

LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII
PACIFIC RELATION
LIBRARY
HONOLULU

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

INDEX TO ANNUAL REPORT, 1927-28.

Australia, Governor-general

TERRITORY OF PAPUA.

ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE

Year 1927-28.

By Authority:

H. J. GREEN, GOVERNMENT PRINTER, CANBERRA

find out the cause of the low birth rate. The temptation to attribute every thing to the presence or absence of vitamins is almost irresistible, but this explanation is denied us in this particular instance, for Dr. Bellamy, who lived in these islands for many years, is emphatic on the point. "I am quite sure," he says, "that a vitamin deficiency is not the cause of the decreased birth rate."

45. There have been epidemics of influenza in the Trobriands, and these, aggravated by a native custom called Kwalua, have probably a great deal to do with the decrease. The Kwalua is a form of mourning for the dead which consists in an abstinence from food, other than roots and berries—food, Dr. Bellamy says, which a pig would eat only by compulsion. A widow keeps up this mourning for a period, in some villages, of two years; the widower not so long. It involves the certain death of an infant that the widow may be suckling, and the almost certain death of the widow herself, and "in the presence of any high mortality produces a vicious circle of ever widening deaths."

The Kwalua is a good instance of native custom the continuance of which should not be encouraged.

PAPUAN SCHOOL READER.

46. One of the most interesting incidents in the year was the publication of a *Papuan School Reader*, which has been written, at the suggestion of the Government, by the Reverend W. J. V. Saville, of the London Missionary Society. The book is an extremely good one, and Mr. Saville has rendered a great service to the Papuan child by writing it.

47. The objection to the existing books, prepared for English or Australian children, was that they seek to explain the meaning of words by an appeal to a world which, to the Papuan child, is almost unknown. Thus the meaning of the word "man" may be adequately conveyed to a child in England or even in Australia by the representation of a gentleman in a frock coat and silk hat; but hardly so to a Papuan child, to whom such an apparition would be strange and meaningless.

48. It will be found that in Mr. Saville's book all the illustrations are local, or at any rate such that Papuan children would be familiar with them.

49. The necessity of providing local colour in school books was brought home to me many years ago by an examination of the books provided by the Americans for schools in the Philippines. We tried then to arrange for the compilation of a local reader, but had no great success until finally Mr. Saville undertook the task.

50. It appears that the practice of teaching natives through books intended for English children is very widespread, for a few days ago I came across the following passage in a very recent book on East Africa:—"Mr. Ormsby-Gore, who recently returned from a further tour of West Africa, was struck by the absurd character of the reading books which are in general use in the schools there. They are the reading books that English children would use, dealing with common places of English country life. The African child is expected to form conceptions of trees, meadows, hedge-rows, sparrows, snow and ice, which he has never seen, and is never likely to see." (*East Africa, a New Dominion*, by Major Church, Witherby, London, 1927, page 143.)

The *Brisbane Daily Telegraph* in a very favorable review of the book comments as follows:—

"The comprehensive character of the book is shown in the range of subjects, which include lessons on the earth, the seasons, the calendar, the compass, wind, water, metals, native products such as coconuts, fibres, bananas, sugar cane, rubber, rice, flowers, &c., wild animals of Papua, birds, fish, elementary physics in relation to heat and colour, technical subjects such as tools and their use, pottery, the principle of the internal combustion engine, the building of houses, canoes, &c., commercial subjects such as the various denominations of coins, weights and measures, foreign market, and a lesson each about cricket and football.

No doubt the book is well calculated to achieve the object which the author has set before him—namely, not only to give pupils a simple working knowledge of English, but also an intelligent idea of what their country can produce and how they may help to produce it, and so take their place alongside the white man in the development of their country."

NATIVE PLANTATIONS.

51. Rice growing has been suspended in the Gulf Division on account of unfavorable climatic conditions ; it will be revived if further observation shows that there are seasonal changes that can be relied upon. In the meantime coconut cultivation has been substituted.

52. In the Northern Division cacao and coffee are successfully cultivated. The cacao has reached the rate of £64 a ton, and the coffee the rate of 10d. a lb. The natives seem to take kindly to both cultures, and both—especially the coffee—seem likely to bring in a fair return. But, of course, the area under cultivation is still very small.

FOOTBALL.

53. Football is especially popular in the North-Eastern Division. The Resident Magistrate of that Division has written a report upon the subject. "Great interest," he says, "is being shown by the natives in the vicinity of the station, and on three Saturdays following, organized games have been played between various teams, a local team of Korapi's from Kabuni village proving so far invincible.

On each occasion Mr. Patrol Officer Rich has acted as referee, and the players have shown themselves quite amenable to the whistle, and although the greatest excitement has prevailed, and feelings have run high, not a single blow has been struck in anger.

An indication of the interest shown is that the tribes, or rather their representatives, have come to the office asking permission to bring along a team, and it has been found necessary to book these at least two Saturdays ahead."

MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE IN PORT MORESBY.

54. The general mission work of the Port Moresby District calls for little comment, but a few special points are of wider interest.

Miss Schinz, the nursing Sister at Poreporena Mission, some four years ago commenced a Baby Welfare Centre. This is still doing its good work, but with a greatly increased membership and attendance ; and, when one remembers the fondness of the Papuan for anything new, and his dislike of continuance, this persistence speaks, more eloquently than words, of the tact and efficiency of the leader of the Centre as well as of the realization of its usefulness by the mothers. Though the roll is purged carefully of irregular attenders, there are over seventy babies named in it, and an average weekly assembly of over forty. Some of the mothers are now bringing the younger brothers and sisters of the originally enrolled babies.

Two branches have been started recently, one at Kilakila and the other at Gaile, the latter under the care of the Papuan pastor's wife.

Such a movement as this, continued through the years, must eventually tell in a lessened infant death-rate, and a healthier childhood for the young Papuan.

Increasingly, the Sister is being called to help the women in their confinements, and has been able to nurse some of the mothers and children back to health, when, left to the tender mercies of the native midwives, they would otherwise have died.

The village hospital, also, has been fully occupied during the year, thus evidencing an increasing appreciation of the benefits to be received.

55. The Scout Movement, under Mr. Chatterton, continues to develop, and is increasingly doing its share in the formation of character, and the provision of outlets for the bubbling spirits of the young people.

56. The Boy Scout Troop now consists of four patrols of eight boys each ; the Girl Guides are divided into three patrols of seven each ; while the Rovers, or Senior Scouts, are in four patrols of seven each. By the provision of a vaulting horse—made in the Technical School—and the gift of a horizontal bar, the boys are afforded opportunities for learning something of gymnastics. A Jazz Band has been acquired, and will do its part in the development of the young people.

It is worthy of note that every Boy Scout who left school during the year joined the Rovers without any pressing, or even being asked.

Here, again, is something provided which seems to fill a recognized need in Papuan life.

57. In the day school, Mr. Chatterton regards the introduction of Mr. Saville's Papuan School Reader as one of the great events of the year. The improvement in the work of the top standard is already very noticeable, and it is hoped that the use of the book will spread to the next lower standard in the school. It certainly provided the children with reading material not hitherto available, and all correlated to their daily life.

58. Since the arrival of the book, Mr. Chatterton has organized an evening class in English reading for the special benefit of young fellows who are occupied during the day in the stores and offices of Ela.

59. In order that a permanent native assistant master may eventually be provided for the Head School here, a married student, Ovia Ikupu, has been transferred from Lawes College to Port Moresby. Both man and wife are capable and intelligent teachers, and under their instructor are making real progress towards this end.

60. There are still in the school two boys and two girls who passed standard IV. in the examination over a year ago. If at the approaching examination even an average number pass this highest standard, there will be a very large post-standard class for next year, and some of them are but twelve years old according to the birth register. This would seem to raise the question of the necessity of a still higher standard, viz., V.

61. At its inception the examination was intended mainly for the head station schools in charge of a European. Gradually, in this district, the nearer outstation schools were brought in, till now 150 pupils from fourteen outstations of the district will gather at Poreporena for the impending examination, in addition to 300 from the head station school.

This result is, in part, due to the system adopted at Mr. Chatterton's settlement, whereby each outstanding teacher was brought in to the head station for three months refurbishing.

62. The benefit of a trained Schoolmaster is being spread to other districts by the scheme now working smoothly of bringing to the school here the exit men from Lawes College. After their preliminary training of at least two years with the missionary of their district, they proceed to Lawes College for the four years' course, and now finish with a year under Mr. Chatterton, being trained in practical school method. In time, this training will naturally influence the village schools of the whole of the South-Coastline of the Territory.

63. The technical side of the work has been developed during the year along lines previously indicated. The classes for girls, teaching them basketry, sewing, and embroidery, are conducted by the ladies of the station as in previous years.

64. Thirty-six of the more advanced boys of the day school receive $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours per week tuition in carpentry, while two who have left school have been taught more advanced work; and the increase in technical skill, as shown in the articles produced, is noteworthy. One boy, e.g., from a scale drawing and cutting list, made a dressing table and chest of drawers which would not have disgraced a white artisan.

65. Eight boys also receive tuition in typewriting, going steadily through the system of "From sight to touch." All are making good progress, while some have attained a fair speed and measure of correctness.

66. The hilarious fun, noted last year as connected with the Institute, is now being provided for the young people by the Scouts, Guides, and Rovers, and we are, therefore, endeavouring in the Institute to meet the needs of an older class of people by providing them with quieter games, such as bobs, dominoes, draughts and ping pong, as well as with illustrated papers and books. A lantern lecture and a concert, the latter given mainly by native artists, have been held, and were so successful that it is intended to hold them regularly to popularize the Institute.

NATIVE BANKING ACCOUNTS.

67. In the Annual Report of last year, under the heading "Native Enterprise," I said that hundreds of natives had banking accounts. It will be seen, from the particulars relating to the Government Savings Bank which are published in this Report, that the actual number of native accounts is 439, and the total amount of deposits nearly £6,500.

J. H. P. MURRAY,

Lieutenant-Governor.

31st July, 1928.