfort. The conveyance of materials, for building and repair of schools and teachers' dwellings, is a difficulty frequently presented. Occasional visits of a vessel are not sufficient, as it usually happens she is not here when most required. To obtain good results, frequent unexpected patrols are essential, and this is becoming more evident each succeeding year. A Protector in this district without means of travelling may be likened to a mounted constable in the back blocks without a horse."

RESERVES—GOVERNMENT SETTLEMENTS.

Barambah (Superintendent, B. J. T. Lipscombe).

The number of natives resident on the reserve at the end of the year was 530. There were 11 marriages, 39 births, and 43 deaths. The total number of persons supplied with rations was 128,400, being an average of 352 per day. These rations consisted of flour, sugar, tea, beef, vegetables (when obtainable), oatmeal, rice, sago, maize meal, wheatmeal, and fresh milk.

The medical staff have experienced a trying time with epidemics of typhoid, gastric influenza, dysentery, ophthalmia, diphtheric throats, and chicken pox; 957 patients receiving treatment, of which 429 were in-patients of the hospital. The visiting medical officer paid 53 visits. Great credit is due to the medical and nursing staff, some of whom are natives, for the low death rate—less than 5 per cent. More commodious hospital accommodation is now needed, and a separate institution for maternity cases. The conduct of the inmates has been good, and there has been practically no crime of any serious nature. Some of the latest arrivals from other districts have proved fractious, but they soon settle down to discipline. Very little drink has found its way on to the reserve.

Demand for aboriginal labour was steadiest in the early part of the year, and 169 agreements were executed for 198 males, 26 single females, and 25 married couples. Wages from 3s. to 30s. per week, according to age, were obtained. Care was taken before hiring out this labour to ascertain that the employees were not unfairly competing with local white labour.

The school now has over 100 scholars on the roll, and a better and more commodious building is needed. The teacher, owing to a severe illness with typhoid fever, was compelled to be absent from duty for four months.

The sales at the retail store for the year amounted to £1,805 7s. 11d., of which £570 17s. 9d. was cash paid over the counter. This enabled the natives to obtain for themselves and their families many extras in food and clothing, and provided a useful outlet for their surplus pocket moneys, to the reduction of gambling and other vices.

The herd of cattle numbers 390, the losses from pleuro, during the epidemic, being 60 head. Two extra draught horses were purchased during the year, but more are required, as some of the old ones are now practically past work.

The revenue from sales of produce, agistment of cattle, and natives' contributions, amounted to £912 10s.

Taroom (Superintendent C. A. Maxwell)

The number of natives on the Settlement at the end of the year was 233, comprising 88 male adults, 64 female adults, and 81 children; and, in addition to these, there were 27 out at employment.

Forty-seven (47) native women and children were removed here from other districts. The newcomers, with very few exceptions, soon became settled in their new home and made friends with the other natives.

There was practically no crime of a serious nature; one native, for illegally killing sheep, was dealt with in the police court. The general conduct was good, and very little drink was seen. A few new arrivals absconded and were returned. Gambling is still indulged in on the sly.

Good progress has been made in the destruction of the prickly-pear, and about 400 acres of ground has been cleared by stacking and burning. About 20 acres had been rung and the grass for stock considerably improved. Cutting and hauling stumps for new buildings, fencing, and shearing sheep also provided occupation for the natives.

The bullock team was kept very busy all the year hauling stores and timber from Juandah. The horses and dray have been fully employed hauling water from the river, also firewood for settlement purposes. The dead timber on about 70 acres of land has been felled, which has considerably opened up the Settlement, and the timber is being used for firewood by the whole camp.

Agreements were entered into for 26 males and 14 females, at wages from 4s. to 30s. per week, mostly for station work and domestic service; but the demand was not great. Wages amounting to £301 2s. 11d. were collected.

Health generally has been good, with the exception of a serious epidemic of influenza and some unpleasant after-effects which also affected the families of the officials. There were 16 marriages, 12 births, and 14 deaths. The medical officer (Dr. Neilsen) visited the Settlement monthly and at special times for any urgent cases arising.

The number of children attending school was 58 (35 boys, 23 girls); but progress was slow, as the teacher also performed the duties of nurse. A soup-kitchen provided regular meals for 25 old people, and made strengthening soup during the winter for the school children.

Though the sheep suffered in the severe drought, we were more fortunate than our neighbours. Our losses totalled 105 (ewes and lambs). Mr. Brown, of the Agricultural Department, paid a visit and gave valuable advice in the care of the sheep, the result being that very little trouble has resulted from the worms or the fly. The last shearing produced 10 bales of wool, which brought a good price. The flock now number 700, and are fast improving.

The bullock team has worked well under its capable driver, a half-caste boy, carrying stores 50 miles from the nearest railway.

Retail sales of stores amounted to £172 16s. 7d., and a large number of clothing outfits was obtained in Brisbane. The demand now justifies the building and stocking of a separate store for this purpose.

The cattle are in good condition, though we still have to purchase killers. The milch cows proved useful for the young and sick. When the back country of the reserve is enclosed, it is proposed to increase the herd for purposes of breeding our own beef requirements.

The revenue—from retail sales, wool, agistment, and native contributions—amounted to £435 12s.

New quarters for the Assistant Superintendent and a Superintendent's office were erected, but more quarters and administrative buildings are needed if the work is to be efficiently performed.

Religious services and instruction have been as often as possible supplied by the Church of England Bush Brotherhood.

Christmas was celebrated by giving the usual holidays, and providing extras in the way of luxuries, toys, &c., which the natives keenly appreciated, entering whole-heartedly into the enjoyments and sports arranged.

Hull River (Superintendent, J. M. Kenny).

The population now numbers over 400, being considerably augmented by drafts from other districts during the year. Discipline has been good in spite of the retarding influence of the numerous Chinese and kanakas, who practised all their wiles to induce the inmates to renew the old opium and morphia trading relations. Naturally, it was not to be expected that all the inmates would be proof against these temptations; but keen vigilance and a number of successful raids and prosecutions have had a good effect, and the Settlement influence is gradually but surely winning the contest, most of the absconders returning voluntarily. Some trouble has also been experienced with white employers encouraging the natives to evade the Regulations. During the year 62 natives engaged under agreement and 77 on casual employment, but the majority of the serviceable labour is profitably utilised in the development of the industrial work on the reserve.

Though the drought considerably curtailed planting, it was favourable to scrub-falling and clearing, and was taken full advantage of in this direction.

In addition to 4 acres of citrus fruit trees, 11 acres of bananas, 10 acres of pumpkins, and half an acre of sweet potatoes, which has already yielded 2 tons of food, another 25 acres is cleared and ready for planting with bananas.

In addition to this work, a new store has been erected, two stockyards and killing-pen have been built, and our reserve has been fenced and divided into two paddocks. Many of the natives have also built for themselves comfortable houses of ti-tree bark, and a fine little village is growing up.

School has been held as regularly as possible by the Superintendent's son pending appointment of a permanent teacher.

The launch has proved a valuable, useful vessel; and, after two years of rough work, having run about 2,000 miles in all weathers, the engine is still in excellent order. A large ketch has also been acquired for use as a store lighter, and proved most serviceable.

Health has been very satisfactory; but the large numbers now resident on the reserve make the early appointment of a dispensing nurse and visiting medical officer, and telephone communication with the nearest centre, very desirable.

Valuable assistance has been given by the police in the work of controlling these deportees; and the greatly improved appearance and health of the inmates are evidence of the beneficial effect of the efforts of the officers to protect them from the evils surrounding them and improve their condition.

RESERVES—CHURCH MISSIONS.

I give herewith a brief outline of progress made at each of the ten reserves under the control of various religious organisations, as shown in each report:—

Mapoon Mission (Superintendent, Rev. N. Hey).

The largest number of natives on the Mapoon Station, at Christmas or other special occasions, was a little over 300, the sexes being about equal in number. The average number who have benefited by the Mission and the ration issued was 240.

Some of the old people still prefer to roam about instead of having a fixed habitation, and very often they induce younger ones to join them. We do not think that it would be desirable to force these old warriors and derelicts into a settled life.

Conduct was uniformly good. Since the prohibition of recruiting on the Mission Reserve has been enforced, the maintenance of order and discipline has been much easier.

Divine services have always been held twice every Sunday, and were well attended and appreciated.

The natives have, in some measure, learnt the value of individual human life, a tender conscience has been awakened, and a higher view of woman and motherhood and childhood is the result.

The care and training of the young has again given great satisfaction, though it was often a heavy task upon our time and strength. The school has been maintained without a single interruption. Owing to our boarding system, the attendance was all that could be desired. The lessons have been made interesting and up to date, and, to a large extent, were of a practical nature.

A selection of articles made by the school children and adults was forwarded to the Brisbane Exhibition, and a number of prizes was won. The highest number attending school was 65.

The health of the children and half-caste population was very good. Since we were able to procure a good water supply, we have had less sickness of a dangerous kind than formerly. Amongst the full-blood adults, both in the village and camps, various forms of tubercle and venereal were again very prevalent; and the erection of an isolation camp or hospital at a suitable place is a crying need. Seven deaths and eight births have been recorded during the year.

Much has been done in trying to instil into the people the laws of health and the importance of cleanliness, but old habits are not so quickly changed as one might wish. The old people have very little *esprit de corps*, and are no help in the improvement of the nation.

The industrial part of the Mission at Mapoon, as well as at the two out-stations, has been vigorously pushed forward and a fair amount of success achieved.

Most of the capable adults are materially independent of the Mission. The Government grant is utilised entirely for the support of the children, sick, and aged.

During the off-season most of the adults are engaged in collecting *bêche-de-mer*. Thus the Co-operative Native Store has become a permanent feature in the activity of the younger generation. This store shows a turn-over of £275 16s. 7d.

Owing to the small amount of rain, the results in the gardens have not been so satisfactory as last year. Unfortunately, the prices of all foodstuffs are very high; so that we have still a very strenuous time before us.

Nevertheless, the natives of Mapoon have willingly contributed towards the Patriotic and Relief Funds, besides helping in the Red Cross.

The expenses and rations in connection with the working of the Mission amounted to £929 7s. 5d., towards which we received a Government grant of £367 10s., exclusive of teacher's salary and school requisites.

There are now only 3 neglected children in the Mapoon Industrial School, who were committed by the Benches, for whom the Government is paying 2s. 6d. a week per head.

We regret that, so far, no progress has been made towards allotment of lands to the natives in severalty. If this were done, we believe the owners would make still better progress. It is also desirable that the Mission should have, at least, a few acres to encourage further developments. Without the improvements made by the Mission, the land at the Station is of no value.

Weipa Mission (Superintendent, Rev. E. Brown).

The vital statistics show a decline in the population, the births being 6 and the deaths 8. The missionaries feel the disheartening effect of this evidence of decline, but speak hopefully of the work being done in improving the social and spiritual condition of the people, and protecting them from abuses and evils.

The war has retarded operations by reducing the purchasing value of the grants and other income.

Spiritual and education work has been carried out regularly, but at times the spiritual result has appeared slightly discouraging. On the other hand, the people are no longer satisfied with the old, evil, dirty, wandering, animal life. They appreciate the Station, which is their home, and their houses and gardens, together with the more ordered and civilised life.

The school attendance has declined from 80 to 50, with a daily average of 36, partly the

result of frequent changes of teaching staff. Two ex-pupils, now married, employed as assistants, have rendered valuable service.

Several scholars exhibited work in the Aboriginal Court at the Exhibition in Brisbane, and won a goodly number of prizes.

Health generally has been good. There is a fairly steady stream of out-patients, often afflicted with the ailments of old age and usual intestinal troubles. Severe epidemics of influenza and eye trouble visited the Mission, the latter complaint leaving some of the victims in a state of semi-blindness. The health of the staff has been good. There has been no visit of any medical officer, the institution relying on the medical knowledge of the Mission Staff.

Owing to war prices, industrial progress was retarded, through the inability to ration sufficient men to prosecute the work. Practically all available labour was absorbed in ordinary routine work of the Station.

A mile of new fencing was erected, but the work could not be continued. A well sunk to a depth of 35 ft., and on which great hopes for water were built, struck salt water.

Many of the natives make a fair showing each wet season at cultivating their own gardens, but their less industrious friends do not allow them to reap the fruits of their own labour.

The rainfall was less than usual, and the drought affected feed and water; but the cattle kept in fairly good condition.

Three white men were received and nursed through severe fever illnesses. The usual gifts of a bullock, and boxes of clothing, &c., for Christmas were received and greatly appreciated.

Aurukun (Superintendent, T. W. Holmes).

The average population of 180 was reduced by 10 deaths. There was 1 birth. The number daily drawing rations was 42.

The general health of the natives has been good. There has been no epidemic, but a few cases of malarial fever. Venereal in all stages is very prevalent, and the lack of suitable medicines makes it very difficult to cope with, whilst the dirty habits of the natives, in their camp life, is a fruitful source of spreading the disease. Medical inspection and a lock hospital are badly needed if this dreadful scourge is to be arrested.

Industrial progress was again retarded, owing to change in the staff, unfortunately rendered necessary by the serious illness of Mr. Owen's baby and his own weak state of health from repeated attacks of malaria; also, from the effects of two serious bush fires, by which one house of three rooms inhabited by the South Sea Island assistant, the vegetable garden, and nearly all the fencing were destroyed.

The work of repairing damages took some time, but it was too late to plant the garden, so that, for nine months, the Station was without vegetables of any kind. The drought has made it impossible to procure sweet potatoes; therefore there will be a shortage again this year. Cassava, maize, and pumpkins promise to yield a fair crop. Some fresh ground has been cleared

and ploughed, and during the coming year an attempt will be made to add another 10 acres.

One cottage for a young married couple has been built, and three more will require to be erected shortly. A well had to be sunk for water for drinking purposes, as the former supply (the lagoon) was found to be the bathing-place of both the natives and their dogs. A water supply, piped, is very badly needed. As it would enable about 5 acres to be irrigated, it would soon pay for its cost.

A pier has been built at the old landing, and has proved very helpful in loading and unloading cargo, as the Mission boat can come alongside.

A fence in course of erection will enclose about 320 acres of good grass ground and enable a start to be made with a few milking cows, so that eventually the long-felt need of fresh milk will be met.

The attendance at all religious services has been good.

The school has been regularly carried on, 30 scholars being on the roll. The success of the work sent to the Brisbane Exhibition was a pleasant surprise to the children, the number of prizes gained being more than they anticipated.

Mornington Island Mission (Superintendent, Rev. R. Hall).

During the year practically all the natives on the island—viz., about 200—have visited the Station and received some benefit. The majority, however, have come in only once or twice, and then only stayed two or three days. Consequently the average daily number has been small—18. This is unavoidable owing to the youth of the Station. The majority of the people have not yet realised the purpose of the Mission, and, besides, those belonging to the far end of the island are somewhat afraid of the tribe which frequents this end.

The general health has been good. We were visited by an epidemic of whooping-cough about the middle of the year. Practically every native suffered from it, and it was responsible for a number of deaths. The total deaths reported were 9 (6 males and 3 females), and the births 2 (1 male and 1 female).

School has been maintained regularly, four days a week, throughout the year, though at this early stage of the Mission we considered 2½ hours a day sufficient. There have been 21 names on the roll, but, as some of these have attended very little, the average for the year is only 7. The progress of these more regular ones has been very gratifying.

Some of the younger women, as well as the girls and boys, have been taught sewing; and the young women have been learning to do general house work.

About 2 acres of land was hoed up and planted with various crops, in small lots, for trial. The sweet potatoes and water-melons did well; but other crops were rather poor, and we got practically no return from them. We had, however, about 2 tons of sweet potatoes, and they greatly augmented our food supply.

Early in the year half a mile of wire-netting fencing was erected, enclosing 10 acres of land on which our houses are built and our cultivation done.

Another half a mile of three-wire fencing was erected to form a small paddock for our stock. Substantial stockyards and a milking and shelter shed were also erected. A second temporary dwelling-house of two rooms—one above and one below—was built for the assistant missionary and teacher. The majority of the material necessary for a substantial Mission-house has been purchased, but a start for the erection of this has not yet been made. In all the work done, the native men were employed under the missionaries' supervision, and several of the younger ones have become fairly handy with such tools as were required in that work. Some have also had training in tending stock, in milking, and in boat-sailing.

The stock now total 2 horses, 2 cows, and 20 goats. We hope to get a few more very shortly.

The Mission Staff experienced some change during the year. Mr. and Mrs. F. C. Campbell have succeeded Mr. and Mrs. Paull, who resigned, as assistant missionary and school teacher.

Trubanaman Mission (Superintendent, Mr. H. Matthews).

The year 1915 has been the worst on record, but nevertheless the Mission can claim a fair measure of progress. The rains so far have been light, but, as irrigation is now possible, the institution will not feel the lack of rain as formerly.

A new centrifugal pump capable of heaving 10,000 gallons per hour has been installed. Owing to the dry year, no returns whatever were obtained from the crops. Consequently it was not possible to receive any new inmates.

The live stock—comprising cattle, goats, and horses—are in very good condition. The cattle number about 400 head, and horses 18 head, not including 5 young foals.

The goats number about 140. Some 400 pineapples, 2 acres of potatoes, and 2 acres of cassava were planted in December, and about 5 acres of land were fallowed in readiness for cultivation this year.

There are 12 married couples at the head station, 13 at Angeram, and 4 at Koon-galara. These draw rations daily—1 lb. flour and $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. rice per head being the allowance to supplement food raised by themselves.

We find the natives do not work well single-handed, and only give them a small plot of ground for their own private use. The large areas are worked by the whole community, and the produce distributed as rations. Another hindrance to private effort is the large number of relatives; so that, if a man is sufficiently industrious to grow a quantity of food, his relatives help themselves, and he gets little or no return for his labour.

The population of the reserve is 500, and the average number drawing rations is 100.

The total rations issued were:—Flour, 20,197 lb.; sugar, 1,298 lb.; tea, 166 lb.; meat, 580 lb.; tobacco, 308 lb.; soap, 241 bars; rice, 10,307 lb.; potatoes, 298 lb.

The number attending school is 26, the average daily attendance being 23.7.

These children are not under the Industrial School Act, and are not paid for by Government.

Health on the whole has been very good. No venereal was noticed, and there were no epidemics except colds. We have not received any visit from a medical officer. The total births were 6 and deaths 3.

St. Paul's Mission, Moa Island (Superintendent, Rev. G. A. Luscombe).

The population at present is 140—75 males and 65 females. There have been 9 births—6 males and 3 females—one woman giving birth to twin females. One family of five is receiving help from the Government. The number of children attending school is 45, with an average daily attendance of 43.

The health of the people, except for a few minor ailments, has been excellent. One case of a broken arm and 1 of a poisoned foot have been treated at Thursday Island Hospital. During the year there was only 1 death—a little boy about two years of age, who wandered from his home and was found drowned.

Only 1 boy left school this year to work on the Mission boat.

A serious fire did much damage to a large number of gardens. That, together with the exceptionally dry year, has caused a shortage of food; but the people have sufficient to carry on with without seeking assistance.

Religious instruction and services have been held daily, and have been well attended.

Conduct has been good, only 5 cases being dealt with by the native court, and fines inflicted amounting to £2 3s.

Cape Bedford Mission (Superintendent, Rev. G. H. Schwarz).

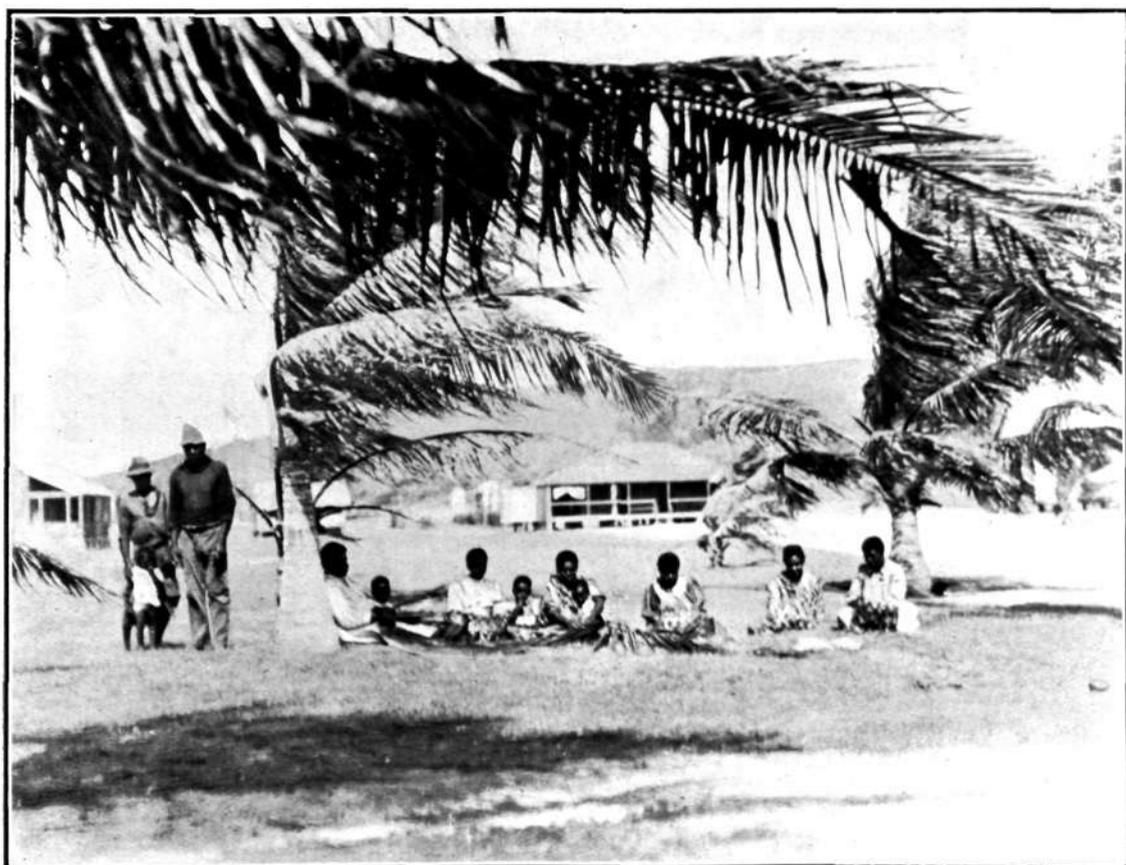
The dry weather and high prices of food-stuffs considerably interfered with progress during the past year. At McIvor River 15 acres of sweet potatoes were planted, but returned barely 25 tons in place of 60 tons anticipated, but this saved about 5 tons of flour, which now costs £23 10s. per ton. A fair amount of cassava and a large number of cocoanuts were grown, but rice and corn were almost absolute failures. Some thousands of pineapples were also used for food. Ten head of cattle, 47 pigs, and 12 Angora wethers provided the meat supply. Fish were rather scarce till about October, when a fine net was received from friends in the South.

No stock were sold during the year, owing to the drought. The last muster was 250 head, but it has been impossible to estimate our losses.

The sisal hemp sales were only £33—a most unprofitable return. The plantations were kept in order, and a further 15 acres cleared and planted with cocoanuts. To meet the threatened failure of crops and shortage of food supplies, a suitable vessel was purchased and fitted up for working in the bêche-de-mer and trochus shell



Village—St. Paul's Mission, Moa Island.



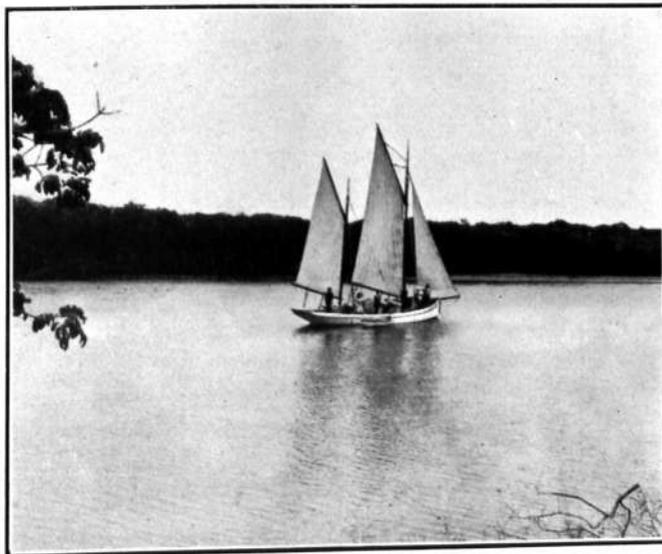
Basket-making—St. Paul's Mission, Moa Island.



Mission Compound—Trubanaman.



View of Mission—Trubanaman.



Trubanaman Mission Vessel—"Frances Pritt."



Working on Cultivation—Trubanaman.

industry. The boys are accustomed to this work, and by the end of the year had cleared the purchasing cost (£166) and had a credit balance of £35, besides in other ways supplementing the food supply—a most encouraging result.

The number of residents drawing rations was 126, and about 70 casual visitors from the coast tribes received regular relief. There were 1 birth and 3 deaths. The health generally is good, only the 3 fatal cases of consumption—one a new arrival—requiring medical attention. The school, under Mrs. Schwarz, has been regularly attended, the average daily attendance being 35.7.

Yarrabah Mission (Superintendent, Mr. S. Lyon, F.R.G.S.).

The staff consists of 8 European and 3 native officers, but there have been numerous changes owing to ill-health, and 1 officer enlisted with the Expeditionary Forces. The highest native population was 322. New arrivals gave considerable trouble, some absconding, and a batch of children from Cooktown district developing ankylostomiasis, which resulted fatally for a large number of them. Amongst people admitted during the year there were 3 births and 15 deaths; whilst amongst the old residents the births numbered 16 and deaths 4—a fact worth noting. The number of children housed in the dormitories reached 120 at one time, and stood at 102 at the end of the year.

Owing to the drought, the crops were again disappointing. The 45 acres planted at end of last year only yielded 10 bags of corn. A further 35 acres planted later on proved a total failure. Over 5,000 cabbages were planted, but scarcity of water stunted them and spoiled their selling value. Three acres of mixed vegetables and 5 acres of turnips were grown for the dormitories, and it is estimated that 50 acres of sweet potatoes and white kumala yielded about 60 tons. Twenty acres were planted under bananas, and the same area in cassava; but, to a large extent, the bananas, melons, pines, and pumpkins were ruined by the drought. This has all had a very disheartening effect upon our people.

Advantage, however, was taken of the dry weather to clear about 50 acres of fresh scrub, and stump and plough another 20 acres previously under the hoe. Seven ploughs, 1 harrow, and 1 cultivator are in regular use, and an earth scoop is being utilised for filling in the swampy parts of the head station.

A number of new buildings have been erected, including new kitchen, boys' new dormitory, matron's room, and new churches at Reeve's Creek and Bukki, mostly built of local material with Mission labour. Three hundred tons of earth have been excavated, and the old duck pond and other places in the station filled in with sand from the beach. Fencing and stone-breaking for concrete work have regularly occupied some men, and the two lads training as carpenters are now proving useful. One other lad is now being taught as blacksmith and mechanic. This enables nearly all repair work to be done on the Station.

A fine new launch was obtained in October; and the fishing ketch has been thoroughly overhauled, and has done splendid service.

The people have easily supplied their own needs by fishing, but any organised attempt to develop a fishing industry has proved a failure, and will do so until a competent white man can be placed in charge. Quite a number of dugong were caught and used for food.

Five horses died—3 by accident and 2 by sickness; but the working mares showed splendid improvement from regular dipping and washing. An early start can now be made with a herd of cows, which will be selected by the Department of Agriculture and Stock, who also made a gift of an Ayrshire bull and some Java seed rice. The herd of goats number 300, and a start was made in breeding pigs and poultry, but persistent theft has nearly killed them off.

School has been regularly held, the average attendance being 72. After reaching the third standard, more attention is paid to practical training. Better teaching accommodation is badly needed.

Failure of crops, war prices, and an increased population rendered strict economy of the insufficient income necessary, though not accomplished without some difficulty, the result of certain changes in food supplies and the necessity for increased effort on the part of the inmates toward self-support. The policy is not to spoon-feed, but to supplement individual effort and encourage industry and self-help. Some discontent occurs amongst new arrivals, some of whom have absconded; but a better spirit and discipline are gradually developing.

Monamona Mission (Superintendent, Mr. J. L. Branford).

The population is 103, showing an increase of 10 during the year; and all these draw rations. There were 8 births and 3 deaths. The sexes are about evenly divided, being 52 males and 51 females. Of the males 35 are men and 17 boys, and of the females 31 are women and 20 girls.

Although the past year has been one long drought, yet the improvements of the reserve have gone steadily forward; 75 acres of scrub land have been cut down and burned off, and maize and Rhodes grass planted; 8 acres of scrub land have been cleared up for garden purposes, and several acres of sweet potatoes put in; and 2 acres of peanuts; but on account of the dry season the crops have been light. About 2½ miles of fencing have been erected. One Mission-house, 7 natives' cottages, and a barn and wagon-shed have been built.

A team of 24 bullocks was purchased towards the end of the year, and about £50 worth of logs were carted to the Oaklands Station.

Health generally has been good, there being no sickness more than colds, with the exception of 1 case of supposed leprosy.

School has been kept through all the year. The roll shows 25 scholars (7 boys, 18 girls), the average daily attendance being 22. Steady pro-

gress has been made; and after school hours the girls have received domestic instruction. The senior girls and women are not only being taught to mend and make their own clothing, but they are making the men's shirts and trousers as well.

The improvement in the behaviour and the altered lives of some of the men during the year have been most noticeable, five having voluntarily given up the tobacco habit.

In the Superintendent's opinion there are many proofs of the civilising influence of Christian teaching in the lives of these dark people.

Deebing Creek (Superintendent, Mr. R. Morrison.)

As soon as the transfer of the Mission from Deebing Creek to the newly purchased homestead at Purga was completed, the work in the school, the religious service, and the outdoor work on the farm land began to movè along with much of the same smoothness, and with even more success than was possible in the old location.

There is still a good deal to be done by way of improvement in the circumstances of the people externally. Some new cottages and conveniences are needed, besides those which already exist, to make the Home what it ought and might be. But the Committee has not yet the money of its own to spend, and it is not the time when much can be expected from other sources; for, although able to use several tons of English and sweet potatoes, pumpkins, and melons, with other vegetables, for food, as well as to dispose of over £106 worth of stock and produce, to aid in the maintenance of the people, yet it did not by any means fulfil what was required, and, but for the drought, what it was expected to realise. But the drought came and the Mission had to share in its losses, both in crops and cattle, and is now looking forward to the better times which, it is hoped, will enable the present deficit to be met.

The religious services and Sabbath school have been continued, and their influence is making itself manifest in the lives of both old and young. They cannot be expected to be faultless. They are men and women and boys and girls who have had, and still have, many disadvantages to contend with, both in heredity and environment, and yet only three times during the year had the Committee to take any action because of misconduct or breach of Home rules. Two of those thus visited had only lately been sent to the Home, and had no idea of living under any disciplinary system.

Beside the usual Sabbath services, other meetings have been held, at all of which the attendance has been good and the conduct exemplary. The work in the day school is faithfully carried out by the teacher, and has been commended by the Government Inspector, and gives the Committee every satisfaction.

The general health of the people has been good. There has been no epidemic. Two infants, 1 boy, and 1 old man died, all of whom came to the Home in a sick and suffering condition, save 1 baby born at the Home.

The number of persons under the care of the Mission, as reported each month, has been

from 103 to 80, giving an average of 96 per month for the year.

Several entertainments were provided by various friends. There have been a good many visitors besides the members of Committee during the year. It is hoped that the time will soon come when, with favourable seasons, the institution will be able to make it a clear witness as to what can be done with the long-despised and neglected natives, and what they can become and do for themselves.

There are now about 20 acres under cultivation, and another 20 which can be cultivated as opportunity occurs. Unfortunately, one whole crop of corn and lucerne was lost, and 1 mare and 1 foal, 8 cows, 4 calves, and 6 pigs died; yet, much as that meant to the institution, these losses were not anything like so great as those borne by farmers round about the Home, because of the store of food prepared and the sinking of a well in one of the fields, which did much to save the rest of the Mission stock.

The receipts from all sources amounted to £398, and the expenditure £460. The stock comprises 19 horses, 38 cattle, and 2 pigs (all valued at £359), and plant worth £100. The value of home improvement work was also £100.

ABORIGINAL PROTECTION PROPERTY ACCOUNT.

The following statement shows the receipts and disbursements of deceased aboriginals' estates and other unclaimed moneys which, by Regulation 14 of 1904, can only be utilised for the benefit of aboriginals.

A balance of £140 (due to complete a loan of £450 authorised by the Hon. the Minister last year) was paid, as well as an additional advance of £30 for the Torres Strait Island Boat Fund; and, later on, a further sum of £174 3s. 9d. was loaned to redeem advances made on shell by the Papuan Industries Ltd.; £200 was granted towards the cost of the removal of Deebing Creek Mission to a much more suitable site on the newly-purchased farm at Purga, adjoining the old Mission cultivation.

The Public Service and other Patriotic Displays involved expenditure for clothing for the aboriginals, which was of use for issue afterwards. In accordance with the usual practice, the accumulated interests on the joint savings bank accounts of Barambah and Taroom natives were expended in Christmas extras and gifts:—

<i>Receipts.</i>		£	s.	d.
Balance, 31st December, 1914		1,160	0	0
Estates of deceased Aborigines		891	1	0
Refund for cost of Clothing supplied		11	16	0
Interest, Barambah Joint Account		77	12	1
Interest, Taroom Joint Account		12	11	9
Wages of deserters		37	19	0
Subscriptions from Exhibition Visitors		10	7	0
Refund of Loans—Torres Strait Natives		137	0	0
Balance, Cross Estate administered		34	17	2
Refund Railway Fares, &c.		5	17	7
Refund Returned Cheque		15	0	0
Transfer Estates Natives Removed		9	17	3
Transfer Accumulated Wages of Native Trackers		62	15	1
		£2,466 13 11		

<i>Disbursements.</i>		£	s.	d.
Loans—				
Torres Strait Natives, £140 0 0				
Balance of £450				
Additional Loan .. 30 0 0				
To Redeem Advance made 174 3 9				
by Papuan Industries				
		344	3	9
Temporary Loan Advance Account ..		35	0	0
Estates of deceased Aboriginals transferred to Relatives		121	3	3
Patriotic Displays—Clothing		15	14	0
Burial Expenses of Natives		27	10	0
Clothing Outfits—Girls		38	18	11
Clothing Outfits—Boys		4	11	10
Grant Deebing Creek for Removal of Mission		200	0	0
Barambah Interest Account		45	7	5
Taroom Interest Account		6	6	0
Exhibition Prizes, 1914		20	9	0
Exhibition Prizes, 1915		29	13	0
Exhibition Expenses		6	12	9
Various Refunds		35	19	9
Proceeds Exhibition Sales		3	19	3
Cross Estate to Legates		34	17	2
Purchase Curios for Panama Exposition		6	18	8
Balance, 31st December, 1915		1,489	9	2
		£2,466	13	11

COMPARISON OF EXPENDITURE ON ABORIGINALS BY VARIOUS STATES.

State.	Estimated Native Population.	Amount. £
Queensland	*15,000	22,877
New South Wales	6,580	24,905
Northern Territory	*3,000	..
South Australia	4,842	8,262
Victoria	283	4,228
West Australia	*32,000	32,010

* Approximate.

The revenue collected from all sources, not including refunds received, amounted to £3,173 6s. 7d.

The number of letters registered and dealt with, not counting returns, &c., was 3,981.

Yours obediently,

J. W. BLEAKLEY,

Chief Protector of Aboriginals.

Price, 1s. 6d.]

By Authority: ANTHONY JAMES CUMMING, Government Printer, Brisbane.

Annual report of the Chief Protector of Aboriginals for the year 1915
Corporate Author: Queensland, Chief Protector of Aboriginals

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