

1926.
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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, and Diamantina Hospital for Chronic Diseases (South Brisbane).

PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT BY COMMAND.

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

Home Secretary's Department,
Brisbane, 15th September, 1926.

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 (Medical Superintendent, Dr. J. Booth-Clarkson).
 INEBRIATE INSTITUTION, DUNWICH (Medical Superintendent, Dr. J. Booth-Clarkson).
 JUBILEE SANATORIUM FOR CONSUMPTIVES, DALBY (Visiting Medical Officer, Dr. Wm. H. Jamison ;
 Superintendent, Miss M. Nutt).
 WESTWOOD SANATORIUM (Visiting Medical Officer, Dr. D. P. O'Brien ; Superintendent, Miss M. Scully).
 GOVERNMENT RELIEF (Officer in Charge, D. A. Hogan).
 HOME FOR EPILEPTICS (WILLOWBURN) ; Miss M. Conway.
 PRISONS (Comptroller-General, A. T. Peirson).
 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, 1925.

POPULATION.

As no census was taken of the aboriginal population last year, the estimate will differ little from 1924, allowing for the deaths (310) and births (303) reported, the total is only reduced by 7 to 17,907.

The 1924 enumeration showed 15,075 full-bloods, being 8,606 males and 6,469 females. The half-castes numbered 2,839, being 1,624 males and 1,215 females.

LABOUR CONDITIONS ON LAND.

The demand for aboriginal labour was generally good, but fell off in a few districts owing to the drought conditions.

In some scattered districts, where the dry conditions made police patrols difficult, cases of illegal employment were reported and some prosecutions resulted. Natives, engaged as stockmen only, were improperly used in droving work, and in some cases substantial arrears of extra pay were collected.

Though many of them are excellent stockmen, able to compete with anyone, the less civilised native will sometimes leave suddenly for a spell or walk about at an inconvenient time. In districts where game is plentiful it is at times difficult to persuade them to accept employment, and then, as a rule, they prefer stock work before agriculture or dairying.

There is always a keen demand, however, for female domestic servants. The reports generally show that the regulations were satisfactorily observed, and there was little complaint as to behaviour of the employees.

The total number of natives engaged under agreement was 2,340 (1,770 males and 570 females), and permits were issued for casual employment for 864 males and 573 females.

One new protectorate was created at Mossman. Sixty-seven men were engaged as trackers by the Police Department, and 2 by the Victorian Police.

LABOUR CONDITIONS ON BOATS.

All aboriginal labour offering during the year was readily absorbed in the pearlshell and beche-de-mer fishing industry. Last year the monthly wages rates of aboriginal employees on boats was increased from £3 to £3 15s. for Torres Strait islanders, and from £1 15s. to £2 5s. for mainlanders.

The proposed regulations governing the employment of aboriginals in this industry will considerably better their working conditions. Provision is made for the issue of a blanket annually to every employee, the payment of overtime for work performed on Sunday, and for more stringent regulation of supply of food, accommodation, medicine, &c.

The behaviour of all aboriginals in employment has been satisfactory.

The engagements of native seamen at Thursday Island numbered 344, and 220 islanders and

108 mainlanders were discharged at the shipping office. The wages earned amounted to £3,478, of which the islanders received £2,582 and the mainlanders £891.

In addition to the above, 350 islanders worked their tribal boats, and earned £19,842, a decrease of £649 on the previous year. The result cannot be regarded as unsatisfactory; quite the reverse, as 1924 was an extraordinarily successful year.

At Cooktown, 84 natives were engaged on the fishing fleet, earning £1,511; while 15 men were engaged from the Palm Island Settlement.

INSURANCE AND COMPENSATION.

With their usual courtesy the State Insurance Commissioner and his Claims Department have co-operated with this Department in arriving at a fair settlement of the various claims submitted to them.

During the year seventeen claims were made under the Workers' Compensation Act, and £377 compensation was received.

The payment in each case was made through this office, and the local Protectors of the districts controlled the use of the money for the injured natives' benefit.

ABORIGINAL TRUST ACCOUNTS.

The following return gives the transactions of 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:—

—	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	447	5,415	4	7	376	2	7	167	15	7	6,197	14	7	4,308	3	2
Palm Island	510	2,807	3	3	650	10	10	221	18	9	4,078	6	8	5,517	10	8
Taroom	216	3,165	14	4	138	17	1	44	12	3	2,175	5	3	2,299	18	5
Brisbane	117	2,937	12	7	321	15	1	168	13	11	2,500	2	5	5,605	8	8
Various Protectors ..	5,179	78,320	6	5	15,579	10	10	7,899	11	8	60,297	10	10	250,459	1	1
Totals	6,469	92,646	1	2	17,066	16	5	8,502	12	2	75,248	19	9	268,190	2	0

The decrease in the total number of accounts is due to the fact that during the past year a number of inoperative accounts, mostly of small sums, have been closed and the balances transferred to a trust account at the Head Office. The average individual credit has consequently increased from £33 to £41.

There is a slight decrease, however, in the amount deposited, but the amount of withdrawals has increased, indicating that the native owners are enjoying in a greater degree the benefits of their savings.

Contributions to the Provident Fund amounted to £1,724, and there is now a balance of £13,789, of which £8,000 is invested in Treasury Loan Inscribed Stock at 5½ per cent.

ABORIGINAL KETCH "MELBIDIR."

This vessel is still practically out of commission, and during the twelve months only ran 322 miles, being on short trips in smooth water.

Most of the work of patrol had to be performed by the hired vessel "Goodwill," which travelled 1,950 miles on departmental business.

Much more work could have been done had a suitable vessel in place of the "Melbidir" been provided.

The master has, during the time not engaged in patrol work, been well occupied attending to the examination, refitting, and repairing of the thirty-one island fishing vessels that work under the control of the Protector. This supervision has resulted in considerable economy in cost of overhauls and reprovisioning, and has also ensured that all vessels have been thoroughly and profitably worked.

The Marine Department are at present negotiating for the purchase of a suitable vessel to replace the "Melbidir."

REMOVAL AND RECOGNISANCES.

Bonds were entered into for the return of fifty-six aboriginals, who were temporarily removed by employers, and twelve permits for the transfer of natives to other districts were granted.

In no instance was it necessary to take action to estreat any of these undertakings.

FOOD AND OTHER RELIEF.

Regular relief rations amounting to £1,678 were issued from twenty-eight centres, in monthly or weekly allowances, according to the natives' needs.

Casual relief amounting to £159 was also issued where needed. This relief is only granted to the natives not eligible for benefits from the Provident Fund.

Numbers of the districts report that native game and foods are plentiful, and where such conditions exist the natives are not very eager to accept employment.

BLANKETS.

The number of blankets issued was 3,947, and, following the usual custom, dresses, trousers, shirts, tent-flies, tobacco, print, fishing lines and hooks, &c., were also distributed.

The cost of this issue was £3,485, and the freight and handling charges £135.

The purchase and despatch of these goods was arranged through the State Stores, and distributed to the various centres in time for winter needs.

OFFENCES AGAINST AND BY ABORIGINALS.

The following comparative tables of prosecutions for the past three years are self-explanatory:—

OFFENCES AGAINST ABORIGINALS.

Offences.	1923.		1924.		1925.	
	No.	Fines.	No.	Fines.	No.	Fines.
Possession of opium ..	16	£ 204	18	£ 310	35	£ 649
Supplying liquor ..	9	137	12	220	10	192
Harbouring ..	1	1	2	30	6	17½
Illegally employing ..	2	14	9	17	17	95

There has been a large increase in the number of convictions for being found in possession of opium, also for the illegal employment of aboriginals. The majority of convictions in the latter cases were in the Northern sugar districts, where employers have been in the habit of putting natives on sugar-cane work, after engaging them for other purposes, on a lower rate of wages.

Of the opium prosecutions 7 occurred at Gordonvale, 9 at Atherton, 4 each at Innisfail and Toowoomba, and the remainder at Cairns (2), Bowen (2), Mackay (2), Port Douglas (1), Cunnamulla (1), and Yungaburra (1).

OFFENCES BY ABORIGINALS.

Offences.	1923.	1924.	1925.
Murder .. .. .	..	1	..
Drunkenness	20	35	28
Stealing	3	4	6
Entering premises ..	1	4	2
Desertion from reserves	2	2	1
Obscene language ..	2	2	7
Assault	1	6	4
Immoral offences ..	2	1	1
Deserting ship .. ..	..	1	1
Resisting arrest ..	..	2	1
Destruction of Property	..	1	2
Creating disturbance	..	..	1
Concealment of birth	..	..	1
False pretences ..	..	..	1
Receiving stolen goods	..	..	1

REMOVALS.

The following statement 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 ..	5	5	1	11
Palm Island ..	26	13	8	47
Taroom ..	4	3	3	10
<i>Missions—</i>				
Yarrabah ..	9	7	3	10
Mapoon ..	1	3	..	4
Purga ..	..	..	4	4
	45	31	19	95

HEALTH.

Health generally has been good. Outbreaks of measles occurred at Gayndah, Barambah, and Taroom, followed by several cases of pneumonia.

An epidemic of sore eyes visited the Mapoon Mission, and scabies broke out in Camooweal camps and on Palm Island.

Influenza occurred at Springsure, Clermont, Birdsville, Boulia, Normanton, Mapoon, Mornington Island, Yarrabah, and Taroom. Malaria and severe colds are usual in the wet season in the Gulf country, and tuberculosis is causing some anxiety by its apparent increase amongst the myall tribes.

The missions are still persevering with the treatment of hookworm, and report that this disease, once widespread, is showing gratifying signs of early eradication.

Venereal disease is still prevalent in the Gulf and East Coast districts. Those found infected in the latter were treated by the Government Medical Officer in the compound established in the old Cooktown Gaol, who examined 13 cases, treated 7 for syphilis, and discovered 1 leper. The Normanton Hospital treated 17 cases from the Gulf districts. Five cases were also treated in Thursday Island Seamen's Hospital. Most of the missions treated a few cases; but Cape Bedford claims to be quite free of this scourge. Odd cases were reported at Augathella, Charleville, Croydon, Ingham, and Innisfail, and Townsville Hospital treated 38 cases, several being from Palm Island Settlement.

A site for a venereal diseases hospital has now been chosen at Fantome Island, close to the Palm Island Settlement, and plans and estimates prepared with a view to commencing the building of necessary accommodation.

The erection of an up-to-date general hospital at the Palm Island Settlement is also now proceeding, and it is hoped to make an early appointment of a resident medical officer in charge of the settlement and lock hospital work.

At the Barambah Settlement Hospital 857 natives, including 326 inpatients, were treated; and at the Taroom Settlement institution the cases numbered 311, including 57 inpatients.

The various mission stations did valuable work in giving treatment to those needing it amongst their inmates, and also the large neighbouring tribes.

The number of natives receiving treatment at district hospitals was 655, of which 85 passed through the Torres Strait Seamen's Hospital, 25 through Rockhampton General Hospital, and 13 through the Brisbane Hospital.

During the year 310 deaths were reported, including 93 on the settlements, 119 in Torres Strait, and 98 in various districts. For the same period the number of births was 303.

YOUNG WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

A rearrangement of work allowed the Female Protector in Brisbane to be relieved of portion of the shopping duties, thus enabling her to make more inspections of girls in service, but this had to be confined to the city and easily accessible neighbouring districts. It was not possible for her to visit the distant country situations, and so whenever complaints or troubles arose the local Protectors' services had to be depended upon. Doubtless most of such troubles could have been prevented if a female officer of experience had been able to visit and inspect the situation.

The conduct of the girls was generally very satisfactory when their almost friendless position is taken into consideration. Whatever trouble they gave was mostly brewed by unsuitable white friends they made outside inciting them to rebellion against control and giving them bad advice, principally as to dodges for breaking agreement. The majority, especially of the full-bloods, were well behaved and content.

The Savings Bank accounts number 104, with a total credit of £4,936 15s. 9d. and average credit of £47.

The wages collected amounted to £2,710, and the sum of £2,372 was withdrawn and expended, under supervision, for clothing, holidays, dentistry, &c.

Of the 94 girls under agreement from this office 31 are in town situations, the policy being to keep them employed as far as possible in the country, where the life is more suitable and healthy.

It was necessary to remove 21 women and 12 children to the settlements, and 10 women and 7 children to the missions, owing to reports of unsatisfactory conduct and conditions, thus ensuring their receiving better care and protection.

Maternity bonuses were received by 35 European half-caste women, the money usually being paid through the local Protector, who controlled the disbursement of it for the benefit of the mother and child.

Permission was granted for 17 legal marriages of aboriginal and half-caste women, 11 being to men of their own race, 3 Asiatic half-castes to men of Malay extraction, and 3 who were nearly white to men of European descent.

The number of orphans in homes was 58, as shown in the following return, the cost of their maintenance being £915:—

Sacred Heart Mission, Thursday Island	20
Mapoon Mission	6
Salvation Army Industrial Schools—	
Yeronga and Chelmer (girls)	13
Riverview and Indooroopilly (boys)	7
Purga (girls and boys)	12
	58

HALF-CASTES.

Applications were received from 68 half-castes for exemption from the Aboriginal Protection Acts.

After making inquiry into the circumstances of each applicant, only 19 (18 males and 1 female) of these were granted this privilege, the remainder, because of being married to, living, or associating with aboriginals, lack of education or business ability, being considered ineligible or unfit to be given control of their own affairs.

Two certificates, previously granted, were revoked, the holders forfeiting them by reverting to type.

RESERVES.

Settlements were visited for inspection and direction of the work as often as was practicable.

The Honourable the Minister made an inspection of the settlement at Palm Island and of the neighbouring island of Fantome. On the latter it was decided to establish a lock hospital for aboriginals, and a progressive scheme for development of the Palm Island Settlement village was also considered and approved. He also visited the missions at Yarrabah and Monamona.

Palm Island and Monamona had not previously received a Ministerial visit, and Yarrabah had not been so visited for some years.

The Minister also attended the annual sports and show of the Barambah Settlement, and in October arranged a visit by a Parliamentary party to this institution, when the new Girls' Industrial Home was officially opened as "The Stopford Home for Aboriginal Girls," and a complete inspection made of all the activities of the settlement.

At each of the reserves visited the hearty welcome and interesting entertainment given by the inmates showed the pleasure and gratification felt by them at this evidence of official interest in their welfare.

TORRES STRAIT ISLANDS AND CAPE YORK PENINSULA.

In his report the Protector at Thursday Island gives the following information:—

Health.—On the whole this has been very satisfactory. The usual mild outbreaks of influenza have occurred, and were successfully checked by treatment from Thursday Island. A new system, ensuring more efficient treatment of sickness on the islands, is being prepared by the Government Medical Officer, and it is hoped will be in operation during the coming year.

Population.—According to the returns, the population of the islands is 3,040—810 men, 701 women, 835 boys, and 694 girls. The births numbered 101 (67 males and 34 females); and the deaths 39 (20 men, 14 women, and 5 children).

A comparison of the figures with those of the previous year shows appreciable increases, convincing evidence that the native races of Torres Strait are not dying out.

Schools.—The Government teachers all report fairly satisfactory progress. An inspector from the Public Instruction Department visited the schools and conducted the usual examination. As a result a revised syllabus, more in keeping with

native mentality and conditions of life, has been drawn up for use, mainly in the schools conducted by native teachers.

The schools conducted by white teachers, however, have also been supplied with this syllabus, which will undoubtedly be found of assistance in arranging their work. A new series of junior reading books, with subjects more familiar and applicable to native life, are being published.

At Mabuiaig Island extensive repairs to the teacher's quarters were carried out by a native carpenter. At Saibai and Badu minor repairs were effected, and at Yam the quarters have been put into good order. The only quarters now in bad condition are those at Murray. All others may now be regarded as in a fairly satisfactory condition.

A new school is in course of erection at Poid, and one at Saibai is practically completed. A new school, on concrete blocks, has also been commenced at Darnley. All these buildings are having hardwood floors and iron roof, with grass sides, a decided improvement on the old thatch buildings. Repairs have been effected to the buildings at Badu and Mabuiaig, and similar improvements are intended at Yorke. The new school erected at Stephens is now being used.

Island Funds.—The statement of the island funds at the end of the year showed a balance to credit of £4,281. This amount, together with the sum of £2,044 on loan, gives a total credit of £6,300. This represents a decrease on last year's figures of approximately £700, consequent on a necessary increase of the total amount on loan to company boats, for extensive repairs, and large expenditure on village improvements, making a heavy drain upon the funds.

Island Company Boats.—It is most gratifying to report that this year has been a very successful one in the working of the native-owned boats. Produce to the value of £19,842 was won and disposed of. Though this is a decrease of £649, it is not due to any slacking off of the boats working, as 1924 was an unusually successful year. Some of the boats are in debt, but, in every instance, it is the result of their having incurred necessary expenditure for repairs on the slip. Ten boats slipped last year were in a position to pay either the whole or part of the cost. All of the boats are now in good condition. A new cutter has been built for Cocomanut Island to replace a vessel past repair, and should pay her cost in the course of a few years.

The price of pearlshell was very uncertain, consequently many boats which usually work pearlshell were compelled to take up trochus fishing. The latter commodity always commanded a good price, but the pearlshell boats were handicapped in being new to the work. Despite this difficulty, most of the boats made good individual catches.

The following figures will give some idea of the growth of the native company boats business since 1912:—

	£
1912	3,895
1915	6,277
1919	12,987
1921	12,919
1924	20,491
1925	19,842

The following figures from the boats returns of catches for 1923, 1924, and 1925 will be sufficient to show that with fair prices and favourable working conditions they can make a success of their boats:—

	1923.	1924.	1925.
	£	£	£
"Sissy" ..	573	1,236	1,609
"Don" ..	241	1,308	1,233
"Caroline" ..	413	723	798
"Erub" ..	192	804	673

The boats belonging to the half-caste family, Mosby Brothers, have also had a successful year. Both of their cutters are now in a good financial position, having paid a dividend last year, and will commence the ensuing year with a credit balance of £200 each. The small whaleboat belonging to this firm is also free of debt.

The "Fly" and "Cherrie," two small vessels worked by mainlanders, accounted for £616, an increase over last year of £139.

General.—The number of Savings Bank accounts in operation was 1,050, an increase of 95. The earnings banked were £11,925, and the withdrawals £11,165, the balance being £15,268, which earned £424 interest.

There is no distress anywhere. The usual free issue of clothing, tobacco, &c., was made to the councillors and police, and fifty blankets given to mainlanders.

Thirty persons are in receipt of permanent relief, being in all cases old people having no relatives or unable to work. Six persons are receiving relief from the Government Relief Department, six are receiving pensions of £1 per month from the Aboriginal Department, and fifty-one are in receipt of relief or small pensions from the various islands funds.

The mission station established at the Lockhart River by the Church of England is steadily progressing, and an increasing number of aboriginals are voluntarily taking up residence there. Its beneficent influence is now being felt in the checking of abuses in the recruiting and employment on the East Coast.

Patrol.—During the year the Protector travelled 1,096 miles on patrol duty, but much more could have been done had a suitable vessel been stationed there. Closer personal attention could with benefit be given to such work as the erection and repair of schools and quarters, general island improvement, and administration.

GOVERNMENT SETTLEMENTS.

Barambah (Superintendent, W. Porteous Semple).

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

Taroom (Superintendent, H. C. Colledge).

Labour.—The demand for male labour during the year was fair, being most keen for married couples and domestics, and the number available was not nearly sufficient. The engagement of natives from Palm Island for sugar farms had to be refused, owing to the practice of exploiting them at other work than that engaged for.

Fifteen men were signed on to fishing vessels from the Palm Island Settlement.

The number of engagements entered into was—

Barambah 958, including 800 casual jobs.

Palm Island 110, including 8 casual jobs.

Taroom 126, including 10 casual jobs.

The sum of £16,500 was earned in wages, and of this £11,388 was paid into the natives' bank accounts for the benefit of themselves and their relatives on the settlements.

Settlement Revenues.

	Barambah.	Palm Island.	Taroom.
	£	£	£
Collections—			
Wages, fares, produce, &c.	6,111	2,807	3,235
Interest on bank accounts	167	221	44
Native contributions ..	181	278	255
	6,459	3,306	3,534

Population.

	Full-bloods		Half-castes
Barambah	659	395	264
Palm Island	737	605	132
Taroom	265	133	132

Crime.—The conduct of the inmates on each settlement has, on the whole, been satisfactory, only three serious cases arising which needed Police Court proceedings.

All the minor cases, principally caused through jealousy and gambling quarrels, are dealt with by the officials or by the native courts. It is claimed at Palm Island that gambling has been completely suppressed.

Retail Stores.—The business transacted at the settlement stores is shown in the following table. These stores enable the inmates to augment their food supplies, purchase clothing, &c., from their bank account, thus ensuring sensible buying, fair value, and protection in trading. The profits are used for settlement development work:—

Settlement.	Cash Sales.	Bank Orders.	Free Issues.	Total.
	£	£	£	£
Barambah ..	541	4,218	551	5,310
Palm Island ..	548	4,357	218	5,123
Taroom ..	1,048	1,032	170	2,300
				£12,733

Schools.—At Barambah the staff consists of a head teacher and two white assistants, and excellent progress has been made, especially in the manual training branches. This has been greatly facilitated by the provision of an up-to-date school building, containing proper accommodation and conveniences for effective work.

At Taroom the school is still being carried on in the old building, but good work under difficulties has been done by the teacher. No action could be taken with regard to the erection of a new school owing to the anticipated change of settlement sites.

The native teacher still carries on the school of eighty-five children at Palm Island, though a white teacher will be appointed early in the

coming year. Very creditable results, however, have been obtained by this native, with some guidance from the correspondence training department.

Inspections were made of the Barambah and Taroom schools by the Department of Public Instruction inspectors, and good reports obtained.

Industrial and Agricultural.—At Barambah the sawmill was kept busy cutting timber for the various buildings in course of erection. From the farms 14 acres of wheat, 6 acres of lucerne, and 18 acres of oats were harvested, while the 3 acres planted with potatoes produced over 6 tons, which were issued as an extra ration to the inmates. The farm overseer is getting good results with his work. The crops grown by him included millet 2 acres, maize 275 bushels, lucerne hay 25 tons, sweet potatoes 3½ tons, tomatoes 2½ tons, pumpkins 1½ tons, green peas 1,392 lb., as well as keeping up a good supply of vegetables. Sixty tons of fodder was also cut and fed to the stock.

At Palm Island, owing to having a very dry year, very little produce was grown on the farm. The usual crops of pumpkins, sweet potatoes, &c., were raised, while 4,000 pineapples and 800 bunches of bananas were used for food.

At Taroom farming operations have been fairly successful, when compared with previous years. Good crops of cotton and potatoes were secured, and the sale of the former brought £128. The sawbench has been kept going, and a good deal of useful timber cut and used for general building work.

Stock.—At Barambah the acquisition of the Cherborough Reserve for grazing purposes enabled the Superintendent to sustain his stock over the very dry and trying winter, and few losses were experienced.

During the year 5 Hereford herd bulls and 77 young Hereford breeders were added to the herd. The season's branding of 190 calves was a record, in comparison with 89 in the previous year. The muster at the end of the year showed that there were 927 cattle on the place. Some of the Ayrshire stud cattle won prizes at the local show. The milk supply was well maintained for the hospital and for the old people and children, 4,370 gallons being issued.

The Palm Island stock has not increased since last year, but arrangements have now been made to augment the herd, also for the purchase of a bullock team.

The quality of the stock at Taroom has been greatly improved by the introduction of a number of well-bred bulls, and they are doing well. The herd, which now numbers 446, provided 51 beasts for beef, and 130 calves were branded.

Building and Village Development.—A large two-storied building, with dormitories, work-rooms, kitchens, &c., has been provided for single girls at Barambah. This was opened by the Home Secretary in October, and named "Stopford Home." A comfortable cottage for the nurses has also been completed, and a start made with new offices and quarters for the Superintendent. Three cottages have also been added to the native village and occupied by suitable families.

The old unsightly buildings have been demolished as larger and more modern accommodation has replaced them on a proper village plan, thus improving the appearance of the village. A large number of ornamental trees have been planted and all new buildings enclosed with neat sawn fences.

At Palm Island a new barn was erected entirely by native labour, while culverts and bridges were built to connect the new land under cultivation with the main settlement.

An up-to-date hospital is being erected by the building staff, also a sawmilling plant, which should be ready early in the coming year.

It has not been possible to do any important building work at Taroom owing to the expectation of removing to a fresh site. A useful extra hospital ward, however, was erected by native labour from timber milled on the place.

Social Improvement.—Despite the retarding influence the regular introduction of more or less degraded characters from the outside districts must have upon social progress, the tone of village life is decidedly improving. The desire for better and more civilised conditions of living plainly exists, as shown by the keen competition for the more modern cottages as they become available. Contrary to prediction, this uplifting influence seems to be proof in most cases against the old-time superstitions. The man who has improved a little home and cultivated his garden plot feels that he has a stake in the community, and is loth to leave it.

The example of the industrious or more refined ones also makes itself felt as a spur to the backward members.

Religious Instruction.—Church of England services were held regularly at Barambah in the old school building, and regular visits were also paid by the local Salvation Army and the lady members of the Australian Inland Mission.

At Palm Island the Church of England chaplain from the Yarrabah Mission paid monthly visits, and the Australian Inland Missionaries are regular visitors.

The Bush Brotherhood have continued their ministrations to the Taroom Settlement, and the nurse also held regular services and Sunday school. The Australian Inland Missionaries are also regular visitors there.

Recreations.—At each of the three settlements football, tennis, and cricket are favourite recreations, and sports material has been provided, mostly from funds raised by themselves. Friendly matches with neighbouring clubs have been allowed, and the natives more than hold their own in these contests. The corroborees are a never failing source of amusement, as also are European dances.

Sports have been held at Barambah and Taroom with great success, the proceeds being banked in a sports fund and expended under the supervision of their own committees.

The usual Christmas festivities were held and suitable gifts provided. A week's round of amusements were held. These functions are eagerly looked forward to and heartily indulged in.

Brass bands were formed at Barambah and Palm Island. The members show great interest, and have made most creditable progress. The

whole of the instruments were purchased from funds raised by themselves from concerts and sports held.

MISSIONS.

- Yarrabah, Cairns (Superintendent, W. McCulloch), Anglican.
 Monamona, Cairns (Superintendent, J. L. Branford), Seventh Day Adventists.
 Cape Bedford, Cooktown (Superintendent, Rev. G. H. Schwarz), Lutheran.
 Lockhart River, Cape York Peninsula (Superintendent, H. Rowan), Anglican.
 Moa Island, Torres Strait (Superintendent, Rev. J. W. Schomberg), Anglican.
 Mornington Island, Gulf of Carpentaria (Superintendent, J. Chapman), Anglican.
 Mapoon, Gulf of Carpentaria (Superintendent, Rev. J. B. Love, M.A., M.C., D.C.M.), Presbyterian.
 Weipa, Gulf of Carpentaria (Superintendent, H. Mayer), Presbyterian.
 Aurukun, Gulf of Carpentaria (Superintendent, Rev. W. F. McKenzie), Presbyterian.
 Mitchell River, Gulf of Carpentaria (Superintendent, J. Chapman), Anglican.
 Purga, Ipswich (Superintendent, Commandant W. Perrem), Salvation Army.

Conduct.—All mission stations report excellent conduct on the part of the natives, largely due to the great assistance given by the native councillors. The natives are usually more ready to bring their troubles to the councillors, as they have less diffidence in speaking to them, and are thus able to express themselves more freely. They invariably obey the decisions unquestioningly.

There was, however, some serious tribal fighting amongst the uncivilised tribes south of the Aurukun Reserve, necessitating some arrests.

Religious Training.—Great interest is taken by the inmates in the religious services, which are well attended, and each station emphasises the fact of the great influence this has on the general wellbeing and behaviour. Crime is practically unknown, and it is said that the conduct of these half-civilised people would more than favourably compare with that of any similar institutions of white people.

Some of the inmates take a leading part in the services, and many have qualified for admission as church members.

At St. Paul's Mission College, Moa Island, two more natives have been ordained to the priesthood. One has been appointed as chaplain to the Mitchell River Mission, and the other in a similar capacity to the new mission at Lockhart River.

Education.—Steady progress has been made in this branch, and the attendance of the children is good. Special attention has been paid to manual and domestic training. The myalls even recognise the value of the education and care of the children, as they frequently voluntarily bring the children in to leave them at the mission.

Industrial and Agricultural.—At Yarrabah a great deal of clearing and building has been done in forming a new out-settlement on the reserve called Kunaburra. The sawmill, entirely

run by aboriginal labour under a white overseer, has been kept busy milling timber. Three new village houses have been built, and several are in course of erection. Complete electric light plant for the station is entirely fitted and managed by aboriginals. Thirty-five acres of new land have been put under cultivation, and 100 citrus trees and 2,000 bananas have been planted. The women make baskets, mats, &c., which find a ready sale. On the various out-stations the occupants receive a small dry ration, and maintain themselves from their farms, selling the surplus products to the head station.

At Monamona a new sawmilling plant has been erected to replace the old one at a cost of £1,500, also a dynamo and motor installed, which provide an adequate water supply for the institution. Fifty acres of land are under cultivation, and food crops of bananas and sweet potatoes have greatly augmented the food supply. The main industry of the mission is timber-getting and milling, the products of which find a ready sale and make this settlement practically self-supporting.

At Cape Bedford the farms at McIvor River were only fairly successful, owing to floods, which made cultivation impossible, and when, later, a large area of land was put under maize and sweet potatoes, continued dry weather ruined the crops. The families with private gardens and the Bridge Creek hamlet were more successful, being able to irrigate them, and some fine bunches of bananas, melons, pumpkins, &c., were brought into head station for sale.

A grister for making maizemeal has been obtained, a change of diet appreciated by the inmates, and resulting in some saving in flour. The fishing net supplied by the Department has enabled good supplies of fish to be caught, and native foods, such as honey, wild pigs, fish, turtles, &c., have been plentiful. Some thousands of coconuts were also consumed for food.

Two miles of fencing has been erected, at which the Bridge Creek people were employed.

At Lockhart River the headquarters of the mission were first established at Orchid Point, but later removed to Bane Hill, where the land is more fertile. The population increased during the year from 35 to 180, and as the various tribes are still coming in it is steadily increasing. A school has been commenced for the children. A sailing vessel works from the mission, while the remainder of the men fish with canoes or clear the scrub land ready for crops. A native carpenter from Torres Strait, and a good all-round native trained at Yarrabah, are now attached to the mission, and are instructing the natives in house-building.

At Moa Island (St. Paul's Mission) most of the men and boys have been employed on their own company boats. The older men, who remained on the mission, worked their gardens and sold the produce in Thursday Island, though the excessive rains followed by a prolonged dry spell seriously affected the garden crops. One of the boat companies did well, but was hindered by sickness and bad weather. The other boat company was unfortunate in carelessly letting their boat be driven on a reef and have to be laid up for repairs when the best fishing time was on.

At Mapoon also beche-de-mer fishing has languished, the grounds being worked out. Six hundred seed coconuts have been planted to replace replanting losses, and 1,000 seed nuts are in nursery. The maize and cotton crops were not successful, but bananas, pawpaws, pineapples, pumpkins, cassava, and sweet potatoes were grown for food, and cowpeas were grown both as a good vegetable and manure for the soil, which is of poor quality.

Thirty families have been established on their own plots of ground. A new single men's quarters have been erected, also a workshop fitted with carpentry benches, where the young men are trained in manual work. Two of the young men have obtained appointments to responsible positions on a cattle station.

The cattle number 250, and provided beef and milk for the staff and children of the home. The people caught plentiful supplies of native game.

At Weipa splendid progress has been made. There are now 32 acres under cultivation, and 20 acres have been cleared and fenced, and a commencement made with a coconut plantation. Cotton was tried, but proved a failure. Sandalwood cutting and beche-de-mer fishing, formerly good sources of revenue, have failed; supplies have now been exhausted. Thirty tons of potatoes, 5 tons of pumpkins, and good crops of cowpeas, maize, tomatoes, cabbages, and pawpaws were raised. Eighty married couples are now established on and are cultivating their own little plots of ground. A Fordson tractor and a portable sawbench have been purchased.

At Aurukun the natives are being encouraged to build proper houses and make gardens. Four acres are also under cultivation irrespective of the family plots. The crops raised are sweet potatoes, cassava, pumpkins, melons, pineapples, pawpaws, tomatoes, and beans. The sawmill has been out of commission, and there has been no pearlshell or beche-de-mer fishing, the neighbouring fishing ground being now depleted, but the boats catch ample supplies of edible fish, which they sell to the mission for food for the children and old people.

At Mitchell River the main industry is cattle-raising, and there are now 2,000 head of cattle on the reserve. The inmates have been kept well supplied with beef, and a number of fat bullocks were sold. The natives take a pride in having their own plots of ground, and this is encouraged in every way. Large quantities of garden produce and fruit were raised and used for food.

At Mornington Island the principal industries are beche-de-mer fishing and sandalwood cutting. About 6 tons of the former and 2 tons of the latter have been gathered and sent to Thursday Island for sale. Twenty acres of land are cultivated, and crops, such as coconuts, sorghum, cotton, rice, and Soudan grass, have done well. Another 20 acres under coconuts and various crops are doing well on Denham Island.

The great drawback is the white ant pest, which destroys the plants. They have even destroyed many of the native trees near the mission, making it very difficult to get suitable timber for building work, so it has been found necessary to have concrete blocks for the buildings. A fine dormitory and large boatshed have been erected, while a new milking shed, stockyards, &c., are well under way.

At Purga the men of the village engage with neighbouring farmers and maintain their families from their earnings, working on the mission when not employed outside. The principal occupation is farming, and 100 bags of maize and 20 tons of chaff were raised and sold after supplying the mission needs. Fair crops of sweet potatoes were obtained, some weighing 10 lb. New ploughs, hayrake, and scuffer were purchased to cope with the work.

The stock number 80 head of cattle, 25 pigs, 11 horses. A fine Shorthorn bull was purchased to improve the cattle herd. The shortage of water is a difficult problem, but it is hoped to overcome this by putting down a bore in the near future.

The voluntary settlement on the mainland of Cape York, at Cowal Creek, has now a population of 184, being 39 men, 45 women, and 52 children. The births numbered 4 (3 males, 1 female), and 2 adults died.

A trained Torres Strait island native teacher, who is also an ordained deacon of the Anglican Mission, conducts school and religious services.

The people maintain themselves by gardening, hunting, and fishing, working their own vessels, the "Fly" and "Cherric," in the beche-de-mer industry, from which the produce, valued at £616, was sold through the local Protector.

They follow the village government system in vogue in the Torres Strait islands, and the community is well behaved and orderly.

Provisional Schools are established at the undermentioned centres to provide for the children of families in the local aboriginal camps, the attendance being—

Gayndah, 7 boys, 8 girls, total 15.

Myora, 7 boys, 5 girls, total 12.

Thursday Island, 13 boys, 8 girls, total 21.

The teacher at Myora is also superintendent of the small reserve on this island, and reports that

some improvement has been made in the living conditions of the camp families by providing family earth closets and pan service and planting trees and flowers around the school grounds. A native policeman assists to keep order, warning off trespassers, and preventing the procuring of drink.

At Gayndah a lady missionary gives religious instruction in school, and ministers to the camp people.

Recreation.—Practically all forms of sport followed by white people are keenly entered into by the natives. Their national amusements, corroborees, displays of skill with weapons, hunting, &c., are always popular. Every encouragement is given to healthy amusements to combat the vices of gambling, &c., inevitable where there is lack of occupation for idle hours.

Social Progress.—Little social improvement is possible where the native is constrained to live in the degraded condition of camp life on the outskirts of civilisation, or where in competition with superior races he is kept down as an out-cast.

In his own communities, amongst his equals, only is it possible to foster the pride, ambition, and sense of self-respect which breed the desire for a better life, without which all efforts to uplift him are futile.

On the missions and settlements earnest men and women are striving, often at much personal sacrifice, to develop the right environment, and it is only those privileged to see in contrast with camp life the well-ordered villages, the neat little homes with domestic improvements, the happy appearance of the people, and note the general atmosphere of industry and contentment, who can understand the spirit which inspires them to persevere with what has often seemed a thankless task.

ABORIGINALS PROTECTION PROPERTY ACCOUNT.

<i>Receipts.</i>		<i>Expenditure.</i>	
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
Balance, 31st December, 1924	8,250 19 11	Barambah (building improvements)—	
Collections—		Wages	1,313 16 2
Estates deceased	1,850 3 10	Material	735 8 11
Unclaimed bank balances	2,118 17 6	Grants—	
Bank balances, natives sent to Peel Island	128 16 11	Yarrabah Mission	500 0 0
Refunds—		Lockhart River Mission (balance of establishment expenditure) ..	277 9 8
Advance account loans	110 0 0	Marlow (honorarium)	100 0 0
Payment of aboriginal accounts ..	6 13 10	Lawson (honorarium)	10 0 0
Wages building B.A.S. school payable from contingencies vote	156 2 10	Refunds—	
Loans, Torres Strait Islands boats ..	546 15 7	Proceeds sale of pearls from Thursday Island	296 4 9
P.A., Thursday Island—		To relatives deceased estates	375 15 5
Purchase of goods for Island schools ..	40 15 9	To others whose bank balances were banked for convenience	754 15 11
Purchase material, Daruley and Poid ..	124 13 2	Christmas goods, settlement interest accounts	605 15 3
Burial fees	5 19 6	Various payments, Aboriginal accounts and destitute natives	383 4 7
Miscellaneous	26 10 7	Loans—	
Proceeds—		Advance account	102 5 0
Sale of pearls from Thursday Island ..	539 12 3	Palm Island	15 0 0
Sale of beans from Palm Island	33 5 0	Burials, destitute natives	21 11 6
Prize interest B.A.S.	2 4 6	Miscellaneous	30 8 1
Interest, settlement joint accounts ..	473 19 0		
Transfer account	1 9 10		
A.P.P. account	299 5 2		
		Balance, 31st December, 1925	5,521 15 3
			9,194 9 11
	<u>£14,716 5 2</u>		<u>£14,716 5 2</u>

The expenditure on relief administration amounted to £54,343, and the collections throughout the State of aboriginals' earnings, wages, store sales, sales of produce of fishing vessels, settlements, &c., amounted to £143,776.

Report upon the Operations of certain Sub-Departments of the Home Secretary's Department - Aboriginal Department, Information contained in Report for the year ended 31st December 1925

Corporate Author: Queensland, Chief Protector of Aboriginals

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