

1928.
—
QUEENSLAND.

REPORT

UPON THE

OPERATIONS OF THE SUB-DEPARTMENTS

OF

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

PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT BY COMMAND.

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A. 36—1928.

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

Home Secretary's Department,
Brisbane, 1st October, 1928.

TO THE HONOURABLE THE HOME SECRETARY.

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

WILLIAM GALL,
Under Secretary.

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

Aboriginal Department—Information contained in Report for the Year ended 31st December, 1927.

POPULATION.

In October, 1925, the Conference of Statisticians held in Sydney made the following resolutions:—

- (a) That in each State the Statisticians, in co-operation with the local Protector of Aborigines, shall endeavour to obtain, in the month of June in each year, as correct data as possible concerning number and distribution of full-blood aborigines, also separately for half-caste aborigines.
- (b) That such data, where possible, shall distinguish between males and females and between adults and children and as to whether the persons enumerated are nomadic, in regular employment, or in supervised camps.

At the conference in Perth, in 1926, a definition as to what constituted a half-caste was agreed upon.

Acting on these determinations, the census taken in June, 1927, by this Department in Queensland, in conjunction with the Registrar-General and the Commonwealth Statistician, showed the aboriginal population in this State to be 17,733 as under:—

FULL-BLOOD, 13,523.		
	Male.	Female.
ADULTS—		
Nomadic	1,217	1,054
Regular employment ..	2,283	558
Supervised camps ..	2,294	2,325
Not stated	307	326
CHILDREN—		
Nomadic	361	341
Supervised camps ..	990	986
Not stated	260	221
Totals	7,712	5,811
Persons	13,523	

HALF-CASTES 4,210.

	Male.	Female.
ADULTS—		
Nomadic	133	70
Regular employment ..	626	340
Supervised camps ..	407	521
Not stated	91	114
CHILDREN—		
Nomadic	58	52
Supervised camps ..	527	503
Not stated	382	386
Totals	2,224	1,986
Persons	4,210	

The above figures show an apparent increase of 82 on the previous year's census, but, actually, a decrease of 81 in the number of full-bloods and an increase of 163 in the number of half-castes.

LABOUR CONDITIONS ON LAND.

There was some decrease in the demand for labour, owing to the severe drought conditions prevailing in the far West. Some holdings were abandoned and the stock removed elsewhere and others were retrenching as much as possible, consequently the less active men and those with large families to feed were at a disadvantage in the labour market.

Also, many of the less fortunate had to depend to some extent on their savings for subsistence or on their earnings from marsupial shooting.

In the Northern districts, while the wet weather hampered timber operations and lessened employment in that field, it resulted in an increase of game and other native foods.

The number of natives employed under agreement was 2,205 (1,990 males and 415 females), and casual permits for short terms were issued for 1,710 persons (1,243 males, 468 females).

One new protectorate was created, viz., Mungana, in place of Maytown, which was closed.

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

LABOUR CONDITIONS ON BOATS.

There was good demand for native crews for the fishing vessels in Torres Strait and on the East Coast and, as this seafaring work is second nature to the island and coastal men, there was no excuse for any able-bodied men to be unemployed or their families to be destitute.

The employment regulations were generally well observed, and little trouble was experienced. The behaviour of the native crews was also satisfactory.

At Thursday Island 335 men were signed on to vessels, viz., 131 islanders and 205 mainlanders. Their earnings totalled £4,529, of which the islanders received £3,032 and the mainlanders £1,497.

Four hundred islanders worked on their communal fishing vessels, earning in this way £23,488, an increase of £2,062 on the previous year's results.

At Cooktown, 61 men, all mainlanders, were engaged, chiefly on Torres Straits vessels, their earnings being £1,261; and 21 men from Palm Island Settlement also were recruited.

INSURANCE AND COMPENSATION.

Claims were made on behalf of natives, under the Workers' Compensation Act, in 25 cases, and compensation, amounting to £1,784 13s. 8d., was awarded, the claims and payments being made through the local Protector and the money administered, as intended, by him for the injured natives' benefit.

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

ABORIGINAL TRUST ACCOUNTS.

The following return gives the transactions of the Savings Bank accounts held in trust for natives throughout the State. The store credit of the inmates of the various missions are not included:—

—	No. of Accounts.	Total Wages Deposits.		Accounts Transferred other Districts, Settlements, &c.		Interest Earned.		Withdrawals for Natives' Benefit.		Balance.	
		£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Barambah	460	5,887	9 3	213	1 6	191	3 0	7,284	15 3	1,331	15 7
Palm Island	583	4,591	3 3	29	3 4	268	14 7	5,882	19 7	3,000	14 10
Woorabinda	214	2,352	16 2	152	6 8	94	19 0	4,182	11 4	3,240	3 4
Brisbane	122	2,780	3 3	294	18 5	413	0 4	2,762	15 5	6,386	1 1
Protectors	5,062	102,082	8 10	23,004	0 2	9,012	8 0	82,274	16 1	282,763	0 2
Totals	6,311	117,694	0 9	23,693	10 1	9,980	4 11	103,387	17 8	296,721	15 0

The actual total is £304,721 15s., as £8,000 of the settlement accounts (Barambah £3,000, Palm Island £4,000, and Woorabinda £1,000) is invested in Treasury Loan Inscribed Stock at 5½ per cent.

The decrease of 202 in the total number of Savings Bank accounts is due to closure of a number now inoperative. The average credit is now £47 10s.

Contributions to the Provident Fund amounted to £1,735 and £786 interest was earned, and there is now a balance of £18,387 17s. 1d., including £14,000 also invested in the above Treasury Loan.

ABORIGINAL PATROL VESSEL.

It was not possible to station a Government vessel in the Straits, and what patrol was done (only 1,360 miles) was by means of hired vessels. The "Goodwill," which was the only vessel suitable for our work, went practically out of commission towards the middle of the year.

The old "Melbidir," which had done service for nearly thirty years, was disposed of, and her engine stripped and sent to Brisbane for sale. The Torres Straits natives bought the vessel, overhauled it, and refitted it for work in the bêche-de-mer industry.

A new patrol vessel of larger and more suitable design and power for the work required is now in course of construction.

The patrol work necessary for the supervision of the working of the aboriginal fishing fleet and the inspection of vessels undergoing repair has been performed with the aid of the native fishing vessels and occasional use of the Harbour Master's launch.

REMOVAL AND RECOGNIZANCES.

Bonds were entered into for the return of 17 aboriginals who were temporarily removed by their employers, and 2 permits were granted for the transfer of natives to other districts.

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

FOOD AND OTHER RELIEF.

Regular relief was issued, according to the needs of the natives, in monthly or weekly allowances from 27 centres, amounting to £1,451. Casual relief, amounting to £251, was also issued as needed.

The distress caused amongst the camp blacks by the shortage of station employment was partly relieved by the earnings during marsupial open season, and the wet season in the North causing an abundance of native game and foods.

BLANKETS.

The number of blankets issued was 4,320, and where more suitable, articles such as dresses, trousers, shirts, tomahawks, print, tobacco, fish lines, hooks, &c., were distributed in lieu. The purchases of these goods and despatch of them to the various centres was also carried out by the State Stores Board. The cost of the issues was £2,728, and the freight and handling charges amounted to £44.

OFFENCES AGAINST ABORIGINALS.

Offences.	1925.		1926.		1927.	
	No.	Fines.	No.	Fines.	No.	Fines.
Possession of opium ..	35	£ 649	17	£ 245	39	£ 488
Supplying liquor ..	10	192	9	207	8	200
Harbouring ..	6	17½	1	5	3	12
Illegally employing ..	17	95	7	41	4	22

The above return shows an important increase in the number of convictions for "possession of opium." This vice is most noticeable where Asiatics are congregated, usually as farmers, in dense scrub country, where the drugs can be given as an inducement to illegal employment. The Police officers are to be complimented on their zeal in the suppression of this traffic.

Of the above prosecutions 13 occurred at Atherton, 6 each at Cloncurry and Cairns, 5 at Malanda, 4 at St. George, 2 each at Edmonton and Gordonvale, and 1 at Millaa Millaa.

OFFENCES BY ABORIGINALS.

Offences.	1925.	1926.	1927.
Drunkenness	28	33	71
Stealing	6	2	3
Entering premises	2	1	..
Creating disturbance	1	2	8
Obscene language	7	2	9
Assault	4	3	3
Resisting Arrest .. ..	..	..	2
Arson .. ..	..	..	1
Vagrancy .. ..	..	..	1
Immoral offences .. ..	..	..	1

REMOVALS.

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

Place.	Men.	Women.	Children.	Total.
<i>Settlements—</i>				
Barambah ..	4	2	6	12
Palm Island ..	40	16	12	68
Taroom ..	2	..	..	2
Woorabinda ..	9	2	6	17
<i>Missions—</i>				
Mornington Is. ..	..	1	5	6
Yarrabah ..	1	2	3	6
Mapoon ..	..	1	..	1
	56	24	32	112

HEALTH.

Satisfactory reports have been received as to the health of the natives generally. All within reach of help were able to obtain treatment through the kindly offices of the local Protectors, as it is the rule to afford all such people free treatment by Government medical officers and general hospitals. The natives near civilisation are becoming more educated to the value of medical treatment, and do not hesitate to apply for it when sick. The myalls, also, to quite a gratifying degree avail themselves of the services of the missions in their locality.

Influenza epidemics of a mild form appeared in parts of the State, cases being treated at Boulia, Malanda, Maryborough, Mitchell, Normanton, and St. Lawrence. A number of the myalls around the Peninsula were treated by the missions, particularly at Lockhart River (the complaint most severely affecting the aged), and also around the Torres Strait Islands. An outbreak of mild chicken-pox also was experienced in the latter district. The Gulf missions also report the usual waves of malaria and, in the early part of the year, an outbreak of boils.

Owing to the abundance of native foods, the people were better nourished and consequently healthier. Hookworm disease treatment was given at Mornington Island and Monamona. Odd cases of venereal disease appeared, and were treated at Cooktown, Ingham, Laura, Thargomindah, and Townsville. The disease seems most prevalent around the Peninsula and Gulf districts. Eight cases were treated at Aurukun Mission and 22 (15 males, 7 females) at Normanston Hospital. A number received treatment at Lockhart River Mission, but it is claimed that the disease is responding to measures for its eradication. Two cases were sent by Monamona Mission to Mareeba Hospital. A number of cases also received attention at the settlements. The lock hospital established at Fantome Island has now been completed and equipped and, with the appointment of the nursing staff, will commence operations in the new year.

Two cases of leprosy were discovered, and sent to Peel Island Lazaret.

A number of minor accidents, snakebites, &c., also were attended.

The number of patients treated at the Settlement hospitals were:—Barambah, 1,120, including 184 in-patients; Palm Island, 11,131, including 244 in-patients; Woorabinda, 185, in-patients numbering 7 being sent to Rockhampton and Mount Morgan hospitals.

The number receiving treatment at the various district hospitals was 693, while 263 deaths were reported, including 68 in the Settlements, 54 in Torres Strait, and 141 in various districts. The number of births recorded was 231.

YOUNG WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

Where possible, the Female Protector has inspected girls in their situations in Brisbane and surrounding districts, but heavy costs of travelling, owing to scattered places of employment and distance in most cases from the railway, has precluded any extensive patrol. The discipline has been good, and behaviour in employment generally satisfactory.

There has been a slight increase in Savings Bank accounts, which now number 109, with a total credit of £5,376 8s. 2d., making an average credit of £49 6s. 6d.

The wages collected amounted to £2,559, and the withdrawals under the Protector's supervision came to £2,591.

Many of the girls spend their pocket money allowance very sensibly, and where this was evident they were given the opportunity to do some of their own shopping.

The number of girls in such employment from Brisbane office was 104, of whom 67 were in country situations and 32 in the suburbs of the city.

Owing to reports of unsatisfactory conduct or living conditions, it was found necessary to remove 20 women and 24 children to the settlements and 4 women and 8 children to missions, where they will receive better care and protection and the children be given schooling.

The number of half-caste mothers who received the maternity allowance was 45, the money being

paid to them through the local Protector, who controlled its disbursement for the benefit of the mother and child.

Permission was granted for the legal marriage of 66 aboriginal and half-caste women, of whom 60 were married to men of their own race, 2 to Malay-aboriginal half-castes, 1 to a Pacific Islander, and 3, being nearly white, to Europeans. There is no reliable record of tribal marriages.

The number of orphans in homes was 63, as shown in the following return, the cost of their maintenance being £1,150:—

Sacred Heart Mission, Thursday Island	28
Yeronga and Chelmer (Girls)	10
Riverview and Indooroopilly (Boys) ..	3
Purga (Girls and Boys)	22
	—
	63

HALF-CASTES.

Under section 33 of the Act of 1897, half-castes who, by reason of their intelligence, education, character, and mode of living, are considered to be living a civilised life and well fitted to manage their own affairs, can be granted a certificate of exemption by the Minister, which, however, can be revoked if they fail to live up to the conditions or revert to camp life amongst the aboriginals.

Naturally, many are anxious, or are prompted, to apply for this privilege, and last year 62 applications for the exemption were received, but only 20 (15 males and 5 females) were considered eligible.

In some cases, the savings of the earlier years, if a large amount, are retained under the Department's control for a while to protect them from exploitation, as the sudden possession of a large sum of money has often in the past resulted in disaster to the native owner, who is not proof against the wiles of the unscrupulous.

RESERVES.

Visits of inspection were paid to the Government Settlements at Barambah, Palm Island, Taroom, and the new reserve proclaimed at Woorabinda, in the Duaringa district, to which site the settlement at Taroom is being transferred.

The Torres Strait Island reserves were also visited with the Public Service Commissioner and Under Secretary for Public Instruction, who also inspected the Palm Island Settlement and Fantome Island Lock Hospital on the return journey.

A comprehensive report on these institutions and the activities in progress thereon, containing important recommendations for development of the work, was furnished by the Commissioner. As far as the limited funds for this year made such practicable, the proposed extensions were carried out, the matter of providing for others being left for consideration in the next financial year.

One of these important reforms, worth special mention, was the preparation of new and more suitable reading books for aboriginal institutions, towards which the Under Secretary for Public Instruction gave valuable support after

reporting on the teaching system at those schools. These readers will be illustrated and deal with subjects of local interest and native folklore. They are in course of preparation by Messrs. Fox and Hooper, lately of the Public Instruction Inspectors' Staff, and should be of ethnological as well as educational value.

TORRES STRAIT ISLANDS AND CAPE YORK
PENINSULA.

Health.—The health of the natives has on the whole been satisfactory. The usual outbreaks of influenza occurred during the year, but without serious results. A very mild form of chicken-pox also visited some of the islands, but with no serious result. The new system of distributing medicine and the issue of a pamphlet recently published by Dr. Vernon should prove of immeasurable benefit to the health of the people. Poid Island, where the health of the people, particularly the children, has always been a source of worry, should be considerably benefited during the ensuing year by the appointment, now made, of a Government white teacher whose wife is a competent nurse.

Population.—The population is given as 3,455, being 921 men, 829 women, 856 boys, and 849 girls. The births numbered 137 (69 boys, 68 girls), and the deaths 54 (21 men, 11 women, and 22 children).

Schools.—Teachers all report fairly satisfactory progress, although it is rather difficult to say if the schools have attained a better standard this year than last.

Beyond the schools at Badu, Poid, Mabuia, and Moa, inspected by the Under Secretary for Public Instruction during May, no school inspector visited this district, which is to be regretted.

A re-arrangement of teaching staff at the end of the year will, it is expected, result in improvement in the schools. On all of the islands, with the exception of Murray Island, good schools exist. A new school was opened at Yorke Island, and the building is a credit to the natives who erected it.

Material was obtained for a new school at Murray Island, but it has not been possible to transport it to that place, as no suitable lighters were available.

Villages.—On Badu, a new hall has been erected for the large troop of Boy Scouts, Rovers, Girl Guides, &c., formed and in which the young people take keen interest. The new school on Darnley Island was completed.

A large quantity of material was purchased from Saibai Island Fund for the assistance of villagers in the erection of new houses.

New teachers' quarters were also built at Yam Island.

Island Funds.—Island funds have an amount to credit totalling £5,823, about £420 less than last year's total. Although the collections were reasonably high, disbursements exceeded them.

In addition to the expenditure on improvements, the funds contribute towards the main-

tenance of a pension system on the islands, which is growing each year. Assistance to the sick and needy is now a charge against the fund, as is also the maintenance of a sanitary system.

Originally these funds were built up when such spending avenues did not exist, but, taking into consideration the amount of valuable work which is performed with these funds, the position should be regarded as quite satisfactory. It does not appear to be advisable to build up large surpluses in these funds, at the same time neglecting to perform the work for which the funds were created.

Island Company Boats.—The year 1927 has resulted in a record for the island company boats. Produce to the amount of £23,488 was won and disposed of, representing an increase of £2,062 over last year's figures, which were also a record for the earnings of these vessels up to that period. Last year the following vessels were placed on the slip: "Masig," "Caroline," "Badu," "Yama," "Argan," "Alice," "Sissy," "Karabai," "Kismet," and "Nancy." Minor repairs were performed to most of the vessels. The old vessel "Yama," when put on the slip, was found to be past repair, so she was scrapped. A new cutter, of the standard size to be introduced into the fleet, was built in place of her, and the crew did particularly well for the time that she was in commission. Last year the old "Yama" earned in twelve months £704, this year, in six months, the new "Yama" earned £654, indicating that a vessel in good condition will always produce better than an old one. A similar state of affairs existed in connection with the cutter "Badu." When replaced by a new and more up-to-date boat, the catch, in the first three months, amounted to £528. The "Caroline" was also re-built as a new vessel. The old "Melbidir" was purchased for the Badu Island community and completely renovated, and can now be regarded as one of the finest vessels in the pearl shell and bêche-de-mer fishery industry in Queensland. I have every reason to hope that this vessel, with the crew that she has for 1928, will demonstrate the fact that the aboriginal-owned vessels, if given a fair opportunity, can hold their own with any boats and any crews in the industry. During 1928 a couple of the vessels will require an extensive overhaul, but, generally, it may be considered the aboriginal boats, for their size, are in as good condition and as well equipped for the work in which they engage as any boats in these waters.

The Murray Island vessels last year were not very successful. With the appointment of the new teacher to this place, it is hoped that the people will show better results with their boats.

The lugger "Alice," of that island, became unserviceable, and is being replaced this year by another cutter re-built on the Badu slip.

For almost the full season last year all of the aboriginal fleet were engaged in the trochus shell industry. The price of pearl-shell rose slightly in December, with the result that one vessel from Badu, one from Mabuia, one from Saibai, and the Boigu cutter will enter the pearl-shell section of the industry this year. None of these vessels are suited for trochus shell.

A new departure in the working of boats in the trochus shell industry will come into operation from the 1st January, 1928. This system permits the vessels to work the Barrier Reef as far south as Cairns, or further if they so desire, having agencies established in Cairns and Cooktown and, if necessary, having their shell shipped to Thursday Island. It is expected that ten vessels will engage in that industry on the new system.

The luggers "Wakaid" (late "Melbidir") and "Saibai," also the cutters "Badu" and "Wakemab" are proceeding south and several other vessels will follow later. A new system of selecting crews for this southern venture has resulted in the four vessels mentioned being manned by the finest trochus shell crew to be found in Torres Strait. It was the wish of the islanders that picked men should be sent south to give the innovation a fair trial. Given an ordinary run of luck, and a fair average price for produce, it is expected that these vessels will surpass any previous results.

The lugger "Wakaid" should compare favourably with any vessel in the industry.

The working of these aboriginal fleets in the marine produce industry has made gratifying strides during recent years. In five years they have doubled the value of produce won, and there seems every prospect, this coming year, of exceeding last year's earnings by a large figure.

With a good official patrol vessel to supervise, £30,000 should easily be passed. Much of the success has been due to the careful supervision exercised over the working of the fleets and the repairing and fitting of the vessels.

The vessels owned by the half-caste firm of Mosby Brothers also had a successful year, the "Kismet" earning £1,000 and the "Nancy" £862. The small whaleboat "Cherry" did not work; all crews of the Mosby firm's boats going on the cutters. The "Cherry" is due for scrapping, as she has about finished her period of usefulness.

The boatshop established by the firm of Papuan Industries Limited, at Badu Island, in conjunction with this department, did a considerable amount of work for the aboriginal fleet last year. A large number of dinghies were built and many minor repairs were made to vessels. However, the slip's work was not entirely satisfactory, but a new shipwright has recently been appointed, and the work now shows a decided improvement. The native apprentices to the boatbuilding industry are making fair progress in the trade, and there is every reason to hope that next year they will do even better.

Patrol.—During the year it was only possible to patrol 1,020 miles, not quite half of what was done during the previous year, and patrol vessels hired by this Department covered 1,350 miles. The work of supervision has been considerably retarded by the absence of a Government patrol vessel here, and it is sincerely to be hoped that one will be provided during the coming year.

GOVERNMENT SETTLEMENTS.

Barambah (Superintendent, W. Porteous Semple).

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

Taroom and Woorabinda (Superintendent, H. C. Colledge).

Labour.—All the settlements report a decrease in the demand for station labour, owing to drought in the pastoral districts. The demand for domestic labour remained good and it was difficult to supply all applicants.

The number of engagements for employment entered into was—

Barambah—117 under agreement, 1,139 casual permits.

Palm Island—54 under agreement, 12 casual permits.

Taroom and Woorabinda—29 under agreement, 7 casual permits.

In addition to above, 21 men from Palm Island were engaged as seamen on pearling vessels.

The sum of £11,668 was collected as wages deductions and banked to the workers' credits, and £17,350 was withdrawn from their savings for cash spendings and purchases through the retail store.

Settlement Revenues.

Collections.	Barambah.	Palm Island.	Woorabinda.
	£	£	£
Wages, fares, produce, &c. . .	6,105	4,740	2,775
Interest on bank accounts . .	191	268	95
Native contributions . .	240	254	157
	6,616	5,262	3,027

Population.

Settlement.	Total.	Full-blood.	Half-castes
Barambah	669	395	274
Palm Island	831	616	215
Woorabinda	298	146	152

Crime.—One serious crime occurred, a case of grievously wounding of a reputed aboriginal "doctor" by other natives, who blamed him for the death of a friend by "boning"—a native superstition hard to combat. The accused are committed for trial.

Two men at Woorabinda were punished and deported for an attack on an official.

Beyond the above, there were no serious offences to deal with, and conduct generally was very satisfactory. Family quarrels, gambling, and breaches of settlement regulations were dealt with either by the officials or the native court.

Retail Stores.—The following table shows the business transacted at the retail stores on the settlements, which were established with the object of enabling the inmates to purchase food, clothing, &c., from their banking accounts to augment the supplies issued.

The profits made are used for settlement development work.

Settlement.	Cash Sales.	Bank Orders.	Free Issues.	Total.
	£	£	£	£
Barambah ..	118	4,738	1,102	5,958
Palm Island ..	131	5,510	402	6,043
Woorabinda ..	310	2,863	92	3,265
				£15,266

Schools.—Though working under some difficulties, fairly satisfactory progress has been made.

The vacancy of head teacher at Barambah has not so far been filled, but the assistant teachers have done good work with the help of a native girl monitor.

The nurse at Woorabinda conducted classes for the camp children, pending the arrival of the teacher and the balance of scholars from Taroom, and her zeal in this direction deserves the highest commendation.

Good work has been done in Palm Island school since the appointment of the white head teacher, but this will be difficult until a proper school building has been provided.

Inspection reports at each place were satisfactory.

Industrial and Agricultural.—At Barambah, the farms had a good season, the rainfall reaching 40 inches. Eight tons of lucerne, wheat, and oaten hay were cut, which saw the stock well through the winter, although excessive wet weather had spoiled more than half of the oat crop grown. The maize crop was 191 bags, of which 30 bags were sold to State Produce Agency.

Thirty tons of potatoes, 10 tons of pumpkins, and about 15 tons of other vegetables were grown and issued as rations.

There was ample milk supply, 6,239 gallons being issued to hospital, dormitories, and young, old, and sick in camp.

The sawmill, although hampered by excessive wet weather, cut and dressed 118,448 super. feet of timber for buildings on the home settlement and for the new reserve at Woorabinda. A very fine high-level bridge, 140 feet long, across the creek, and another 40 feet long across a large gully, were built by the sawmill engineer and native staff.

At Palm Island the farms raised 20 tons of sweet potatoes, 6,000 pineapples, 5 tons pumpkins, 400 cases mangoes, besides sugar-cane, kitchen vegetables, and fruit. The natives also had good crops from their private gardens.

The fishermen won 4 tons of trochus shell, which was sent to Thursday Island for sale.

The sawmill cut 77,340 super. feet and dressed 19,109 super. feet of timber, which was used in the buildings of Fantome Island Lock Hospital and new quarters at the settlement.

The work of transfer of Taroom Settlement to the new site at Woorabinda, near Baralaba, made

any important agricultural operations impossible, but a small garden plot at the new place gave most gratifying results with potatoes, tomatoes, melons, and other vegetables, the quality being excellent.

A large amount of clearing, grubbing, fencing, ring-barking, and similar preparatory work was accomplished, and many tons of material hauled across country in the face of frequent wet weather obstacles.

Stock.—The season was a good one for the stock. At Barambah, 235 calves were branded, 77 maiden heifers were put with the cows, and 88 old cows taken out to be speyed. The settlement herd supplied 89 bullocks for the butcher's shop, and now numbers 1,129, including 351 breeders.

The Ayrshire dairy herd did well and there was ample milk.

At Palm Island the herd now numbers 103 and 2 bulls. Necessary milkers will be supplied to the new lock hospital.

The stock from Taroom were all safely brought across to Woorabinda. With the larger area of better country, it is intended, as soon as practicable and boundary fences are all complete, to build up this herd.

Building and Village Development.—A dormitory for babies and young mothers has been erected where for the early months after birth they can receive proper care. Extra bath showers and lavatories have been added to the girls' home. Five new native cottages have also been built in the village and wire and picket fences erected.

About 600 trees, mostly silky oaks grown from seed, and flowering shrubs have been planted, and most of them are thriving.

At Palm Island the girls' home was completed and furnished, and has greatly relieved the congestion. The Fantome Island Lock Hospital buildings also were completed and furnished, ready for a start in the new year.

Quarters for the medical officer were partly erected.

A number of extra sanitary conveniences were provided in the village. A good road has been made to the farm settlement, two miles away, and village streets laid out on uniform plan.

At Woorabinda, the new village and administrative block have been laid out on town planning lines, with an attractive tree-planting scheme.

Quarters have been built for the farm assistant and the nurse, and other buildings to serve eventually for girls' home and hospital, but occupied meanwhile by officers waiting for quarters.

Social Improvement.—The great interest displayed by the inmates in the various movements for improvement of their living conditions and social life is evidence that they can successfully be educated to better things. As the cottages in the village become available, there is keen competition amongst the eligible families, and not one has become disqualified for neglect of the

rule to improve the plot and keep the house clean and in good order. Nor have the old superstitions, which have proved so great a retarding and unsettling influence in the past, been proof against the advantages and comforts of the new conditions. Once settled in his little home, the proud owner does not voluntarily leave it.

Religious Instruction.—The usual religious services and instruction have been supplied by visiting clergy of different denominations. Sunday school instruction has been given at certain places by some of the officers of the settlement.

The district missionaries of the Aborigines Inland Mission have also worked untiringly in ministering to the people of the camps, in the way of village visiting and camp services.

The natives appeared to enjoy the services held.

Recreations.—The native is fond of all outdoor sport, and cricket and football are followed up keenly in each season. Teams have been allowed to visit neighbouring towns and have proved successful in many of the contests. The native brass bands at Barambah and Palm Island have accompanied their teams, and the behaviour has always been well commented upon.

The Barambah Concert Party also gave several entertainments in other towns, to raise funds, and the hall, for which this money was desired, has been commenced. The Woorabinda team of footballers also played a match in Rockhampton, and won praise for their play and behaviour.

The usual corroborees and displays with aboriginal weapons are always popular.

On each settlement an annual sports day has been organised, and proved successful in every way, the natives working willingly in the preparations for the festivity and entering heartily into the competitions.

The usual Christmas and New Year festivities have also been organised and gifts, extra rations, and usual delicacies supplied.

The evident enjoyment of the inmates has well repaid the trouble.

MISSIONS.

- Yarrabah, Cairns (Superintendent, W. McCullough), Anglican.
 Monamona, Cairns (Superintendent, J. L. Branford), Seventh Day Adventists.
 Cape Bedford, Cooktown (Superintendent, Rev. G. H. Schwarz), Lutheran.
 Lockhart River, Cape York Peninsula (Superintendent, H. Rowan), Anglican.
 Moa Island, Torres Strait (Superintendent, Rev. J. W. Schomberg), Anglican.
 Mapoon, Gulf of Carpentaria (Superintendent, R. M. McCormack), Presbyterian.
 Aurukun, Gulf of Carpentaria (Superintendent, Rev. W. F. McKenzie), Presbyterian.

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

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

Purga, Ipswich (Superintendent, Commandant W. Perrem), Salvation Army.

Conduct.—All stations reported the behaviour of the inmates as having been most orderly. There was no serious crime. The usual small family quarrels and tribal differences were settled in their native council or before the Superintendent.

At the Gulf Missions, trouble is caused at times by whites outside trying to induce the women away; in one case a man actually invaded the Mission with a gun and attempted to forcibly secure a woman.

One difficulty to combat, principally amongst the primitive tribes, is the practice of race suicide. The old women claim to be able to identify the paternity of a child by its feet, and this frequently leads to trouble in the camp, consequently the women often in fear try to evade their duty to bear children. Again, the weaker one of twins is killed, also any child born before the previous one is weaned. Mission converts often report such cases, and it is possible to save these children by taking them into the homes.

Religious Training.—Regular services and classes of instruction have been held, and the inmates have displayed gratifying interest in them. The greatest response to the teaching comes from the younger generation, who enter heartily into the little organisations formed for social service.

In many places the religious services have been translated into the native dialect, thus enabling them to enter with more understanding into them. The rendering of the "language" hymns alone is proof of the value of this step.

The Torres Strait Anglican Mission has, for years, carried on the religious work throughout the islands with a system of native clergy, trained at their Theological College at St. Paul's Mission, Moa Island, and these men have proved very successful. On several islands, where they are stationed, they act as teachers also.

Education.—Good reports as to general progress have been received. The children attend well and take an interest in their lessons. Unfortunately, the distant missions, particularly in the Gulf, have not had the benefit, for some years, of a professional inspection, with its helpful criticism and advice.

The school at St. Paul's Mission, Moa Island, was visited by Mr. McKenna, the Under Secretary for Public Instruction, who reported that "the quality of the work at this school shows that, with proper teaching, the natives are capable of reaching a good standard of intelligence and attainment."

A proposal is under consideration for the establishment at this mission, of a class for the training of native assistant teachers.

INDUSTRIAL AND AGRICULTURAL.

Yarrabah.—All efforts had to be directed to replacing the buildings demolished by the cyclone. A large new school was completed, and all furniture made for it in the joinery shop. About 20,000 feet of sawn timber was supplied to order for the settlements at Palm Islands and Torres Strait.

All crops were washed away by the cyclone floods. The fishing vessel gave promising results.

Monamona.—General farming, banana growing, and dairying helped to provide an important portion of the needs of the people. The sawmill and timber hauling were also a valuable source from which material for development purposes and revenue for maintenance was raised.

The dressmaking and tailoring departments made all clothing for the institution.

Cape Bedford.—Good crops of potatoes, cassava, bananas, and many thousands of coconuts were grown and used for home consumption. Mauritius beans grown brought £30 when sold, although the price had fallen from 25s. to 10s. per bushel. Twenty-eight sacks of copra also were sold.

The fishing vessels, although hampered by dirty weather, managed to earn enough to ensure all the crews a fair living.

The cattle herd also provided all the beef requirements of the station.

Lockhart River.—The mission lugger has been at sea, working with a native crew as a company, in the bêche-de-mer and trochus shell fishing. They have managed to maintain themselves. Others of the people have earned for themselves by cutting timber, sandalwood, or fishing with their dingheys. Good homes are being built in the village, and many have started to work gardens.

About 8 acres are under cultivation, with sweet potatoes, vegetables, and cotton.

The girls also are doing well with needlework, basket and mat making.

St. Paul's, Moa Island.—The Moa Fishing Company had only fair success. Most of the men earn their living in marine industries. The others made gardens, cut timber for boatbuilding at Badu, or helped in erection of the large concrete church, which is progressing satisfactorily. Many of the men have become expert at making concrete blocks.

Three new houses have been built in the village, and a fourth is nearing completion.

Aurukun.—The farms suffered some reverse, owing to the bad wet season, but 7 acres returned fair crops of cowpeas, Mauritius beans, melons, pumpkins, and bananas. A splendid crop of tomatoes also was obtained. Over a ton of sandalwood and some loads of firewood were sent to Thursday Island for sale.

Three new paddocks were fenced, another cleared, and others planted with a natural grass introduced from the Kendall River.

The sawmill and pumping plant were put into working order and material cut for a home-made irrigation system.

Mitchell River.—There are now 2,105 head of cattle, 55 horses, and 30 goats. Of this stock, 117 head of cattle were killed for beef and 23 were sold.

The natives earned £940, chiefly from dingo scalping and wages for station work outside.

Vegetables for home consumption also were grown.

Mornington Island.—Owing to a broken season and low market prices, the bêche-de-mer vessel only earned £201 9s. 6d. for fish and £13 for sandalwood.

The gardens gave good results; yielding 26 tons of vegetables, including 13 tons of sweet potatoes, all of which were used for home consumption. The boys and girls do the lighter garden work, the men doing the timber felling, building, fencing, fishing, and carrying of timber by boat from other parts of the island.

Purga.—The men of the colony obtained employment on neighbouring farms and stations, thereby maintaining their families on the mission. Of their earnings, £845 was banked for this purpose, and £868 was drawn from these accounts by their families as needed. Some revenue was also obtained from sale of farm produce, and cattle were killed for meat issue.

Cowal Creek.—The native settlement, formed voluntarily by the once warlike tribes of Cape York and neighbouring islands, has made good progress.

The village plan has been extended and several new and more comfortable bark houses built. The cutter "Fly" was not very successful, earning only £253. The mainlander is a good worker under a good captain, but few mainlanders make good masters.

A good supply of edible fish, oysters, and garden produce was obtained and used for food by the villagers.

NATIVE PROVISIONAL SCHOOLS.

Gayndah (Teacher, C. Turner)—Roll, 21 (boys 9, girls 12).

Myora (Teacher, P. Bensted)—Roll 16 (boys 10, girls 6).

Thursday Island (Teacher H. Simpson)—Roll 50 (boys 26, girls 24).

Progress has been satisfactory, favourable reports being made by the visiting inspectors. At Gayndah, the children displayed some very creditable work, at local shows, of sewing, and of vegetables and flowers grown in their school gardens. In sports also they attained very gratifying success.

At Myora, several new houses of better type were built from material obtained from the dismantled buildings at St. Helena. The able-bodied people have just managed to maintain themselves at work at Dunwich or on farms or oyster beds in the neighbourhood.

At each school religious instruction has been given by local visiting missionaries or clergy.

RECREATIONS.

This important side of the work has not been neglected. The usual outdoor sports, football, cricket, tennis, rounders, &c., are always popular. Hunting, fishing, and searching for bee's-nests or "sugar-bag" are also favourable pastimes for holidays. At some stations, as also in Torres Strait, the young people have entered keenly into the Boy Scout and Girl Guide movement.

Besides providing a healthy recreation for them, this has been found to have important value, in that they display keen interest and strive to acquire, as a sport, efficiency in many of the manual and domestic arts it was desired to afford them instruction in.

At many places wireless receiving sets have been installed. At Mornington Island, where but a very few years ago the people were of the most primitive type and murdered their first missionary, these same people enjoy, per medium of the magic lantern, the gramophone, and the

listening-in set, some of the joys of their civilised white brethren across the sea.

SOCIAL IMPROVEMENT.

While the more advanced stations are making gratifying progress in the social betterment of their inmates, by encouraging the settled, industrious life, and moulding the mind of the growing generation, some very interesting work is being performed amongst the primitive tribes. By tactful study of, and friendly interest in, their native customs and laws, the missionaries are succeeding in winning their confidence, with the result that their tribal leaders encourage the people to attend the mission for help, and even bring their children to be cared for.

In this way, the Mornington Island missionaries have, after many years, succeeded in establishing friendly contact with the wild people of Bentinck Island, of the Wellesley Group, who have always previously, probably because of cruelties in earlier days, been too wild and timid to be approached. It was evident from the very poor and emaciated condition of these people that protection and help were sadly needed.

ABORIGINAL PROTECTION PROPERTY ACCOUNT.

<i>Receipts.</i>		<i>Expenditure.</i>	
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
Balance at 31st December, 1926	3,540 1 5	Woorabinda—Purchase trees	6 10 6
<i>Collections—</i>		<i>Barambah—</i>	
Estates deceased natives	1,940 16 10	Sanitary wagon	105 0 0
Unclaimed bank balances	1,257 8 11	Sewerage work	116 1 0
<i>Refunds—</i>		Hospital	31 13 5
Advance account loans	140 0 0	Prize money	10 0 0
Payment aboriginal accounts	230 15 8	<i>Palm Island—</i>	
Palm Island—Proceeds football match ..	87 0 0	Material	76 17 7
P.A. Thursday Island—Refund fares, Johnny Mapoon and family	27 10 0	Timber	25 4 10
<i>Interest—</i>		Wages	138 15 4
Settlement accounts	1,836 0 5	Wireless	5 10 3
Transfer accounts	1 14 11	<i>Grants—</i>	
Loans—Part payment, Cape Bedford ..	130 0 0	A.J. Mission (donation for services, missionaries)	25 0 0
P.A. Laura—Sandalwood account	106 11 3	B.A.S. Natives (during typhoid out- break)	10 0 0
State Stations Department—Wages, Nellie Jackson	37 19 6	Mapoon	500 0 0
Outstanding cheque, P.A., Quilpie	0 2 2	Weipa	300 0 0
		Yarrabah	500 0 0
		<i>Refunds—</i>	
		To relatives deceased estates	10 16 0
		To others whose bank balances were banked for convenience	405 16 2
		Christmas goods, settlement interest account	308 6 10
		Various payments, aboriginal accounts and destitute natives	165 12 0
		Interest on Inscribed Stock	972 16 1
		<i>Loans—</i>	
		Burials, deceased natives	40 18 0
		Thursday Island school prize money ..	5 0 0
		Mabuiag Island	130 9 0
		Advance account (Brisbane)	105 0 0
		Do (Settlements)	95 0 0
		Miscellaneous	37 10 8
		Balance at 31st December, 1927	5,199 13 5
	<u>£9,336 11 1</u>		<u>£9,336 11 1</u>

The expenditure on relief administration amounted to £60,547, and the collections, throughout the State, of aboriginals' earnings, wages, store sales, sales of produce of fishing vessels, settlements, &c., amounted to £172,080.

The loyal service of all officers of this Department, especially the Protector at Thursday

Island, the Superintendents of the Settlements and Mission Stations, the medical officers and the Head Office staff, and the sympathetic assistance of the Home Department and other Government Departments, have been warmly appreciated.

Aboriginal Department, Information contained in Report for the year ended 31st December 1927

Corporate Author: Queensland, Home Secretary's Department

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