

1938  
QUEENSLAND.

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# REPORT

UPON THE

## OPERATIONS OF THE SUB-DEPARTMENTS

OF

Aboriginals, Diamantina Hospital for Chronic Diseases (South Brisbane), Dunwich Benevolent Asylum, Inebriates Institution (Dunwich), Eventide Home (Charters Towers), Prisons, Queensland Industrial Institution for the Blind, Westwood Sanatorium, and Licensing Commission.

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PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT BY COMMAND.

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# Reports upon the Operations of Certain Sub-Departments of the Department of Health and Home Affairs.

Department of Health and Home Affairs,  
Brisbane, 3rd October, 1938.

TO THE HONOURABLE THE SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AND HOME AFFAIRS.

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.

C. E. CHUTER,  
Under Secretary.

ABORIGINALS (Chief Protector, J. W. Bleakley).  
DIAMANTINA HOSPITAL FOR CHRONIC DISEASES, SOUTH BRISBANE (Acting Visiting Medical Officer, Dr. T. H. R. Mathewson; Superintendent, T. M. Daley).  
DUNWICH BENEVOLENT ASYLUM (Manager and Medical Superintendent, Dr. F. C. Turnbull).  
EVENTIDE HOME, CHARTERS TOWERS (Manager, W. H. Berry).  
INEBRIATE INSTITUTION, DUNWICH (Manager and Medical Superintendent, Dr. F. C. Turnbull).  
PRISONS (Comptroller-General, J. F. Whitney).  
QUEENSLAND INDUSTRIAL INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND, SOUTH BRISBANE (Manager, A. T. Fullagar).  
WESTWOOD SANATORIUM (Superintendent, Dr. J. H. Blackburn).  
LICENSING COMMISSION (T. A. Ferry (Chairman), R. H. Robinson, and F. P. Byrne, Commissioners; Secretary, F. P. Byrne).

## Aboriginal Department—Information contained in Report for the Year ended 31st December, 1937.

### POPULATION.

The census taken by the Government Statistician at 30th June, 1937, showed that the total aboriginal and half-caste population of the State was 18,024.

The census figures now include all types of aboriginal cross-breeds subject to the department's supervision.

The subjoined tables indicate their condition and location. These figures disclose that there has been a decrease in the total population of 98 for the year.

In the Torres Strait district there was an increase of 103, and on the mainland a decrease of 201. It was also found that, in the full-blood population, there was a decrease of 225, but the half-caste population comprises 9,714 males and 8,310 females; there being a surplus of 1,404 males over females.

In 1935 and 1936 the excess of males over females was 1,895 and 1,696 respectively, which would seem to indicate that the discrepancy is steadily adjusting itself.

### LOCATION OF POPULATION.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Settlements (Government) ..	1,593	1,290	2,883
Missions (Church) ..	2,177	2,106	4,283
Torres Strait Islands ..	2,124	2,021	4,145
Country Districts ..	3,820	2,893	6,713
	9,714	8,310	18,024

### FULL-BLOODS.

Males 6,742, Females 5,370, Total 12,112.

Condition.	Adults.	Children.	Total.
Nomadic .. .. .	1,323	314	1,637
In regular employment ..	3,701	..	3,701
Supervised camps .. ..	3,245	2,480	5,725
Others (dependents of employees)	558	491	1,049
Totals .. .. .	8,827	3,285	12,112

### HALF-CASTES.

Males 2,972, Females 2,940, Total 5,912.

Condition.	Adults.	Children.	Total.
Nomadic .. .. .	33	10	43
In regular employment ..	1,779	..	1,779
Supervised camps .. ..	657	1,397	2,054
Others (dependents of employees)	878	1,158	2,036
Totals .. .. .	3,347	2,565	5,912

### ABORIGINAL WELFARE CONFERENCE.

As a result of the decision of the Premiers' Conference held at Adelaide in 1936, a conference of Chief Protectors and Aboriginal Protection Board representatives of the States and Commonwealth Territories was called together at Canberra on 21st April, 1937, to discuss questions of aboriginal welfare and formulate a uniform policy.

A large number of important questions was presented on the agenda and the keen discussion of the various matters necessitated day and night sittings to complete the programme in the time allotted.

A Secretariat was appointed by Department of the Interior to retain contact between conferences, which, it was decided, should be held annually, and the minutes of proceedings were published.

Briefly the resolutions adopted dealt with:—

- (1) The destiny of the race and the absorption of the natives other than full-blood into the white community.
- (2) The necessity for uniform legislation, the details of administration in accordance with the general principles to be left to the individual States.
- (3) The education of cross-breed children to white standard with a view to their employment and absorption into the white community.
- (4) The segregation of the full-blood and education of the detribalised towards development of the village life and self dependence.
- (5) The need for investigation of racial problems in other countries with native populations.
- (6) The need for financial assistance from the Commonwealth Government to the States with heaviest relief burden.
- (7) The objection to corporal punishment.
- (8) The disabilities of appointment of females as protectors.
- (9) The use of light neck chains in preference to handcuffs where restraint is unavoidable while travelling through the bush.
- (10) The establishment of native courts for purely tribal cases, the disallowment of confessions or pleas of guilty by natives unless approved by the Chief Protector, provision of defence for native prisoners and the non-compellability of native wives as witnesses.
- (11) Uniform legislation for suppression of traffic in drink and opium and poisons.
- (12) The eligibility of native cross-breed women for pensions and maternity allowances.
- (13) The repatriation of troublesome natives from other States.
- (14) The condition of government supervision and subsidising of religious missions.
- (15) The personnel of future aboriginal welfare conferences.

The discussion of the above subjects created considerable public interest, and the exchange of views on, and knowledge of, the divergent problem of the different States will undoubtedly be of benefit to all concerned in the administration of matters of aboriginal betterment.

#### LABOUR CONDITIONS ON THE LAND.

The demand for labour was sufficient to provide employment for all able-bodied natives. Except in the drought areas the demand at times exceeded the available supply.

An increase is noted in the number signed on under agreement and under casual permit. Instructions were issued to protectors that casual employment for short periods, ranging from one day to one month, could be suitably covered by the issue of a casual permit. As a result, increased supervision was assured and some exploitation by employers was checked. Following investigations in several protectorates, action was taken to ensure that the employment regulations were more uniformly enforced.

Two cases of persons illegally employing aboriginals resulted in prosecutions, with consequent conviction of the offenders. Other cases were investigated, but in some it was evident that ignorance of the provisions of the Act was responsible, and in such cases a warning was found to be sufficient.

The total number of aboriginals and half-castes employed, excluding native seamen engaged on the fleets at Thursday Island, was:—Males, 1,840; females, 588.

Again the demand for female labour as domestics in country districts exceeded the available supply. Such employees are mostly drawn from the three settlements, and trained girls, who have passed through the domestic science classes, have no difficulty in obtaining congenial positions.

It speaks volumes for the care and protection afforded the wards of the department by country protectors when it is considered that in three cases only was it found necessary to resort to Court action to recover unpaid wages. A few cases of delay in regular payment arose through the financial difficulties on the part of the employer, caused by drought and low prices for produce. In such cases extension of time to pay was granted, and practically all arrears were collected.

Patrols were made by various protectors in their own district, and the accommodation and working conditions of the natives inspected. Reports were generally satisfactory, the personal attention to cases of breach of regulations ensuring prompt correction.

The behaviour of natives in employment was generally good. As can only be expected, in such a number, a few recalcitrants are sure to be found. It was usually found that a change of employment was sufficient to right matters, but in a few cases the return of the offender to a settlement had to be resorted to.

#### INSURANCE AND COMPENSATION.

All aboriginal employees are required to be insured under the Workers' Compensation Act.

Claims were filed with the Insurance Commissioner for 31 accidents and awards, amounting to £1,803 7s. 3d., were made to the claimants. These amounts were paid to their Savings Bank accounts and the natives withdrew the money as required for sick relief.

After the occurrence of these accidents every means of assuring prompt medical and hospital attention was provided.

#### ABORIGINAL TRUST ACCOUNT.

The following table, giving details of the transactions on the Savings Bank accounts of native employees, shows that there was a decrease

of 186 accounts, but an increase in the deposits of wages amounting to £3,088 14s. 6d. This increase is accounted for by the increased number in employment from country protectorates and the settlements.

The deposits show an excess of £1,080 over withdrawals for the period, and this can be regarded as a healthy sign that the depression of the last seven years has practically lifted and the drain on the reserve savings has been relieved. The wisdom, during the prosperous years, of building up these reserves has been proved; not only in the obviation of privation amongst the native families, who supplemented their reduced earnings from their earlier savings, but in the saving of expense to the State in the relief of unemployment.

An amount of £999 16s. 5d., being the unclaimed estates of deceased natives, and £910 16s. 2d., representing unclaimed Savings

Bank balances of missing owners, were credited to the Aboriginal Protection Property Account. Exhaustive inquiries were made in every case to locate any dependents of the deceased or missing natives before such transfer was made. Sufficient reserve fund is always retained to meet any belated claims that may later be established.

The following statements show the receipts and disbursements of the Aboriginal Protection Property Account and the Aboriginal Provident Fund as at the 31st December, 1937. It will be noted that the amounts of £13,998 5s. 6d. and £2,000, respectively, are shown as receipts for the sale of stock. This stock comprised reserve funds invested in Commonwealth Inscribed Stock to earn higher interest, but was realised on to provide funds for expenditure of a capital nature in the industrial development of settlements and missions.

#### ABORIGINAL TRUST ACCOUNT.

—	No. of Accounts.	Total Wages Deposits.	Interest Earned.		Actual Withdrawals for Natives' Benefit.		Balances as at 31/12/37.	
			£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Cherbourg .. .. .	599	3,690 16 11	132	6 0	4,661	4 8	Dr. 160	6 4
Palm Island .. .. .	628	5,857 19 3	457	7 0	6,677	13 1	7,212	13 11
Woorabinda .. .. .	334	4,074 0 1	91	5 0	4,578	6 3	787	12 2
Various Protectorates (including Brisbane)	2,643	48,278 10 5	7,808	19 8	41,742	1 10	17,570	3 0
Thursday Island .. .. .	1,395	14,672 11 8	104	19 5	17,834	2 10	3,743	15 9
Totals .. .. .	5,599	76,573 18 4	8,594	17 1	75,493	8 8	29,153	18 6

#### ABORIGINAL PROTECTION PROPERTY ACCOUNT.

RECEIPTS.		EXPENDITURE.	
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
Balances as at 31st December, 1936 ..	4,676 11 8	Refunds—Deceased Estates to Relatives	334 8 2
Collections—Unclaimed Estates, Deceased Natives .. .. .	999 16 5	Refund—Balances missing aboriginals located on Settlements, &c. . . . .	176 7 0
Unclaimed Balances, Missing Natives ..	910 16 2	Temporary Loans—Aboriginal Industries	2,000 0 0
Sale of Inscribed Stock .. .. .	13,998 5 6	Loan—Mapoon Mission, Purchase of Stock .. .. .	500 0 0
Repayment Loans, Aboriginal Industries	1,500 0 0	Relief—Industrial Development of Aboriginal Institutions ..	15,715 7 0
Interest—Temporary Loan, one month, Aboriginal Industries .. .. .	1 13 4	Balance as at 31st December, 1937 ..	3,550 9 7
Current Account .. .. .	189 8 8		
	<u>£22,276 11 9</u>		<u>£22,276 11 9</u>

#### ABORIGINAL PROVIDENT FUND.

RECEIPTS.		EXPENDITURE.	
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
Balance as at 31st December, 1936 ..	807 1 8	For Relief of Indigent Country Natives	7,572 17 11
Collections—Contributions by Natives in employment .. .. .	2,382 15 8	Temporary Loan—Aboriginal Industries	500 0 0
Sale of Inscribed Stock .. .. .	2,000 0 0	Balance as at 31st December, 1937 ..	1,435 4 3
Repayment, Part Loan, Aboriginal Industries .. .. .	4,000 0 0		
Interest—			
Inscribed Stock .. .. .	40 0 0		
Aboriginal Industries .. .. .	268 18 2		
Current Account .. .. .	9 6 8		
	<u>£9,508 2 2</u>		<u>£9,508 2 2</u>

#### WIRELESS.

Perhaps the most important and far-reaching development in the activities and progress of the Department, particularly in relation to the more remote and inaccessible aboriginal com-

munities, was the establishment of the Torres Strait and Cape York Peninsula Wireless Service, which, after several years of patient investigation, has now become an accomplished fact.

The disabilities and hardships suffered for so many years by the pioneers of aboriginal work in the places furthest removed from civilisation, with the almost complete isolation from official or social contact, have now been overcome to the extent that daily 'phone communication by radio, and its attendant advantages, is a daily routine.

This network of radio stations has bridged hundreds of miles of uncivilised country, previously without communication, and deprived of accessibility to the services to which the people of the cities are accustomed, and it might be said that to these isolated outposts of Queensland a new era has dawned.

While much still remains to be done before transport in these distant areas has been developed to the standard considered to be necessary for completely effective administration, the boon of the wireless telephone enables the Department to utilise to the best advantage what means of transport are available and to meet with the utmost expedition any emergencies which may arise.

The dread of complete absence from medical or other aid (particularly in the case of the womenfolk), for many months on end, is now removed, because, with the same facility that the suburban householder can summon his medical adviser, the missionaries and Government officers in these isolated communities can, by a mere turn of a switch, establish immediate communication with their administrative and medical headquarters in Thursday Island. They can thus obtain instant advice and, where necessary, further succour by the Department's patrol boat, the "Melbidir," or even, where essential, by aeroplane from the mainland.

The first practical example of the vital needs which are fulfilled by this service was provided by the outbreak of an epidemic of gastric influenza at one of the Gulf mission stations within a week or two of the establishment of the first radio station. The epidemic was developing rapidly and becoming serious.

Situated some 200 miles from the nearest point of civilisation, weeks would have elapsed before aid could have reached the mission under ordinary circumstances, and the missionary and his helpers would have had to depend entirely on their own limited resources and knowledge, to meet the emergency.

With the wireless service available, however, it was only a matter of minutes before the harassed superintendent was in consultation with the Government Medical Officer at Thursday Island, who, from the description of the symptoms, was able to diagnose the complaint and to prescribe the correct treatment. Within two weeks the epidemic had been almost completely stamped out, with the saving of considerable worry, suffering, and perhaps loss of life.

This mission is merely one of the fifteen isolated communities which are catered for. The complete scheme embraces a main station at Thursday Island under the control of a fully-qualified engineer-operator, and sixteen substations. The substations are situated on the seven main islands of the Torres Strait—namely, Badu, Moa, Mabuig, Yorke, Saibai, Darnley, and Murray Islands; at five mission stations situated on the Cape York Peninsula—namely, Mapoon, Weipa, Aurukun, and Mitchell River on the Gulf

coast, and Lockhart River Mission on the east coast. A station is also situated at Iron Range, via Portland Roads, which is the centre of the new Claudie River Goldfield, and is the site of the principal iron ore deposit in Queensland. Another plant is installed on the departmental patrol vessel, the "Melbidir," which is engaged in constantly patrolling between the various islands of the strait and the peninsula mission stations.

In addition to the above main group, substations are established at Palm Island and Fantome Island. These centres are in contact with the coastal radio station at Townsville.

The distance in air miles between Thursday Island and the substations varies from 25 to 350 miles; the nearest being the St. Paul's Mission, at Moa Island, and the furthest the Mitchell River Mission on the Gulf coast.

The only aboriginal mission in the Cape York and Gulf group which is not included in the group is the Mornington Island Mission, which is already catered for by the Australia Inland Mission, which has its headquarters at Cloncurry.

The plant was manufactured by Amalgamated Wireless (Australasia) Limited, and comprises dual wave transmitters and receivers, capable of transmission and reception both by voice or morse. Power for the substations is provided by means of engine-driven generators, while power for the head station at Thursday Island is obtained from the local town supply.

The stations transmit on two frequencies—namely, 180.72 metres (1,660 k.c/s.) and 59.72 metres (5,020 k.c/s.), while the patrol vessel "Melbidir" operates also on the shipping wave length of 600 metres (500 k.c/s.).

The effective range of the various stations has been proved to be ample for all practical purposes, and, in fact, voice transmission from the substations has been received at loud speaker strength in Sydney, a distance of 2,000 miles.

The power of the main station at Thursday Island is 200-400 watts, and the substations 35-100 watts.

The transmitters are designed to operate with maximum efficiency on voice transmission, with the result that the inexperienced missionaries and Government officers, who are operating them, have no difficulty in establishing communication and are not compelled to resort to Morse transmission.

The atmospheric conditions in the area covered by the service are generally bad, and during the nor'-west monsoonal season the conditions are probably as bad as is possible to find in any part of the world. It therefore speaks volumes for the efficiency of the service when voice transmission can be so effectively established with all stations without undue difficulty.

As far as is known, this State can claim the distinction of being the only country in the world which has a service of this kind for its aboriginal inhabitants.

#### Q.G.K. "MELBIDIR."

The patrol vessel "Melbidir," stationed at Thursday Island, was kept particularly busy, the distance travelled amounting to 10,866 miles, an increase of 2,296 over the tally for 1936. The consumption of fuel oil was 3,193 gallons.

The amount of cargo carried to the various Torres Strait Islands, the Gulf Missions, and to the Aboriginal Industries Trading Station at Badu Island, was 375 tons.

Special patrols occasioned by the visit of the Ministerial party to the Gulf and the work of installation of the wireless plants on the mainland missions and island villages increased the patrol work of the vessel. The "Melbidir" is now fitted with radio and can keep in daily touch with the central station at Thursday Island as well as the various islands and missions similarly connected.

In addition to the regular official patrols and movements of island teachers, 617 native passengers were carried. The vessel was at sea for a total of 269 days, of which the protector was on board on patrol for a total of 147 days. It was not possible to slip the vessel and it is expected that a fairly extensive overhaul will be necessary at an early date. For the first time since its installation in 1928 the engine gave trouble, and a thorough overhaul, with replacement of worn parts, will also soon be necessary.

#### RECOGNIZANCES.

Seven recognizances were executed under section 17 of the Principal Act of 1897, which requires any person removing or employing an aboriginal beyond the limits of the State to enter into a bond for the payment of wages and for the return of such native to the place of his usual residence. No action was necessary for estreatment of any such undertakings.

#### RELIEF.

Food relief amounting to £1,991 19s. 3d. was issued at a number of supervised camps, established in various outlying districts, to ensure the proper care of old and indigent natives where it is considered they would be more contented living in their own territory and their removal is not warranted. The local protectors exercise constant supervision over these camps, to protect the inmates from abuse, and ensure that any distress is relieved.

#### BLANKETS.

Further distribution of relief in the form of blankets and other goods where more suitable, such as clothing, tobacco, knives, tomahawks, fish lines, tent flies, &c., was made to all natives in poor circumstances, whether in camps or institutions. The number of blankets issued was 2,826, and the cost of all the above issues amounted to £2,587 13s. Aboriginal Industries Board in Torres Strait again secured the order for the supply of clothing for northern districts.

The distribution was effected through the State Stores Board, and the careful attention given by the manager and his staff to the buying and despatch of the goods ordered ensured a successful distribution.

#### CRIME AMONG ABORIGINALS.

As in former years, the accompanying table shows that the incidence of crime amongst aboriginals remains at a low figure. The vigilance of protectors and police officers, coupled with the fact that the aboriginal, for the most part, is a law-abiding citizen, accounts for this pleasing feature of the administration. Offences against aboriginals were also at a low rate, although the appended table only records the

cases where sufficient evidence was obtained to ensure successful prosecutions.

#### OFFENCES BY ABORIGINALS.

Offences.	1935.	1936.	1937.
Drunkenness .. ..	24	46	46
Stealing .. ..	2	3	12
Creating a disturbance .. ..	2	..	..
Wilful destruction .. ..	..	..	1
Obscene language .. ..	..	..	1
Assault .. ..	2	2	1
Resisting arrest .. ..	1	1	..
Rape .. ..	2	..	..
Murder .. ..	1	1	..
Bigamy .. ..	..	1	..

#### OFFENCES AGAINST ABORIGINALS.

Offences.	1935.		1936.		1937.	
	No.	Fines.	No.	Fines.	No.	Fines.
Possession of opium	1	£ 40	1	£ 30	1	£ 20
Supplying of opium	2	..	..	..	..	..
Supplying liquor ..	5	82½	2	50	1	20
Harbouring .. ..	..	..	1	gaol	..	..
Harbouring (freq. quenting camps)	..	..	1	gaol	..	..
Cohabiting .. ..	..	..	..	..	1	10s.

#### REMOVALS.

The figures in the subjoined table, which show a further decrease in the number of cases of the removals of destitute and troublesome aborigines to settlements and missions, can be read as an improvement in conditions in country districts.

The total number removed was 162, as compared with 277 in 1935 and 235 in 1936. Of these 21 were sent to Fantome for medical treatment, one less than the 1936 tally of patients:—

Place.	Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.
<i>Settlements—</i>				
Palm Island ..	44	15	7	66
Fantome Island ..	12	8	1	21
Cherbourg ..	21	11	3	35
Woorabinda ..	11	3	..	14
<i>Missions—</i>				
Mapoon .. ..	..	1	3	4
Yarrabah .. ..	..	..	..	..
Purga .. ..	..	..	..	..
Monamona ..	2	2	1	5
Cape Bedford ..	4	..	..	4
Lockhart River ..	2	1	..	3
Aurukun .. ..	..	..	..	..
Weipa .. ..	5	3	..	8
Mornington Island	..	..	..	..
Doomadgee .. ..	..	..	2	2
Mitchell River ..	..	3	..	3
<b>Totals ..</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>165</b>

#### HEALTH.

With the exception of epidemics of German measles at Woorabinda and Cherbourg settlements, the health of the natives on settlements, missions, and in the various protectorates was excellent.

Two cases of infantile paralysis occurred at Cherbourg, and the settlement was quarantined for a period. Both patients, young children, died.

Aurukun Mission reports a decrease in pulmonary complaints following advice received from Dr. J. R. Nimmo, Government Medical Officer, Thursday Island.

The aerial medical officer at Cloncurry paid several visits to Mornington Island Mission, and necessary advice at other times was supplied by radio.

Dr. G. Courtney was appointed Medical Superintendent at Palm Island in September, following the resignation of Dr. J. Park, who had been temporarily filling the position.

The hookworm campaign was continued in the northern areas with satisfactory results. The nomadic natives invariably became reinfected after treatment, and it is difficult to eradicate the disease under such conditions.

Practically all settlements and missions were again supplied with dugong oil, extracted by steam-jacket apparatus at the Cape Bedford Mission. This has been found very beneficial in chest complaints and cases of malnutrition.

Over 150 cases of malaria occurred at Mapoon, and 21 cases of venereal disease, which could not be treated at the local hospitals, were sent to Fantome Island.

Very few cases of serious sickness were reported from country districts, the majority of complaints being of minor character, such as coughs, colds, whooping cough, and common epidemics.

The highest tally of cases treated was at Normanton, where 69 natives were admitted to the hospital as in-patients and 128 were treated as out-patients.

Plans are under consideration for provision of additional special hospital ward accommodation for the native population at this centre.

At Cairns, 119 patients received medical attention as follows:—

General complaints .. .. .	97
Accidents .. .. .	8
Venereal .. .. .	2
Epidemic .. .. .	5
Maternity cases .. .. .	7

At Burketown 26 cases received attention.

With the exception of the cases at the foregoing protectorates, there was very little call for medical attention, and at more than half of the remaining areas no treatment at all was required.

Patrols were regularly made in all protectorates with a view to rendering medical aid and other assistance that may be required.

The following table indicates the number of patients treated at the various settlements, missions, and centres from which records were obtained:—

Settlements.	
Palm Island .. .. .	Confinements 41, accidents 25, general complaints 271, pulmonary 420, while 5,225 out-patients paid 25,010 visits for treatment. (N.B.—Pulmonary includes cases of colds, bronchitis, influenza, &c.).
Cherbourg .. .. .	In-patients totalled 516, while 3,002 out-patients paid 47,030 visits for treatment.
Woorabinda .. .. .	651 In-patients and 5,861 out-patients paid 45,668 visits for treatment.

#### Missions.

Mornington Island .. .. .	Pulmonary 3, venereal 5, general 39, whooping cough 153, chicken-pox 12, malaria 27, diarrhoea 33.
Mitchell River .. .. .	Health was generally good. Some gastric trouble towards end of year, necessitating visit from aerial medical officer.
Aurukun .. .. .	Venereal 1, yaws 4, granuloma 5, gangosa 2, scabies 30. One case of appendicitis ended fatally.
Weipa .. .. .	Pulmonary 5, general 6,500 treatments.
Mapoon .. .. .	Malaria 156, yaws 60, T.B. 3, accidents 16.
Lockhart River .. .. .	Venereal 1, pulmonary 3, impetigo 114, general 423.
Hammond Island .. .. .	Pulmonary 1, accidents 4.
St. Paul's, Moa Island .. .. .	Treatment for minor cases only given. Health was generally good.
Cape Bedford .. .. .	Health generally good. One case of pneumonia sent to Cooktown Hospital and one accident case treated there also.
Monamona .. .. .	No serious accidents or epidemics.
Doomadgee .. .. .	Pulmonary 1, venereal 4, ulcer 2.

#### Country Hospitals.

	In-patients treated.		In-patients treated.
Ayr .. .. .	7	Herberton .. .. .	3
Beaudesert .. .. .	55	Hughenden .. .. .	2
Boulia .. .. .	1	Mareeba .. .. .	1
Burketown .. .. .	26	Maryborough .. .. .	8
Cairns .. .. .	119	Mitchell .. .. .	8
Camooeal .. .. .	7	Mossman .. .. .	11
Charleville .. .. .	7	Mount Isa .. .. .	2
Charters Towers .. .. .	12	Mount Garnet .. .. .	4
Chillagoe .. .. .	2	Mount Molloy .. .. .	2
Cloncurry .. .. .	2	Mundubbera .. .. .	6
Coen .. .. .	2	Mungana .. .. .	3
Collinsville .. .. .	4	Nocundra .. .. .	1
Cooktown .. .. .	31	Normanton .. .. .	69
Croydon .. .. .	5	Proserpine .. .. .	1
Cunnamulla .. .. .	2	Rockhampton .. .. .	26
Einasleigh .. .. .	1	Springsure .. .. .	2
Eromanga .. .. .	1	St. George .. .. .	1
Fortitude Valley .. .. .	12	Toowoomba .. .. .	2
Landsborough .. .. .	1	Townsville .. .. .	27
Gayndah .. .. .	17	Tully .. .. .	1
Georgetown .. .. .	20	Urundangie .. .. .	8
Gregory Downs .. .. .	4	Winton .. .. .	1
Goondiwindi .. .. .	8		

#### FANTOME ISLAND LOCK HOSPITAL.

##### Statistics for the Year.

	Admitted.	Born.	Discharged.	Died.	Population at 31-12-37.
<i>Full-bloods—</i>					
Male adults .. .. .	68	..	60	11	91
Female adults .. .. .	27	..	31	10	62
Male children .. .. .	8	1	14	2	12
Female children .. .. .	14	2	4	1	16
<i>Half-castes—</i>					
Male adults .. .. .	27	..	24	2	13
Female adults .. .. .	24	..	21	..	16
Male children .. .. .	18	3	18	2	10
Female children .. .. .	7	2	11	..	4
Totals .. .. .	193	8	183	28	224

Stock.—Horses, 4; pigs, 3; cattle, 28.

Rainfall.—42.58 inches, as compared with 84.20 inches in 1936.

The year 1937 is the first full year using the island as a quarantine station for the observations and testing of newly-admitted natives to the group, in addition to its use as a hospital for specific diseases. A number of tubercular and chest cases have been sent from Palm for care and treatment under the fresher conditions here at Fantome.

The figures of admissions and discharges shown under the statistical heading illustrates the volume of natives dealt with. As a result of local tests and tests made on specimens sent to the Brisbane laboratory of the Health Department, about 50 per cent. of the admissions are detained at Fantome for treatment. Minor sicknesses are usually cleared up before the ordinarily well native is transferred to Palm Island. The routine works well. It is an additional routine and entails considerable medical and administrative detail. Its value is obvious.

The institution was visited by the Director-General of Health, the Chief Protector of Aborigines, the Assistant Chief Protector of Aborigines, the Superintendent, Westbrook Farm Home for Boys, at regular intervals by the Visiting Justice. The Dental Surgeon visited monthly.

There has been no case of serious crime; offences have been few and mostly domestic in character. Selected natives continue to give excellent assistance in various duties, and there is much sign of goodwill and little evidence of discontent.

Football, cricket, and basket ball are played by the younger natives, with the older folk playing the part of interested spectators. The corroboree is a bi-weekly feature, in suitable weather, and remains mostly native in character. Fishing and hunting occupy leisure time with profit.

Quarters for the matron and nurse were completed early in the year on a hill site overlooking the central administration.

A pumping plant has been supplied for the central administration in place of the windmill, and the water supply is improved as a result. The farm plant continues satisfactory.

The land at the farm district is very poor in character and not very productive. A pocket of land in the district carries a better soil, and an attempt will be made to concentrate on the area for vegetable growing. Considerable main crops were supplied from Palm Island.

Despite the difficulties of promoting growth on Fantome Island the grounds are kept in nice order. Many cocoanut palms have been planted over the past seven years and, although there has been a large percentage of failure, quite a number of palms are well grown now and are improving the appearance of the institution. Further plantings are being made.

A useful supply of lime from coral has been obtained by the men at the farm, and some made available for Palm Island. With the labour available being only a minimum, this work, which is heavy and laborious, cannot be made into an industry, but it is hoped local requirements may be maintained.

The installation of the wireless transmitter and receiver is being carried out with office extension to house the plant. The ability to communicate with Palm Island and the mainland should improve administrative conditions considerably.

#### TORRES STRAIT ISLANDS AND MISSIONS OF CAPE YORK PENINSULA.

*Government Medical Officer, Dr. J. R. Nimmo,  
Thursday Island.*

During 1937 the health of the people of this district has been reasonably good.

The system of monthly health reports by Government teachers and superintendents is proving valuable in maintaining closer co-operation between all concerned.

The installation of radio communication is proving of benefit in health matters. Immediate medical advice for urgent cases and epidemics can now be received by the most isolated settlements.

The standard list of drugs has now been approved of by the Director-General of Health and has been in use for the past year. It has shown itself to be adequate for the routine treatment of local diseases.

#### EPIDEMIC DISEASES.

*Dengue.*—After a lapse of many years dengue suddenly appeared in February. Commencing as a short period (three day) fever, the true nature of the disease was doubtful at first. After two weeks the course of the disease became that of classical dengue. No serious results or complications occurred although there were some hundreds of cases.

*Chicken-pox.*—This disease has been noticed from time to time during the year, but it has not reached epidemic proportions.

*Whooping Cough.*—An epidemic of whooping cough broke out at Thursday Island and Saibai Island at the end of December and, at present, has reached epidemic proportions on most of the islands. All necessary steps to deal with the outbreak were taken immediately, and radio communication proved its value in assisting to do this. The complaint was brought up from Cairns by crews of beche-de-mer boats.

#### ENDEMIC DISEASES.

*Malaria.*—The incidence of malaria was fortunately light during the year. There was less fever at Saibai Island than has been the case for many years. Prompt and thorough treatment of every case of malaria must result in reducing the incidence of this disease still further.

*Hookworm.*—Mass dosage has been carried out regularly at Badu and other islands and the mainland missions for the past four years. The result has been gratifying, though it will take years to eradicate the disease.

*Yaws.*—Good work is being done in the control of this disease amongst settlement natives. In time the disease should completely disappear. The bush tribes of the peninsula present a problem that will be referred to later.

*Ulcerative Granuloma.*—The introduction of an antimony preparation, that can be administered intramuscularly, has enabled mission workers to give treatment for this disease. Previously, many cases from the peninsula were left untreated, as they would not come to Thursday Island. The preparation in use is Anthiomaline and the results obtained have been satisfactory.

*Tuberculosis.*—So far nothing has been arranged to segregate natives suffering from this disease. As I have pointed out previously, the usual type met with is acute phthisis running a fatal course in a few months. Subsequently it is not unusual for one or two children, who have been contacts, to develop tuberculosis, meningitis, or peritonitis, with inevitably fatal results. Complete segregation should lessen the incidence of tubercular infections.



*Veneral Disease.*—There was no case of gonorrhœa treated during the year. It is probable that a number of natives of the peninsula will be found to be infected with this disease. It is hoped that a proper medical survey of this district will take place before very long.

*Leprosy.*—In spite of reports to the contrary, it seems that there is very little leprosy amongst natives of this district. An efficient medical survey would assist in identifying patients suffering from this disease. One case was discovered during the year in a young girl from Badu Island. Owing to the fact that positive microscopical finding was not obtained after several attempts the girl was returned to Badu Island, where she is receiving treatment for the disease.

ABORIGINAL PATIENTS TREATED IN THURSDAY ISLAND HOSPITAL.

Of patients admitted during 1937 one hundred and fifty-eight (158) were aboriginals. The following is an analysis of the diseases for which these patients were treated:—

Malaria .. ..	3	Herpes zoster ..	2
Yaws .. ..	13	Toxic goitre ..	1
Granuloma ..	5	Obstetric .. ..	5
Influenza ..	3	Gastro-intestinal ..	2
Pneumonia ..	11	Genito urinary ..	2
Tuberculosis ..	13	Diseases of women	9
Beri-beri ..	11	Simple tumors ..	3
Hookworm ..	2	Cancer .. ..	1
Heart disease ..	5	Diabetes .. ..	1
Rheumatism ..	5	Dengue .. ..	16
Injuries ..	19	Eyes, &c. ..	6
Shark-bite ..	1	Miscellaneous ..	9
Abscess .. ..	10		

*Deaths.*—Of nine deaths in hospital, six were from tuberculosis. The occurrence of beri-beri in aboriginal members of crews of diving boats was quite unusual. Nine aboriginals were treated in hospital and all have gradually recovered. Two boys died of beri-beri before arrival at Thursday Island.

All these men were members of the crew of boats that had gone further across the Gulf than usual. The great scarcity of fish in those waters compared with plentiful local supply was the chief factor in causing beri-beri.

*Cancer.*—The only instance of this disease seen in an aboriginal was that of a full-blood male, aged 38 years, from Mitchell River. He had a cancer of the head of the pancreas with extensive secondary growths.

*Shark Bite.*—Iona, of Saibai Island, escaped from a shark attack after his head had been inside the shark's mouth. He was brought to hospital with extensive wounds of the head, neck and chest. It was possible to heal the wounds, and Iona, who had shown great fortitude throughout his trying ordeal, ultimately recovered.

*General.*—Although the situation of the more isolated settlements has been improved, from a medical point of view, by the installation of radio, there is still a need for better facilities in the way of trained nursing and accessible medical and laboratory services.

VITAL STATISTICS.

The following comparative statistics are of interest as evidence of the improved health and fertility of the natives when assured of proper care and nourishment on the settlements and missions:—

Place.	Population.	Number of Births.	Per 1,000 of Population.	Number of Deaths.	Per 1,000 of Population.
<b>Settlements—</b>					
Cherbourg .. ..	921	36	39	30	32.5
Palm Island .. ..	1,081	41	31.4	18	13.8
Woorabinda .. ..	657	24	36.5	32	48.7
Totals .. ..	2,659	101	38	80	30
<b>Missions—</b>					
Aurukun .. ..	325	8	24.6	12	36.9
Myora .. ..	43	2	46.5	..	..
Purga .. ..	47	1	21.2	..	..
Yarrabah .. ..	512	16	31.2	2	3.9
Monamona .. ..	246	5	20.3	3	12.2
Cape Bedford ..	252	9	35.7	4	15.9
Lockhart River ..	388	9	23.2	25	64.2
Mapoon .. ..	109	12	11.1	5	45.9
Weipa .. ..	174	4	23	10	57.5
Mitchell River ..	272	5	18.4	8	29.4
Mornington Island	271	11	40.6	3	11
Doomadgee .. ..	94	3	32	2	21.3
Hammond Island*	117	8	68.4	2	17.1
St. Paul's Mission*	240	7	29.2	1	4.2
Totals .. ..	3,090	100	32.4	77	24.9
Torres Strait Islands .. ..	3,407	127	37.3	42	12.4
†Country Districts and Bush camps .. ..	6,858	47	6.9	65	9.5

\* Not included in Torres Strait Island figures.

† As regards the death rate in country districts, it must be noted that many old indigent and sick are sent into settlements when unable to care for themselves.

## MARRIAGES.

Legal marriages were contracted by native women in sixty-three cases, the majority being to men of aboriginal race or extraction. In every case careful inquiry was made as to the health, character, and bona fides of the other contracting party, in the interests of the woman.

The unions, as regards breed, were as under:—Both parties full-blood, 13; full-blood women to half-castes, 3; full-blood woman to quadroon, 1; full-blood woman to European, 1; half-caste women to full-blood, 7; half-caste women to half-caste, 30; half-caste women to quadroon, 2; half-caste woman to European, 1; half-caste woman to Asiatic, 1; quadroon women to quadroon, 2; quadroon woman to European, 1; Pacific Island woman to Torres Strait Islander, 1.

## YOUNG WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

Again the demand for domestics has been greater than the supply, and there was no need for any capable woman to be unemployed.

The number of females placed in employment was 1,588, and, on the whole, their behaviour was good. A few proved troublesome to their employers and were sent to other situations, where it frequently happened they settled down more contentedly.

The Brisbane Office placed 42 of these females in employment, the settlements accounted for 158, and the balance engaged through country protectors or mission stations.

*Brisbane District.*—Of the females employed through Head Office, Brisbane, 27 found situations in the city and suburbs, and 15 in the country. Total wages earned amounted to £2,030, of which 60 per cent. was banked, and 40 per cent. paid direct as pocket money.

The total credit balance of these females is £6,843, and a total amount of £1,267 was withdrawn to purchase clothing and to cover the costs of holidays, amusements, &c.

*Orphans in Homes.*—The number of orphan children, mostly quadroons, maintained in homes at the expense of the department is as follows:—

Sacred Heart Mission, Thursday Island ..	23
Purga Industrial School .. .. .	13
Salvation Army Boys' Home, Indooroopilly ..	5
Salvation Army Girls' Home, Yeronga .. ..	11

The total cost of maintenance was £1,443.

An officer of the State Children Department makes a regular inspection of the conditions of these children, and reports have, in all cases, been satisfactory.

One boy of those of the Salvation Army Boys' Home, Indooroopilly, won a State Scholarship in 1936 examination, and is now attending the Central Technical College and High School. His school reports are very satisfactory. Similarly, a girl from among those at Yeronga Home won a Scholarship in 1937, and is to study at the Domestic Science College.

Besides the education grant for books, &c., this Department sees that such pupils are provided with all essentials in the way of school badges, blazers, sports fees, pocket money, &c., to ensure their being at no disability in their relations with their school mates.

## COUNTRY CAMPS.

Reserves have been established at a number of centres to enable old natives who can still look after themselves, and whose condition does not warrant their removal to a settlement or mission, to establish themselves in decent village conditions.

These reserves are also used by dependents of boys in employment, whose work precludes their families accompanying them, and by the boys themselves when on holiday. Many of the natives have erected comfortable accommodation for themselves, with some assistance from the Department towards providing sanitary conveniences and water supply.

The concentration of these people in one suitable place, especially at holiday times, makes the task of supervising much easier.

At some of the reserves, notably Gregory Downs, the natives have made nice vegetable gardens, the produce from which is a useful addition to their food supplies.

Reserves were gazetted at Herberton and Hughenden during the year, and action is pending concerning reserves at Coen, Charters Towers, and Cairns.

## HALF-CASTES.

As the population statistics show, the number of half-castes, or more correctly, cross-breeds of aboriginal strain, has increased by 127, or 2.19 per cent., on the figures for the previous year.

As returns have shown that not more than 5 per cent. of half-caste children born are of full white paternity, being otherwise the progeny of unions between the cross-breeds themselves, or of cross-breeds with full-blood and other coloured races, it can be taken as an indication that the stricter control now exercised and possible under the new laws is resulting in the steady suppression of illicit intercourse between whites and native women.

The problem of the future of the cross-breed was the subject of much discussion at the conference of Chief Protectors and Protection Board representatives held at Canberra in April. It originated in views put forward by certain States that ultimately the natives must be absorbed into the white population, and that all efforts should be directed to that end. This was opposed by a majority of the States, including Queensland, and eventually it was agreed that the destiny of the natives of aboriginal origin, but not of the full-blood, lies in their ultimate absorption by the people of the Commonwealth, and that all efforts should be directed to that end. It was also agreed that the details of administration of such a policy should be left to the individual States, but there should be uniformity of legislation, as far as possible, and the aim should be to educate the children of mixed blood to white standards, to enable them to take their place in the white community on an equal footing.

The fact was emphasised that Queensland's cross-breed problem was probably more complex than that of any other State, owing to the greater percentage of Pacific Island and Asiatic crosses, and the views of most of the authorities

on the subject in this State disputed the wisdom of measures to encourage the absorption of these breeds.

The evidence in this State has not supported any view that such breeds desire union with whites, rather do they seem to prefer to mingle with the aboriginal element.

Usually, the ambition for association with whites is found most amongst those with a preponderance of European or the higher Asiatic blood, but frequently in these classes preference is shown for the society of those of their own colour. The policy followed, of training the cross-breed youths with aboriginal leanings to become self-dependent members of their own communities and of providing facilities in uplifted home conditions, education, and technical training for the superior type to fit them to successfully merge into the white civilised life, is felt to be the most happy solution for both sides.

Progress was made in the plans for establishing two institutions as clearing stations for such types to civilised life. The Roman Catholic Mission at Hammond Island for half-castes of Asiatic and Island races was assisted by provision of materials for extensions of the school and the building of manual workshops to establish rural school training in the allied trades of the fishing and boatwright industries, to which these young people look for employment.

The Salvation Army Mission at Purga is to be developed as a home for superior types of half-castes, where the families can develop a civilised community life on European lines, from which the youths can be trained in preparation for their absorption into the industrial life of the white communities.

Training will be given in all the manual trades and also rural occupations to fit them to take their places in all avenues of useful citizenship.

#### EXEMPTIONS.

Where it has been evident that certain half-castes were by breed, intelligence, and character able to maintain themselves respectably in the civilised community and had the ambition to better themselves, certificates of exemption have been issued releasing them from the control of the Department.

To a number of such privileges given, a condition has been attached that the money to their credit with the Department should be still held in trust until their trial in free conditions proved their ability to safely administer such funds. Experience in the past has frequently shown that such people, when given control of a large sum of money, are too easily the victims of extravagance or imposition. The owner, however, is allowed all reasonable access to his money for genuine need. The number of mainland half-castes who were so exempt was 45.

As it was necessary to clearly define the position of a large number of cross-breeds at Thursday Island, many of them with a preponderance of other blood than aboriginal, certificates were issued to 157 such persons.

#### VOCATIONAL TRAINING.

Encouraging reports have been received of the progress made at the various institutions with facilities for technical training of the native youths.

With the appointment of the manual instructor at Cherbourg Settlement, a definite syllabus of training was framed, somewhat on rural school lines. This provided for primary manual instruction in the school curriculum between twelve and fourteen years of age, secondary training in the technical classes between fourteen and sixteen years, and apprenticeship to a selected trade from sixteen years onwards, under the skilled workmen on the settlement.

The boys of the technical classes are building their own workshops, under the instructor's supervision, in this way getting valuable practical experience. They are displaying great pride in their job, which is being remarkably well done.

At Palm Island, creditable work was performed in the manual classes, under direction of the Rural School head teacher. The class in leather work made 450 leather belts for Christmas clothing issue.

The most proficient pupils, on reaching the age of sixteen years, were apprenticed to the various trade workshops on the settlement.

These pupils constructed quite a large number of necessary articles of furniture and utensils for use of the native families, and they also erected a serviceable wire-netting fence to enclose a model plot for flower and vegetable garden instruction. An interesting and profitable project work is the keeping of bees, which provides a welcome addition to the food supply.

The head teacher at Woorabinda has done creditable work in organising manual classes for the boys and sewing instruction for the girls, but this will be extended when it has been possible to provide additional staff.

At each settlement the girls received regular instruction in domestic arts, such as housework, cooking, sewing, cutting out garments, and care of children. These girls made useful assistants in settlement administration as hospital wardsmaids, dormitory attendants, seamstresses, and for necessary domestic help in the quarters.

Amongst the more primitive inmates of the mission stations advanced vocational training has not been practicable, but the youths receiving training to the settled village life have been taught village building, fencing, gardening, stockwork, seamanship, and net fishing, the cultivation of tropical fruits, and coconut-growing.

In the Torres Strait islands a selected class of lads have been apprenticed to combustion engine work, others at Yorke Island have attended the carpentering and cabinet-making classes.

The islanders' teaching training school at Mabuag Island has given advanced instruction in English and the art of teaching to young islanders designed for the teaching service in their own schools or for the Island Theological College to qualify for the Ministry.

The Aboriginal Industries Trading Station has also provided means of training lads in dinghy building and boat repair work, and for the girls in the sewing rooms, which make most of the garments for issue to indigent natives.

#### OFFICIAL INSPECTIONS—RESERVES AND INSTITUTIONS.

As frequently as the pressure of administrative duties would allow, visits of inspection and direction of development activities was paid to the various settlements and missions by the Chief Protector or Assistant Chief Protector. The former paid a visit to Palm Island Settlement in March with Mr. Jones, the Superintendent of the Farm Home for Boys, Westbrook, and Mr. Rillie, the Visiting Justice at Townsville.

The Southern and Central Settlements at Cherbourg and Woorabinda were inspected later in the year by the Assistant. It is possible also to keep in daily touch, if necessary, by telephone with these latter places.

In June, the Hon. E. M. Hanlon, Minister for Health and Home Affairs, with Mr. C. E. Chuter, Under Secretary, the Chief Protector, and an official party, including the Deputy Chief Protector at Thursday Island, paid a visit of inspection of the aboriginal missions and reserves in the Gulf and Cape York Peninsula.

The mission stations and island villages at Hammond Island, Badu, Mabuia, and Poid were also visited.

The Chief Protector, with the Deputy Chief Protector, afterwards paid a visit to all the inhabited islands in the Strait, conferring with the native councils on a number of reforms proposed in local government. The Chief Protector afterwards visited the mission stations at Lockhart River, Cape Bedford, Yarrabah, and Monamona, and also attended to aboriginal matters at Cooktown, Port Douglas, Daintree River, and Cairns.

During the whole year the Deputy Chief Protector has been stationed at Thursday Island directing the reorganisation of the local administration of the affairs of the island villages and fishing fleets, and with the Government Medical Officer has periodically inspected the mission stations and island villages in his district.

#### TORRES STRAIT ISLANDS—SOMERSET DISTRICT.

##### *Protector of Aborigines, C. O'Leary.*

*Administration.*—The discontent amongst the islanders, as recorded in the last report, has now completely disappeared, and all appear to be contented again. This has resulted mostly from the change in protection system, which has given a larger measure of self-government to the people, their elected councillors now determining their future domestic policy.

The election of councillors, on the adult suffrage, still exists, and to enable them to give united expression of views on matters of such policy, a conference of councillors was held in May at Yorke Island. This conference, amongst other matters, confirmed their earlier request, agreed to by the Minister during his visit, for

a greater measure of self-control. The satisfactory manner in which the councils generally have carried out their responsibilities under the direction of the local protector for conducting the domestic and industrial affairs of their islands is gratifying evidence that such arrangement can safely be accepted for the future. While every credit is due to many of the fine old councillors of the past regime who did faithful and valuable service, their limited education was often a barrier to successful leadership. This has been recognised by the people, who have apparently appreciated the greater qualifications of the younger men with better education for these positions. This is seen in the improved type of elected representative, as there is now practically not one illiterate man amongst the councillors. They thus recognise that, without education, progress is impossible.

It is confidently anticipated that, with benevolent guidance, these people will make steady advance towards industrial and social independence.

The intellectual superiority of the islander over the mainlander must be recognised as placing the former in a distinct class, with claims to special encouragement and assistance to achieve their ambition to win a position as self-dependent citizens.

*Education.*—The usual steady progress in the primary schools established on every Torres Strait Island and church missions has been maintained. Notwithstanding that a number of the teachers employed are natives, who have not had the advantage of training and environment equal to that possessed by European teachers, their efforts, generally, have been satisfactory.

In Torres Strait, there are fifteen schools, with a roll of 1,038 pupils, of which nine are taught by European teachers, with native assistants, and six of lower grade are under control of trained native teachers.

At six reserves, on the mainland of the peninsula, four schools have European teachers and two are taught by trained natives.

The Training College established at Mabuia Island for the training of advanced pupils and student teachers has had a successful year. The number of students who passed through this college was sixteen (16), and it is pleasing to note that the popularity of this school is increasing, as the parents of the pupils become more enlightened as to the aims and achievements.

It was not possible to hold the usual annual refresher course for native teachers last year, but this will continue in future.

#### POPULATION.

The following table of the populations of the various islands and vital statistics reveals an appreciable increase in the number of births and marriages in comparison with last year. Likewise the births, per 1,000 population, show a slight increase over last year's figures.

The report for 1936 included the half-caste population of Thursday Island, but as these people are not now regarded as wards of the Department no good purpose can be served by including them.

Islands.	Total.		Births.		Deaths.		Marriages.		Births per 1000 population.	Deaths per 1000 population.
	1936.	1937.	1936.	1937.	1936.	1937.	1936.	1937.		
Badu .. .. .	518	531	17	20	4	5	5	8	37.7	9.4
Boigu .. .. .	132	141	6	1	3	3	1	4	7.1	21.3
Coconut .. .. .	128	153	4	7	3	4	..	..	45.8	26.1
Darnley .. .. .	334	344	16	16	2	6	3	2	46.5	17.4
Dauan .. .. .	110	128	1	4	1	1	1	2	31.3	7.8
Mabuiag .. .. .	339	352	6	11	1	2	2	7	31.3	5.7
Murray .. .. .	557	586	19	20	7	3	3	2	34.1	5.1
Nagheer .. .. .	30	18	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Nepean .. .. .	7	7	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Poid .. .. .	259	251	5	14	3	4	3	3	55.8	15.9
Saibai .. .. .	441	457	15	19	4	4	2	4	41.6	8.8
Stephen .. .. .	59	56	5	1	1	..	..	..	17.9	..
Three Sisters .. .. .	20	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Rennell .. .. .	..	14	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Dalrymple .. .. .	..	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yam .. .. .	193	205	7	7	2	7	..	2	34.1	34.1
Yorke .. .. .	154	158	4	7	3	3	..	1	44.3	19
<b>Totals .. .. .</b>	<b>3,281</b>	<b>3,407</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>37.3</b>	<b>12.3</b>
St. Paul's .. .. .	8	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Hammond Island .. .. .	129	131	5	8	..	2	..	1	61.1	15.3
<b>Totals .. .. .</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>..</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>58.8</b>	<b>14.7</b>

In addition there is estimated to be over 2,050 nomads on the mainland, including the following under the control of the Church Missions:—Mapoon, 338; Weipa, 182; Aurukun, 660; Lockhart River, 375.

#### LABOR CONDITIONS ON LAND.

During the year, ninety-seven (97) males and eighteen (18) females were employed under agreement. The females were all engaged as domestic servants in Thursday Island and the majority of the males secured employment, through mainland missions, on adjoining cattle stations.

The policy of placing young mission boys in work on cattle stations is proving quite successful. This provides that lads just leaving school should be engaged as stock boys with approved employers for the purpose of obtaining early training. The number of boys so employed, from Mitchell River, Aurukun, and Weipa Missions, has almost doubled and, in no case, has there been any report concerning ill-treatment of the trainees. Limited, but fairly consistent, employment for men is still obtainable on the stations in the peninsula but, as might be expected, the principal sources of employment for workers in this district are in the marine industry.

To stimulate agricultural development of the various Church missions, and, at the same time to absorb surplus labour, those mission men who are not capable of securing work in the marine industry in productive employment, grants of money and plant were made by the Department to assist the missions to achieve a measure of self-support.

A large proportion of the mainland mission natives are not adapted to work in the marine industry, and it therefore devolves on the missions to endeavour to secure remunerative employment for them, either in productive work on the missions or through neighbouring employers.

#### GOVERNMENT SETTLEMENT, COWAL CREEK.

The Government Settlement at Cowal Creek, Cape York Peninsula, continues to make satisfactory progress. The people there are probably more favourably situated than is the case with the inmates of missions further south, in that, during the major portion of the year, they can work marine produce with their dinghies. Pearlshell, in particular, can be picked up in fair quantities in the adjacent waters.

It has been possible with the co-operation of the people to so organise their work that they are guaranteed sufficient foodstuffs at any period of the year. When climatic conditions militated against dinghies working marine produce, they engaged in cultivation of their gardens, on systematic lines, under the supervision of the native teacher. The result was that there was no shortage of food at any time and the people were assured a well-balanced diet.

Approximately 12 acres was cultivated and planted with sweet potatoes, cassava, pumpkins, and watermelons. These foodcrops carried the people on to about November, after which their earnings from marine produce enabled them to live comfortably with no apparent distress. Towards the end of the year, the cultivation areas were extended and, already, a start has been made to plant 20 acres which, if satisfactory weather conditions prevail, should ensure ample food crops during 1938. The intention is to extend the sweet potatoes and cassava cultivation and also plant bananas, papaws, pineapples, and greater areas of pumpkins and watermelons. The people still augment their food supplies with fish, caught with the locally made net, together with game, which is fairly plentiful.

An improved water supply in the form of a cemented well, with pump, was provided and the villages are now assured of a constant supply of excellent water.

Timber was obtained for the flooring of all houses, and the bark cottages on this settlement are thus improved beyond measure. Fourteen new houses have been erected.

#### LABOUR CONDITIONS IN THE MARINE INDUSTRY.

Conditions in the marine industry were fairly satisfactory, so far as employment offering was concerned.

The total number of men who secured work in all branches of this industry was 711, of which number 548 were islanders and 163 mainlanders. The majority of the islanders were employed on "Company" boats, whilst the mainlanders were mainly all employed on "Master" boats. The 240 islanders who were employed on "Master" boats earned gross wages totalling £7,800, while the 130 mainlanders, who were similarly employed, earned £2,620.

As in previous years, a large number of partly inefficient islanders were employed on "Company" boats, although actually their services were not essential. The "Company" boat system, however, enables these men on an average to earn a wage sufficient to keep themselves and families in reasonable comfort.

The gradual reduction in the number of "Company" boats engaged also made it more difficult to find employment for the whole of the islanders, and the position had been made more acute by reason of the unrestricted employment of Papuan labour. This difficulty has now been overcome, through an arrangement whereby the number of Papuans who can be employed in the industries is restricted to 100. This arrangement will operate as from the 1st of June, 1938, and it is anticipated that the number of islanders who will secure employment on "Master" boats will be considerably in excess of the figures previously recorded. This restriction will benefit principally the men of Darnley and Murray Islands, where no "Company" boats are worked, and as these men are dependent on the "Master" boats for their living, and, in the main, have given good service in the past years, their claim for preference over indent labour should be recognised.

#### "COMPANY" BOATS.

A total of twenty-five "Company" boats, the capital value of which is £13,000, were engaged in the marine industry and gave employment to 328 islanders and 32 mainlanders. Of these vessels six are luggers and the balance cutters. In the latter category there are a few small vessels which are not suitable for work in heavy weather, but, nevertheless, they give serviceable employment to old men, who work the reefs adjacent to their home islands as circumstances allow.

Several noteworthy records were established by the "Company" boat fleet for the year. The lugger "Timena" produced marine produce to the value of £2,487 and the cutter "Naianga's" catch for the year totalled £1,487. This latter figure is the highest ever recorded by a cutter in the history of "Company" boats workings, and it can be claimed that no vessel of her size has ever, under similar conditions, obtained such a high return for twelve months. Other outstanding successes were attained by the "Jimmy" of

Mabuiag, £1,055, "Badu" of Badu," £957, "Kismet" of Yorke, £866, and "Caroline" of Cocomat, £836. These boats were all able to pay good wages and allocate a percentage of their earnings towards redemption of loans or payments to reserves. The vessels working from Saibai, Boigu, and Dauan Islands were not nearly so successful as those from other islands.

When the recruiting of labour for "Company" boats took place in January, 1937, there was a feeling of enthusiasm which augured well for the success of the boats. For some unaccountable reason, however, the Saibai islanders did not enter into their work with the same energy as marked the crews of other boats. The result was that both luggers and cutters from the Saibai group were unsuccessful in paying even reasonable wages, and they all accumulated a working account debit balance. Saibai Island is an outstanding example of failure on the part of the councillors to rise to the occasion in controlling the crews of their "Company" boats. While their efforts in the directing of social services ashore have been commendable, they have failed to achieve success with the boats. It is hoped that an improvement will mark their efforts during 1938.

The price of marine produce was generally very satisfactory. During the early months, the price of trochus shell was in the vicinity of £120 and, at such figure, fishing for it was a remunerative undertaking. Pearlshell was in a much worse position, averaging £110 per ton. However, towards the close of the year, and particularly at the end of December, there was a further serious slump in the price of pearlshell, sold locally, and the best sales result for a large parcel of "Company" boats shell was only £98 per ton. At this price pearlshell is hardly worth working. Present indications are that the difficulty in marketing trochus shell will also seriously affect the price of this commodity. Should trochus shell fall in price, as pearlshell has done, the successful workings of the boats, either "Company" or "Master" vessels, is going to cause grave concern, with the probable necessity of laying up some of the boats until a better price for produce can be obtained. The laying up of a "Company" boat is an impossibility, unless the price of produce falls to a totally unworkable figure.

The Torres Strait islanders are almost entirely dependent on the marine industry for their livelihood. There is no other industry capable of absorbing the unemployed islander; consequently it is imperative that the boats should be kept working, even if the outlook is not bright at the moment, owing to depression caused by the Chino-Japanese War, which is worse than that of 1930 and 1931, as once a boat is laid up deterioration is considerably greater than if she remains in commission.

The total produce won by the "Company" boats was 169 tons, valued at £20,348. This shows an improvement on the figures for 1936, which were 135 tons for return of £15,401. Of this amount shore workers earned £2,838, and aboriginal industries sold, on behalf of Palm Island Settlement swimmers, produce to the value of £464. The total value of produce won by the individual efforts of natives was, therefore, despite the very poor price of pearlshell,

quite satisfactory. When it is remembered that during 1935 as high as £160 per ton was obtained for pearlshell and the average during 1936 was £120, the disheartening effect of the fall in price to £98 in December, 1937, can be appreciated. However, the prospects for the "Company" boats for 1938, while not as bright as could be hoped for, are nevertheless promising and, provided that a slight improvement in market conditions can be assured, there is no occasion at present for concern regarding the future of the fleet.

The total wages paid to men employed on "Company" boats was £11,206, which is £3,679 in excess of that paid last year and £2,100 greater than was paid in 1935. During 1935 459 men received £9,170 as wages, against £11,206 which was earned by 360 men during 1937.

In addition to receiving the above wages, "Company" boat employees were each supplied with tobacco to a value of £1 12s. per annum. Furthermore, during lay-up periods, the crews have had the opportunity of cultivating their gardens, building houses, &c.

#### HEALTH.

Early in the year a slight epidemic of dengue fever occurred in some of the islands, and there was a further mild outbreak at Badu during May, June, and July. Other than this, there was no serious illness, and the usual cases of yaws, malaria, &c., were successfully treated. It is pleasing to be able to record that malaria fever was again not prevalent at Saibai Island to any extent. At the end of December several cases of whooping cough were reported, with every indication of an extensive epidemic. However, the position is well in hand should the outbreak extend to other islands.

#### ISLAND IMPROVEMENTS.

At Badu Island, fifteen new houses were erected, with financial assistance given by the protector's office. Such assistance covered the purchase of roofing iron and sawn timber, which was keenly appreciated by the men, as it allowed many, who previously could not afford material for their houses to build. Similar assistance was also given at Mabuig Island, where one house was rebuilt, one new house erected, and two partly completed.

A new gaol was built and a second tank erected to provide greater storage for the windmill. One wooden bridge was also built, and a road was cut to the site of the new village. The main road between the Aboriginal Industries store and the village has been widened and rebuilt.

At Yorke Island, improvements to the school were carried out and the sea wall on the western end of the village was repaired.

At Murray Island, work was commenced on the erection of privies, and a village square for recreation was laid out.

Keen interest was taken on all islands in the production of the usual foodcrops, and particularly on Poid Island, which hitherto has been rather backward in this direction, was a commendable improvement noticed.

#### BOY SCOUTS AND GIRL GUIDES.

The interest in the boy scouts and girl guides movement was well maintained and new troops were formed at Boigu and Coconut Islands.

It was intended to hold a scouts jamboree about the middle of the year, but this was impossible, as most of the men who would have attended were absent on their boats. The value of such an event, in creating greater interest in the movement, can easily be appreciated, but, unfortunately, it is most difficult to arrange without clashing with the workings of the boats. It is intended during next year to give further consideration to the question.

#### ISLAND FUNDS.

The following reveals the position of Island Funds held in the Protector of Aborigines' Office at the 31st December, 1937:—

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Badu Island .. .. Cr.	1,163	7	0			
Boigu Island .. .. "	64	15	8			
Coconut Island .. .. "	101	10	3			
Darnley Island .. .. "	123	5	8			
Dauan Island .. .. "	22	1	10			
Mabuig Island .. .. "	547	10	4			
Murray Island .. .. "	841	11	2			
Nagheer Island .. .. "	180	5	5			
Rennell Island .. .. "	22	16	8			
Saibai Island .. .. "	477	13	6			
Stephen Island .. .. "	413	7	4			
Yam Island .. .. "	59	2	4			
Yorke Island .. .. "	450	6	0			
Moa Island (Poid) .. .. "	112	15	2			
Kendall River .. .. "	137	4	8			
East Coast .. .. "	87	6	8			
Mapoon Mission .. .. "	26	4	11			
	£4,831	4	7			
Small River .. .. Dr.	89	0	3			
Total .. ..		4,742	4	4		

During the year the term "Island Fund," in so far as it applied to the collection of deductions from natives' earnings, was abolished and the term "Island Tax" substituted. Previously the revenue from Island Fund consisted principally of such deductions, but, as from the 1st January, 1938, an island tax, ranging from 2s. to £2 per person per annum, conditional on the circumstances of the taxpayer, will be levied. This innovation, which was a recommendation of the councillors' conference, was accepted by the Government for a period of twelve months from the 1st January, following which the system of raising funds for local social services from the island communities will again be considered.

#### SAVINGS BANK ACCOUNTS.

The credit balance of 1,395 Savings Bank accounts in operation was £3,743 15s. 9d. The sum of £14,672 11s. 8d. was deposited to the credit of these accounts, whilst £17,834 was withdrawn. Thirty-three new accounts were opened and 204 were closed. Interest earned amounted to £104 19s. 5d.

#### ABORIGINAL INDUSTRIES.

Steady progress was maintained throughout the year at Aboriginal Industries head store at Badu Island and at the various branch stores. Branches were opened at Boigu and Stephen Islands and are giving good service to the people on these islands.

The turnover at Badu and the branch stores for the twelve months was £29,216, but, as the actual audit and stocktaking will not be effected until the 31st March, it is not possible to indicate in this report the percentage of profit made.

The following turnover for twelve months at the various branches reveals the support which is given to the small stores.—

	£	s.	d.
Murray Island .. .. .	1,448	0	0
Darnley Island .. .. .	2,101	0	0
Yorke Island .. .. .	2,121	0	0
Coconut Island .. .. .	1,647	0	0
Yam Island .. .. .	824	0	0
Saibai Island .. .. .	2,871	0	0
Cowal Creek .. .. .	1,411	0	0
Shell Store (T.L.) .. .. .	1,979	0	0

The boatshed and workshop at Badu Island was particularly busy, and nineteen new dinghies were built for the "Company" boats, in addition to which forty were repaired. Eight cutters were slipped and repaired and, generally, the workmanship can compare favourably with that performed elsewhere.

The workroom, which employs a staff of four girls, produced the following garments:—

Bloomers .. 189 doz.	Frocks .. 198 doz.
Petticoats .. 14 doz.	Pillows .. 5 doz.
Lava Lavas .. 41 doz.	Baby Rugs .. 1 doz.
Drawers .. 82 doz.	Girl Guides
Sheets .. 16 only	Dresses .. 16 only

Apart from the tuition which the employees receive in needle work, the customers receive the benefit of having ready-made clothing for sale, which at times is preferred to the articles received from the South.

Aboriginal Industries Board held eight meetings, occupying thirty-seven and a-half hours. At these meetings, accounts, totalling £40,141, were passed for payment, and ninety-seven requisitions for supplies were prepared and submitted to the Board for consideration.

Periodical inspections of branch stores were carried out by the manager or members of the Board.

The Board's ketch "Mulgrave," assisted by the Q.G.K. "Melbidir," carried 389 tons of cargo between Thursday Island and Badu Island and between Thursday Island and the branch stores.

All native-won produce was sold by public tender, and ninety-seven such sales were held, towards which 307 tenders were received.

The sum of £262 12s. was paid as commission to branch storekeepers. Several of these branch storekeepers are Torres Strait islanders, and they have given excellent service to the Board. The difficulty under which the business works must be appreciated, when it is recognised that these native storekeepers have had no previous experience and are dependent on the Board's officials for advice and direction in carrying out their various duties. It is to their credit that in no instance has a case of dishonesty or maladministration been recorded, and the Board is indebted to them for their zealous efforts in dealing fairly with the customers. Appreciation should also be accorded the various European Government teachers, who also act as branch managers and who render invaluable assistance to the business.

#### RECREATION.

Native dancing continues to be the most popular form of recreation for the island people. The policy of the Department is to encourage

such dancing and other native sport and, despite that there is an inclination amongst some of the younger men to indulge in European dancing, the influence of the older people is still sufficiently strong to discourage such form of recreation.

Fishing and dugong hunting, as usual, form a prominent occupation of the people, and, while such cannot be solely regarded as recreation, they nevertheless constitute a break in the monotony of island life.

#### VISITS OF INSPECTION.

During May and June a visit of inspection to various missions in the Gulf of Carpentaria and some of the islands of Torres Strait was made by the Honourable the Minister for Health and Home Affairs, who was accompanied by the Under Secretary and the Chief Protector of Aborigines. These visits served to bring before the coloured people the interest which the Department is taking in their welfare, and to provide them with an opportunity of stating their position as coloured residents of the State. The result was that many matters of policy were amended and a greater measure of self-government was granted to the people of the islands.

#### APPRECIATION.

It is desired to extend to all Government teachers, superintendents of church missions, and to the various public servants in Thursday Island, including the staff of the Office of the Protector of Aborigines, the most sincere appreciation of their co-operation and assistance during what has been a particularly trying year.

The assistance which has been given by the Chief Protector of Aborigines to the administration, including the Aboriginal Industries Board, is also thankfully recorded.

#### GOVERNMENT SETTLEMENTS.

**Cherbourg, Murgon. Superintendent, W. Porteous Semple.**

**Woorabinda, Baralaba. Superintendent, H. C. Colledge.**

**Palm Island, Townsville. Acting Superintendent F. H. Julian to 12th October, 1937, Medical Superintendent, Dr. G. Courtney from 12th October, 1937.**

*Staff.*—The following appointments to or change in staff were made:—

Cherbourg: Mr. James Patrick McEvoy, a trained manual instructor, was appointed assistant teacher, manual training subjects.

Mr. Vivian Bryon Jordon, who was serving in a temporary capacity as sawyer and lorry-driver, was appointed overseer on probation.

Palm Island: Dr. Geoffrey Courtney, M.B., B.S. (Melbourne), was appointed Medical Superintendent.

Mr. F. H. Julian, Acting Superintendent, resumed his position as Deputy Superintendent, Fantome Island.

Miss Margaret Richardson, of the hospital staff, was appointed settlement matron in place of Miss Lorna E. Norman, who resigned.

Miss Annie Green was seconded from the Department of Public Instruction as assistant teacher at school.



Mr. G. Roberts was appointed supervising tradesman in a permanent capacity.

Fantome Island: Miss M. E. Lucy, who was serving in a temporary capacity, was appointed permanently to the staff of the Fantome Island Lock Hospital.

Miss Gladys Tinney was made matron in charge.

Woorabinda: Miss Dorothy M. Ethell was appointed hospital matron, Woorabinda, in the room of Miss Clements, who was transferred to Palm Island Hospital staff and subsequently resigned.

#### POPULATION.

Settlement.	Full-blood.		Half-caste.		Total.
	M.	F.	M.	F.	
Cherbourg ..	207	125	293	320	945
Palm Island ..	481	317	223	179	1,200
Woorabinda ..	169	116	177	195	657
Fantome Island ..	103	78	23	20	224
Total ..	960	636	716	714	3,026

The figures given above show an increase of 167 on those of the previous year. Removals of aged and indigent natives from country protectorates accounts for the increase.

The greatest increase in population was at Woorabinda, which received 76. Cherbourg showed 17 extra, and Palm Island an increase of 84.

*Labour.*—The demand for female labour from the three settlements has again been in excess of the number available for domestic service. Male labour, required mostly for stock work, has not been so much in demand, owing to the dry season experienced throughout the greater part of the State.

The number employed under agreement was 295, but there was a decrease of 75 in the number of casual permits issued.

The Murgon district, which is closely settled, passed through a very dry period; thus landholders did not require the usual number of casual workers from Cherbourg.

The following table will indicate the amount of native labour employed from the three settlements:—

Settlement.	Under Agreement.			Under Casual Permt.
	M.	F.	Total.	
Cherbourg ..	23	68	91	116
Palm Island ..	47	39	86	Nil
Woorabinda ..	37	51	88	5
	107	158	265	121

*Conduct and Discipline.*—Apart from a case of attempted stabbing at Palm Island, for which the offender was sentenced to a term of imprisonment, the behaviour of settlement inmates was excellent. The usual family squabbles occurred

and, when the number of diverse types quartered in the settlements is taken into account, it is greatly to the credit of the officers in charge that the behaviour is of such a generally high standard. The services of the native police contributed in no small degree to the good conduct, and they proved of great service. All domestic quarrels and minor offences against discipline have been dealt with by the settlement administrations. The usual number of abscondings has occurred, but in most cases the deserters returned voluntarily or were apprehended and sent back. One batch of abscondings, that was officially investigated, showed that in not one case was any complaint made against treatment. The majority were because of homesickness or wanderlust.

#### AGRICULTURE.

*Palm Island.*—Following a visit by Mr. T. Jones, of Westbrook Farm Home, and acting on his advice, areas of land previously under cultivation have been allowed to return to grass, thus giving a larger area of pasture for stock. Cultivation has been concentrated on the areas closer to the village and considered to be more suitable. Twenty-five acres were planted with food crops with an additional 5 acres under fodder crops.

Good supplies of farm produce were grown and distributed to inmates, as additions to ordinary rations. Included in the distribution were 28 tons sweet potatoes, 4 tons turnips, 5 tons swede turnips, 5 cwt. French beans, 5 cwt. green peas, 2 tons tomatoes, 1 ton carrots, 3 tons Chinese cabbage, 6,000 lettuce, 1,000 bunches of bananas. In addition to ample supplies of mangoes for consumption by inmates, 3 tons of pulp was sold to Southern buyers.

The experimental crop of rice did not give any return commensurate with the labour involved, so it was considered that the land under this crop could be more profitably utilised otherwise.

*Woorabinda.*—The lowest rainfall since 1932 was experienced, with the consequence that farming operations were, in most instances, unsuccessful. Supplies of vegetables were obtained and distributed to inmates. A cutting of Rhodes grass and panicum gave a good supply of hay for stock. The installation of an irrigation plant is being investigated, in order that farming can be carried out despite adverse weather conditions. The visit of an engineer to report regarding this is awaited.

The following vegetables were grown and issued for food:—1,053 cabbages, 206 lettuce, 187 squashes, 298 lb. beans, and 84 dozen turnips, with smaller quantities of other vegetables.

*Cherbourg.*—A badly distributed rainfall, 10 inches under the average, again made farming difficult. This followed two years of abnormally low rainfall. As a result the crops planted proved disappointing. Thirty acres of oats were planted, but only 15 tons of hay were harvested from this. Lucerne planted gave a very poor return. Crops of sweet potatoes, pumpkins, and cowpeas were failures. Amongst smaller quantities of other vegetables distributed, the following were grown:—925 lb. tomatoes, 1,488 lb. eschallots, 583 lb. onions, 400 lb. artichokes, 234 lb. turnips, 3¼ tons cabbages, 1 ton

cauliflowers, 2 tons potatoes. A total distribution of 33,935 lb. of produce was made.

The installation of the proposed irrigation plant is awaited, in the hope that it will obviate the present heart-breaking attempts to grow crops under such adverse conditions.

*Fantome Island.*—The land at the farm area, as previously reported, is poor, and does not

respond too readily to efforts to promote agriculture. The rainfall was only half that of the previous year. Nevertheless, fair supplies of vegetables were grown and distributed. Coral was burnt for lime and a quantity sent to Palm Island for use there on the farm. Coconut palms have been planted, and many are making good progress.

STATEMENT OF STOCK ON SETTLEMENTS.

Settlement.	Breeders.									Dairy Cattle.						Horses.		
	Herd Bulls.	Herd Cows.	Bullocks.	Heifers.	Weaners.	Working Bullocks.	Spayed Cows.	Steers.	Totals.	Bulls.	Cows.	Heifers.	Weaner Heifers.	Weaner Bulls.	Totals.	Draught Horses.	Saddle Horses.	Totals.
Cherbourg . .	24	636	80	154	346	9	14	146	1,409	1	20	18	4	..	43	16	11	27
Woorabinda	31	506	285	575	..	35	207	401	2,040	..	..	..	..	..	..	26	42	68
Palm Island	2	48	57	22	..	50	..	37	216	2	85	..	40	34	161	19	7	26
Fantome Is.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	12	8	3	4	28	3	1	4
	57	1,190	422	751	346	94	221	584	3,665	4	117	26	47	38	232	64	61	125

## STOCK.

*Cherbourg.*—As reported elsewhere, this settlement again passed through a dry period; consequently, water and grass were scarce. Although conditions were no better, the losses of stock were lower than in the previous years. Calving was again poor, for the above reasons. The calves branded numbered 360, and the herd now totals 1,451 head, including twenty dairy cows. The milk yield, however, was fairly satisfactory, considering the dry season, and adequate supplies for all needs were available.

Fifteen herd bulls were added to the herd. The number of cattle killed for beef was 345. There are also twenty-seven horses (draught and saddle) in use on the settlement.

No new dams were built. A continual watch had to be kept for bush fires, which proved troublesome. A good deal of valuable grass land was rendered useless for the time being by fires. Twelve hundred acres were ringbarked and 20 miles of boundary fences rebuilt. One portion of the reserve was divided into new paddocks.

*Woorabinda.*—Seasonal conditions at this place also adversely affected the stock. Such rain as fell was badly distributed, and excessive cold and heat added to the difficulties experienced. Two hundred killers were transferred to Cherbourg; 211 head were killed and issued as a meat ration. The calves branded numbered 405, and the herd now totals 1,739. There are seventy head of draught and saddle horses in use. Some trouble was experienced with bush fires, but little loss occurred. Boundary fences were repaired and are now in good order.

An area of land was ringbarked, and another of 700 acres was suckered. Two dams were repaired and one new one made near the settlement.

*Palm Island.*—The total number of stock at Palm Island was 327 head. Included in

these were eighty-five dairy cows. These latter produced a fair quantity of milk (8,359 gallons), which was all used on the settlement. No stock was sold or transferred, but the dairy herd was augmented with fresh stock of a good milking strain. There are twenty-six head of horses (saddle and draught) in use. Cattle and pigs were killed to augment the meat ration; the respective weights thus issued were 4,276 lb. and 2,500 lb.

No ringbarking was carried out, and the area remains at 1,000 acres. Three miles of fencing were erected and 1 mile was repaired.

*Industrial.*—At Palm Island, 715 logs were milled, producing 92,110 superficial feet of timber. A five-roomed house was erected as quarters for the farm overseer, and a similar dwelling for the nurses at Fantome Island. A new office was erected at the school, and repairs carried out to existing buildings. This work was all done by trained native carpenters. Thirty-six new native houses were erected. Cabinet-makers, blacksmiths, and tinsmiths have been kept busy supplying the settlement demands for the various articles manufactured by them. The cabinet-makers particularly deserve mention for the splendid furniture turned out. A pumping plant was installed at Fantome Island in lieu of the windmill. This will overcome the water shortage, caused through lack of wind, at times. Arrangements were made to house the wireless transmitting plants at North Palm Island and Fantome Island.

At Woorabinda, despite epidemics of influenza and measles, progress was made with the building programme. More native cottages were completed, and additions were made to the saw-mill, enabling increase in its output. The teacher's residence was completed, and improvements carried out at the hospital. The new store buildings were completed, and the accommodation in this building is now ample for the free and retail store requirements of the settlement.

The drafting yards were repaired in readiness for the annual muster and are now in good order.

At Cherbourg a covered gangway was built between the nurses' quarters and the hospital. The whole of the settlement administrative buildings and officers' quarters were painted. New native police barracks were erected and conditions thus made more comfortable. A large building, as a workshop for the manual training classes and a blacksmith's shop, is under construction, and should be completed early in the new year. The butcher's shop was relined with fibro-cement. Native tradesmen carried out all the building work on the settlement, and the results were very creditable.

The settlement sewing-room, which is in the charge of the settlement matron, provided a good quantity of clothing for the inmates.

The sawmill turned out 53,866 superficial feet of timber of all sizes, rough and dressed.

Trochus shell to the value of £382 9s. 11d. was obtained by some of the men at Palm Island and sent to Thursday Island for sale. The matter of obtaining a larger boat is under consideration, as the dinghies are too small and too much time is lost in sailing to the working grounds and returning each day.

Promising native lads were again apprenticed to the native tradesmen, with gratifying results. Work turned out by these young native craftsmen and trainees compares favourably with that of white tradesmen.

The collections for the three settlements are indicated in the following table:—

Collections.	Cherbourg.	Woorabinda.	Palm Island.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Native wages .. ..	3,690 16 11	4,074 0 1	5,857 19 3
Sale of produce .. ..	387 17 2	215 10 8	382 9 11
Interest on trust accounts	132 6 0	91 5 0	457 7 0
Native contribution to Maintenance	509 19 2	517 18 4	1,362 12 11
Stock .. .. .	56 10 6	61 16 1	..
	4,777 9 9	4,960 10 2	8,000 9 1

A total of £17,800 9s.

These figures do not include the value of home-grown produce, beef, food crops, stock fodder, timber, &c., produced for home consumption, nor of the buildings, fencing, dams, and general development work carried out by native labour.

#### RETAIL STORE TRANSACTIONS.

The following table indicates the amount of business which passed through the retail stores in the way of native purchases or issues to the needy:—

Settlement.	Cash Sales.	Bank Orders.	Free Issues.	Total.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Cherbourg ..	935 15 5	2,523 2 0	1,057 8 11	4,516 6 10
Palm Island	773 13 2	5,163 1 0	439 8 9	6,376 2 11
Woorabinda	1,163 15 3	2,809 10 9	271 12 3	4,244 18 3
Totals ..	2,873 3 10	10,495 14 3	1,768 9 11	15,137 8 0

#### EDUCATION.

The reports of the school inspectors and the head teachers show that progress has been made by the pupils. A competent manual training instructor has been appointed at Cherbourg, and at present he is busy with the assistance of the senior boys, in building the necessary workshops. At Palm Island the pupils have been taught leather-work, tinsmithing, and wood-work, and the product of their efforts has been very creditable. Project work, in the form of beekeeping, has also been undertaken and a good supply of honey has been distributed.

It is proposed, if the soil and situation is found suitable, to establish a forestry plot, with a view to replanting those areas on the island denuded of trees by logging operations. At Woorabinda the senior boys were taught wood-work and have built their own workshop and fenced in the school area. The girls at the three settlements have been taught domestic science with a view to fitting them for home life and domestic service.

The following table shows the enrolment of native children at the Government settlements, missions, Torres Strait Islands, and provisional schools.

#### GOVERNMENT SETTLEMENTS.

Settlement.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Palm Island .. ..	134	119	253
Cherbourg .. ..	67	54	121
Woorabinda .. ..	70	53	123
Totals .. ..	271	226	497
TORRES STRAIT ISLANDS.			
Islands .. ..	471	470	941
Cowal Creek .. ..	23	23	46
Totals .. ..	494	493	987

#### CHURCH MISSIONS.

Missions.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Aurukun .. ..	47	40	87
Cape Bedford .. ..	38	17	55
Doomadgee .. ..	26	30	56
Hammond Island .. ..	32	10	42
Lockhart River .. ..	29	29	58
Mapoon .. ..	27	39	66
Mitchell River .. ..	40	20	60
Moa Island (St. Paul's) .. ..	29	36	65
Monamona .. ..	35	37	72
Mornington Island .. ..	32	45	77
Purga .. ..	9	12	21
Weipa .. ..	4	12	16
Yarrabah .. ..	55	70	125
Totals .. ..	403	397	800

#### PROVISIONAL SCHOOLS.

Centre.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Gayndah .. ..	5	6	11
Myora .. ..	5	8	13
Thursday Island .. ..	28	35	63
Mitchell .. ..	20	17	37
Totals .. ..	58	66	124

## RECREATION.

Settlement and mission officials, assisted by their families, have often taken great interest in the fostering of sport and amusement amongst their charges. This sphere of settlement activity is of inestimable value, because of its influence in cultivating a friendly community spirit and contentment, as well as providing a healthy outlet for energies.

Settlement teams played football and cricket against white teams at various centres and had a most successful year. The Cherbourg teams, especially, deserve special mention for their achievements. The general good conduct of these boys when away from home has given rise to favourable comment. Native and European dancing was also popular, while the corroboree, especially among the older people, was, as always, a firm favourite. Vigoro, tennis, basket ball, and other games were played by the girls and younger women.

Boxing was enjoyed by the younger men, and teams from Cherbourg came to Brisbane, on two occasions, to compete with white amateurs, and rival teams from Cherbourg and Woorabinda journeyed to Brisbane to compete for a championship cup, under the auspices of the Queensland Amateur Boxing and Wrestling Union. The boys acquitted themselves creditably in contests against white boxers, and in the tournament against Woorabinda the Cherbourg team was victorious.

Sports meetings were held on the settlements on festive occasions and to raise funds to further the sporting activities.

At Woorabinda a wireless set, purchased by the natives themselves, provided nightly a popular means of recreation.

The Boy Scout movement is established at Palm Island and Cherbourg, and the beneficial influence of the training on the young boys is very evident. A number of white scouts, drawn from troops throughout Queensland, attended a camp at Palm Island. The Chief Commissioner highly praised the work and co-operation of the local native troop.

The usual Christmas and New Year celebrations were indulged in and, with the extra issue of good things to all settlement inmates, the festive season was enjoyed to the full.

The loyal and often self-sacrificing work of the officials of the settlements, in which their families have often voluntarily assisted, for the welfare and happiness of the inmates, is gratefully appreciated.

The visiting missionaries, besides their ministrations for the spiritual welfare of the people, have always willingly co-operated in measures for their benefit.

## MISSIONS.

**Aurukun, Gulf of Carpentaria (Superintendent, Rev. W. F. McKenzie), Presbyterian.**

**Cape Bedford, Cooktown (Superintendent, Pastor G. H. Schwarz), Lutheran.**

**Edward River, Gulf of Carpentaria (Superintendent J. W. Chapman), Anglican.**

**Hammond Island, Torres Strait (Superintendent, Rev. O. McDermott), Roman Catholic.**

**Lockhart River, Cape York Peninsula (Superintendent, H. Rowan), Anglican.**

**Mapoon, Gulf of Carpentaria (Superintendent, Rev. R. McLelland), Presbyterian.**

**Mitchell River, Gulf of Carpentaria (Acting Superintendent, A. McLeod), Anglican.**

**Monamona, Cairns (Superintendent, L. A. Borgas), Seventh-Day Adventist.**

**Mornington Island, Gulf of Carpentaria (Superintendent, Rev. R. H. Wilson), Presbyterian.**

**Moa Island, St. Paul's, Torres Strait (Superintendent, Rev. F. H. Darke), Anglican.**

**Purga, Ipswich (Superintendent, Adjutant T. H. Booth), Salvation Army.**

**Weipa, Gulf of Carpentaria (Superintendent, J. Dougherty), Presbyterian.**

**Yarrabah, Cairns (Superintendent, Rev. T. C. Kernke), Anglican.**

**Doomadgee, Burketown (Superintendent, W. T. Reed), Gospel Brethren.**

## AURUKUN.

*Religious Instruction.*—Services were held daily and twice on Sunday. These were well attended, and a good interest was shown by the natives.

*Health.*—The health of the inmates can be regarded as satisfactory. In the early part of the year a number were receiving treatment for skin diseases, and it was found that infection was being spread by dogs. With the consent of the people all dogs on the mission were destroyed, and the skin infection disappeared.

The natives are not now so subject to coughs and colds, which previously were fairly prevalent, owing to the practice now being followed of not wearing any clothing on the upper part of the body.

*Industry.*—On the mission reserve there are 566 head of beef cattle, 30 milkers, and over 60 horses. For nine months of the year it was possible to supply milk to the school children, the aged, and the babies.

Coconuts, pumpkins, cassava, yams, and bananas were the chief items of food grown.

Two miles of new fencing was erected and 1 mile of old fence repaired.

The quantity of timber milled was not up to expectations, owing to trouble with the sawmill machinery.

## CAPE BEDFORD.

*Industry.*—At Spring Hill 30 acres of land was cleared of timber for agricultural purposes, and 1½ miles of fencing erected.

Potatoes and Mauritius beans were successfully cultivated, and coconuts, turtle meat, oysters, and other marine foods assisted the food supply. Owing to the necessity for utilising the boats for transport purposes, the usual quantity of dugong was not obtained. This item of food was missed by the people.

The cattle herd did not show any increase in number, owing to dingoes killing the calves and because of the inability to prevent the cattle straying from the mission reserve. The difficult nature of the country made it impossible to prevent these losses.

*Health.*—The health of the natives was excellent. Only four deaths occurred, three of whom were old men, who recently came to the mission to live.

*Building.*—Further progress was made for housing the inmates. Twenty cottages have been erected and are now occupied by married aborigines. The framework consisted of bush timber and the walls of split and dressed palm, of which there is an ample supply. Difficulty was experienced in obtaining iron for roofing, owing to shortage of supplies.

#### HAMMOND ISLAND.

*Health.*—The health generally was good. One case of pulmonary disease was treated at Thursday Island hospital, and the Government Medical Officer there treated a number of patients for injuries, including four children with fractured arms. Two deaths occurred, both infants only a few days old.

*Labour.*—There was a steady demand for boys for work on pearling vessels. The married men earned a good living by casual labour in Thursday Island. Fourteen were signed on shipping articles and seven were casually employed, one half-caste female being employed as a domestic.

*Industrial Operations.*—Approximately 60 acres are used for garden purposes. A good variety of crops were grown, and the produce was sold in Thursday Island or consumed by the inmates. Sixty bushels of Mauritius beans were sold in Cairns.

*Conduct.*—Discipline was satisfactory and a good spirit prevailed.

*Social Improvements.*—A good road was constructed through the village. Three new houses were erected and other houses repaired and painted.

*Education.*—Forty-two children attended the school, which was in charge of two teaching sisters. The girls were taught sewing and dress-making and the boys woodwork. Construction of the new building for manual training, presented by the Department, was commenced, and it is hoped this phase of school work will commence shortly. Progress was satisfactory.

*Religious Instruction.*—Services were regularly held and very well attended. The teaching and example of the Sisters has been of marked benefit to the children.

*General.*—The councillors did good work in effecting village improvements, and were accorded the willing co-operation of the people. The year was an exceptionally happy one for the inmates.

#### LOCKHART RIVER.

*Religious Instruction.*—Regular services, once daily and twice on Sundays, have been maintained. The attendance and interest shown was very fair.

*Industry.*—All able-bodied swimmers found employment in the marine industry. The demand for bush workers and stockmen was somewhat slack, and a few of the men were unable to obtain employment in this sphere.

Six miles of new fence was erected, to provide for a head of 250 mixed cattle transferred from the Mitchell River Mission.

An area of land, 360 yards by 150 yards, with a 25 feet runway, has been cleared and drained for use as an aerodrome.

*Social Improvement.*—The practice of housing girls in a dormitory has been discontinued, as it was found that the parents were capable of looking after their own children.

*Health.*—Generally the health of the natives was good. The Government Medical Officer was able to pay a visit of inspection to the Mission during the year. An outbreak of impetigo occurred, 114 natives being affected.

#### MAPOON.

*Religious Services.*—Church services were held daily and twice on Sundays. These were well attended and a good interest was shown by the natives.

*Health.*—The people are strong and virile, a condition largely attributable to their balanced diet. All members were dosed for hook-worm. Malaria is still prevalent, 156 cases being treated during the year.

*Industry.*—Several new houses have been built but there is still need for more, but the shortage is being gradually overcome. Good quantities of sweet potatoes, pumpkins, corn and other vegetables were produced. A semi-rotary pump has been fitted on the well and water is now reticulated to the gardens.

There were 605 head of cattle, including 162 breeders and 11 bulls recently purchased. Brandings totalled 122. A number of fat cattle were sold and 41 killed for rations.

The season has been good and all stock look well. Income amounting to £260 was received from the sale of firewood, posts and knees for boat building. This work has kept a number of men employed and with the proceeds of sale of fancywork has added to the revenue of the mission. A regular mail service has been maintained from Thursday Island, by using the cutter "G. K. Kirke," twenty-one trips being made.

#### MITCHELL RIVER.

*Religious Instruction.*—Services were held twice daily with additional instruction for school children.

*Industry.*—There are approximately 3,700 head of cattle on the mission; 250 were sold and a similar number sent to the Lockhart River Mission. The number killed for rations was 197.

Six miles of new fencing has been erected and 10 acres of land cleared for agriculture.

Fourteen new houses were built and 10 old ones repaired.

*Health.*—The health of the natives generally was good. Visits were made by the Flying Doctor from Cloncurry when necessary.

## MONAMONA.

*Religious Instruction.*—All religious meetings were fairly well attended and good interest was shown by the majority of natives.

*Health.*—There has been no serious accidents or epidemics. The ordinary dispensary treatment was given every morning by a trained nurse.

*Industry.*—On the mission there are 20 horses, 43 dairy cows, 297 mixed cattle, and 59 working bullocks.

Good quantities of sweet potatoes, giant cow-peas, cassava, pineapples and vegetables have been produced.

## MORNINGTON ISLAND.

*Religious Instruction.*—A service was held every day, with additional instruction to children during school hours. These services were well attended, at which a quiet, reverent interest was shown by all.

*Education.*—Satisfactory progress was maintained, both in ordinary school work and manual training. A total of 9 boys and 30 girls received special technical training. The progress made in this sphere is regarded as excellent.

*Industry.*—Efforts were mainly directed towards reconstruction and repairing damage caused by the destructive cyclone which swept the mission last year.

Quantities of pumpkins, sweet potatoes, beans, and other vegetable crops were produced, from 30 acres of cultivated land, which were consumed on the reserve.

An area of 80 acres was ringbarked, and 140 chains of new fence erected.

Two additional wells were sunk; unfortunately the water proved to be salty and could not be used.

Three new houses were erected for native occupation, and the Mission House was re-roofed and repaired.

The construction of the new Church is well advanced and the building will soon be ready for use.

*Health.*—Of a total of 272 patients treated, 153 suffered from whooping cough and 33 from diarrhoea. Three deaths were recorded; two being children and one old man.

The Aerial Medical Service Plane made four flights to the mission, in response to appeals for advice and assistance to the sick.

## ST. PAUL'S MISSION—MOA ISLAND.

*Religious Instruction.*—Services were held daily and were well attended by the natives, who showed a keen interest.

*Health.*—There have been no epidemics or outbreaks of disease of any kind, and health generally has been consistently good.

*Industry.*—Four new houses have been completed and three others are in the course of construction. Several old houses have been re-thatched and repaired.

All able-bodied men found employment in the marine industry.

Abundant food supplies were available throughout the year from the native gardens.

## PURGA.

*Religious Instruction.*—The natives regularly attended services, which were held three times a week, and displayed a keen interest in the spiritual activities of the mission.

*Health.*—The health of the people was remarkably good. There was no epidemic and only three cases of sickness required hospital treatment.

*Labour.*—The demand was better than during the past year; 62 inmates signed on to employers under agreement, as against 30 last year.

*Industry.*—Dry conditions prevailed at the Mission and crops were not as good as anticipated.

Twenty-four acres of land were cultivated in all, the main crops being maize, sugar cane, arrowroot, lucerne, oats, and Sudan grass.

## WEIPA.

*Religious Instruction.*—Regular services were conducted and well attended. Kindergarten classes for children were held on Sunday afternoons and regular meetings of the Women's Guild.

*Health.*—Approximately 500 patients were treated for various ailments. No cases of venereal disease were detected. Only one death occurred, a young child suffering from tuberculosis.

*Industry.*—Following a muster of cattle, 119 head of stock were located. None were sold or transferred through the year. Five acres of land were cultivated, and 21 acres partially cleared. In addition to this, about 3 acres of land were cultivated by the natives, as private gardens. Quantities of pumpkins, sweet potatoes, cassava, yams, cabbages, tomatoes, pineapples and bananas were grown and distributed amongst the inmates.

One thousand five hundred super. feet of timber was cut by the sawmill.

There was little outside demand for labour; 13 men were found employment under agreement.

*Conduct.*—The preponderance of males in the population has caused some domestic trouble at times. One or two cases of pilfering had to be dealt with, but the behaviour of the people generally has been satisfactory.

*School.*—There were 16 children attending school. Besides primary education, the boys are trained in stock work, tinsmithing, &c., and the girls in domestic duties and crochet work.

## YARRABAH.

*Religious Instruction.*—The usual services were held and interest was keen.

*Health.*—The general health has been good. There were no epidemics of any kind. Births totalled ten and there were two deaths.

*School.*—The school roll showed 134 children attending school. Progress was good. The boys were taught technical and manual trades in the settlement workshops, and the girls learnt sewing and cooking.

*Industry.*—All inmates were employed on the mission. Live stock consists of 148 head of cattle and 56 horses.

The area of land under cultivation was 150 acres, and 230 bags of sweet potatoes, 18 of cassava, 11 bags of yams, 1 bag of Egyptian corn, 16 bags of rice and 2 bags of maize were produced. Eighty pounds (£80) was obtained from the sale of produce and the balance was consumed by the inmates.

Seventy-three chains of permanent fencing were erected.

The dairy paddocks have been maintained and the fences kept in order; 2,400 gallons of milk were distributed.

Six new cottages were built at Reeves Creek and one at Oombunghi. A bridge was erected across Reeves Creek.

#### DOOMADGEE.

*Religious Instruction.*—All attended services and the interest shown by the natives was very good.

*Industry.*—Living conditions in the camp have been improved by the erection of larger dwellings. These are built of ti-tree bark and will be used until timber can be milled for improved homes.

A new dormitory has been built for girls. This building has a floor space of 280 super. feet and has hardwood floors and iron roof.

A similar building was also constructed during the year for boys, and a water supply put on. Water is now laid on to the houses.

A sawmill has been erected, with 14 horse power kerosene engine, and is now ready for use. A new 35 cwt. Dodge truck was purchased for transport purposes.

*School.*—A total of 56 children were attending school and were being taught in accordance with the Queensland Correspondence School lessons.

#### APPRECIATION.

The loyal assistance received throughout the year from the Staff of Head Office is gratefully recognised, as also is the work of the Protector of Aborigines, Thursday Island, the Manager, Aboriginal Industries, and the officers under their direct control.

The superintendents and staffs of the large settlements have earned the Department's appreciation, for their zealous efforts at all times for the welfare of their people.

The Under Secretary, Department of Health and Home Affairs, the Director-General of Health and Medical Services, the Commissioner of Police, the Manager, State Stores Board, and the staffs of their Departments have always readily afforded any assistance and advice needed. The Portmaster has given great assistance in matters relating to the floating plant of the Department, and his Harbour Masters at Thursday Island and Townsville have similarly helped in the inspections and overhauls of the launches and boats of the native fishing fleet.

The various police officers appointed as district protectors have carried out their duties most capably, often under difficult circumstances, showing sympathetic interest in the welfare of the natives under their charge.

The superintendents and staffs of the Church Missions also deserve commendation for their self-sacrificing labours, often in difficult and trying conditions, mainly amongst the primitive tribes.

It is pleasing to record that a genuine advance has been made in the upliftment of the natives to a better and broader life.

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 1937

Corporate Author: Queensland Home Secretary's Department

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