REPORT

UPON THE

OPERATIONS OF THE SUB-DEPARTMENTS

OF

Native Affairs, 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.
Director of Native Affairs—Information contained in Report for the Year ended 31st December, 1939.

Brisbane, 11th October, 1940.

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.

DIRECTOR OF NATIVE AFFAIRS (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).

LABOUR CONDITIONS ON LAND.

The census taken by the Government Statistician on 30th June, 1939, revealed that the total aboriginal and half-caste population of the State was 18,808, of whom 10,154 were males and 8,654 females. Full-bloods comprised 12,030, and half-castes 6,778 of the above figure.

RELIEF AND BLANKETS.

Where necessary, casual relief was granted at a cost of £343 16s. l1d. All old and indigent natives were supplied with rations and blankets, clothing, tobacco, &c. The cost of the blankets was £1,867 11s. 5d., and of the other relief £1,845 18s. 7d., exclusive of freight. Blankets issued totalled 1,900.

ABORIGINAL ACCOUNTS.

Wages deposits to the 5,786 native accounts totalled £70,043 7s. 6d., and withdrawals amounting to £77,766 6s. 2d. were made.

The total amount held in trust for the natives throughout the State was £341,466 11s. 11d.

The Aboriginal Protection Property Account was credited with £784 4s. 6d. and £183 19s. 1d., representing the unclaimed estates of deceased and Savings Bank balances of missing aboriginals.

The Aboriginal Provident Fund, used for the relief of indigent natives, was in credit to the extent of £1,350 6s. 6d.

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CRIME AMONG ABORIGINALS.

The number of convictions for offences by aboriginals was 68, and of these 54 were for drunkenness. Fines totalling £7 6s. were imposed.

OFFENCES AGAINST ABORIGINALS.

The fourteen convictions for offences against aboriginals were punished by the imposition of £11 11s. 6d. in fines.

REMOVALS.

Removals of aboriginals to settlements showed an appreciable decrease on those of the preceding year, 196 being removed, as compared with 230.
The Torres Strait Island communities in a unique position, in 1939. These Acts placed Preservation and Protection Act of were between couples of the same breed. were legal and five tribal; forty-seven of the legal unions that they now have a constitution giving them a system of epidemics of influenza, the outbreak at the latter settlement establishment of a leper lazaret at Fantome Island, and the outstanding feature, from a health point of view, was the protoxins, and pleurisy, the country protectorates were troubled only by minor outbreaks of coughs, colds, and influenza. In districts to which hospitals were attached natives were given treatment, and 671 patients received attention. So far as the Government settlements were concerned, the outstanding feature was a healthy point of view, was the establishment of a leper lazaret at Fantome Island, and the transfer there of all aboriginal patients from Peak Island. Cherbourg and Woobrinda settlements were visited by epidemic, the outbreak at the latter settlement being of a serious nature; and at Palm Island outbreaks of mumps and whooping cough occurred.

Marriages.
Sixty-one marriages were celebrated, and of these fifty-six were legal and four tribal; forty-seven of the legal unions were between couples of the same breed.

ORPHANS IN HOMES.
The Sacred Heart Mission, Thursday Island, the Salvation Army Girls' Home, Yoronga, the Salvation Army Boys' Home, Innaburra, and the Purga Industrial School maintained fifty-four orphans at the expense of the Department. The total cost of such maintenance was $1,980.

COUNTRY CAMPS.
Throughout the country protectorates there are twenty-five areas set aside as aboriginal reserves, and of these seventeen are in regular use. In addition to these proclaimed areas, a number of unalienated camps exist. All reserves and most camps are under the supervision of local protectors, who advise that sanitary conditions were generally satisfactory.

HALF-CASTES.
By the passing of the new "Aboriginals Preservation and Protection Act" in 1939, the term "half-caste" was changed to "half-blood." Under this Act persons with 50 per cent, or less aboriginal blood, who do not live with or habitually associate with aborigines are not subject to departmental control unless directly declared by a judge or magistrate to be of mixed race. This provided an incentive to ambition. Insufficient time has elapsed, however, since this Act came into operation in October for reliable observations as to the results.

EXCEPTIONS.
Exemption certificates were issued to sixty-one males and fifteen females. In future, this privilege can be extended to desiring full-bloods.

TORRES STRAIT ISLANDS—SOMERSET DISTRICT.
(Protector of Aborigines and Islanders, C. O'Leary.)

ADMINISTRATION.
The most outstanding feature was the passing of "The Torres Strait Islanders Act of 1939" and "The Aboriginals Preservation and Protection Act of 1939." These Acts placed the Torres Strait Islanders in the same position, in that they now have a constitution giving them a system of self-government, much more comprehensive and progressive than is enjoyed by any other native race of similar circumstances.

EDUCATION.
Good progress was again evident. Every effort is being made to develop a system of education to meet the steady intellectual advance of the people.
cleansing and improvement gangs all did good work. Other natives employed in school, hospital, police and domestic duties gave equally good service.

Revenue collections at Cherbourg were £4,610, at Palm Island £4,758, and at Woorabinda £8,602.

The retail store turnover, including cash sales, bank orders and free issues, were as follows:—Cherbourg £3,813, Palm Island £8,667, and Woorabinda £5,504.

**EDUCATION.**

Exclusive of the Torres Strait teaching service, already dealt with, educational facilities were provided by means of native schools on Government settlements and missions, and provisional schools in districts with large native populations.

The enrolments at the Cherbourg, Palm Island and Woorabinda settlements’ schools were 287, 182, and 117 respectively. Instructions were given in academic, domestic and rural school subjects. Epidemics hampered the usual routine at Palm Island and Woorabinda, but at Cherbourg a particularly good year was recorded.

Mission schools were attended by 798 children, and progress, both in academic and technical education, was satisfactory.

Children, numbering 136, received instruction in the provisional schools at Gayndah, Mitchell, Myora and Thursday Island.

Some children in isolated centres were educated through the State Correspondence School, whilst others, resident in districts in which State schools were established, attended there.

**RECREATION.**

In a successful community life both work and play must have their place. All work and no play does not make for a progressive and enlightened people, and this fact is realised fully by settlement and mission authorities alike.

Practically all institutions, such as settlements or missions, found recreation in such games as football, boxing, cricket, rounders, or vigoro. Fishing, swimming, hunting, bush ‘‘walkabout,’’ and practice with native weapons were all popular, and young and old enjoyed the native corroborees, which are always encouraged. Even European dancing was enjoyed by the more civilised element, at which they usually become quite efficient.

Christmas festivities were observed by the usual enjoyments, gifts and special issues.

**MISSIONS.**

There are fourteen missions throughout the State, controlled by the following religious denominations:—Church of England, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, Seventh Day Adventist, Lutheran, Salvation Army, and Brethren. The interest shown in and the attendances at religious services were very satisfactory.

Conduct and discipline, for the most part, were good, and a spirit of industry was manifested by the majority of inmates.

Lack of skilled assistance retarded building progress at some of the missions, but at those at which it was available good work was accomplished.

Farm and stock operations were carried on successfully.

Mission natives not occupied in productive or development work in their own communities found employment outside as domestics, station workers and seamen. The demand for such labour was somewhat irregular.

All missions expressed appreciation of the sympathetic assistance of the Department.

**APPRECIATION.**

Grateful appreciation is expressed of the kindly assistance received from the Minister and officers of the Health and Home Affairs Department and all other Departments in the service. The loyal work of the Deputy Director and officers of the Department of Native Affairs and its institutions, the officers of police acting as district protectors, and of all mission and school officers has been the main support in the task of carrying on under difficult circumstances.