

then the disease has spread insidiously and somewhat rapidly. On the two previous occasions on which lepers were removed from the Cook Islands to Makogai the majority came from Penrhyn (which is 750 miles north of Rarotonga), and the present occasion was no exception.

The Administration has under consideration a scheme by which all lepers throughout the Group will be removed to Penrhyn immediately each case is diagnosed and segregated there in one particular place under medical charge, and given treatment until such time as the leper colony can be removed to Fiji.

Staff.—Owing to the financial position it has been impossible for some years to adequately staff the medical services. For the whole Territory, comprising a land and sea area of 850,000 square miles and a population of 12,000, the staff consists of one medical officer, three registered nurses, two Native medical practitioners, and a handful of Native girls locally trained. Fortunately the health of the people, on the whole, is good, but with the medical officer confined more or less to Rarotonga it is impossible to give adequate attention to the health of the outlying islands.

Additional lads are in training at the Central Medical School, and will in time be available for work in the Outer Group, but it will be some years before any considerable assistance can be expected from this source.

During the year a relieving medical officer was able to make one trip through the Group.

Soil-sanitation and Water-supply.—Despite the straitened financial position for some years past the policy has been adopted of conserving funds to enable a soil-sanitation scheme to be carried out throughout the Lower Group. With the co-operation and financial assistance from the Rockefeller Foundation a three-year scheme was commenced in October, 1932. Its purpose was to provide fly-proof privy accommodation for every house, school, marae, and public place in all islands of the Lower Group.

With the assistance of the New Zealand Public Works Department a design, considered to be an improvement on all then known designs of Native privies, was drawn, and improved methods of manufacturing concrete slabs and “raisers” by means of moulds was decided upon, the finished product being made entirely of indestructible material—viz., concrete—with pressed metal lids and bolt hinges.

Mr. C. F. Cowley, of Wellington, was appointed to undertake the field work, and to his ability and energy, and the support of the Native people in freely undertaking the digging of pits, the scheme was completed with a considerable saving in time and in estimated cost.

Coincident with this work the water-supply has been still further extended until on the Island every house in every village has water laid on, from a safe source of supply from the water-catchment areas.

Both these works will undoubtedly be important factors in improving the health and sanitation of the Island.

Yaws.—A constant campaign is being waged against yaws and other tropical diseases with satisfactory results.

Native Medical Practitioners.—Both these young men have been kept fully employed during the year, principally in the Lower and Northern Group Islands, although at times they are stationed at Rarotonga for experience and also to give some relief to the Medical Officer, who has to work single handed.

Resident Nurses are stationed at Aitutaki and at Mangaia, and their work, which is very arduous in these isolated tropical places, is of a very high order and is greatly appreciated by the inhabitants.

Port Health.—Pratique was granted to all vessels arriving at Rarotonga from outside the Group.

X-ray.—During the year an X-ray plant was installed at the Hospital at Rarotonga, and this has given general satisfaction throughout the Group.

VITAL STATISTICS.

The following table shows the births and deaths in each island of the Lower Group for the year ended 31st March, 1935; and of the Northern Group for the year ended 30th September, 1934:—

STATISTICAL RETURN SHOWING BIRTHS, DEATHS, AND MARRIAGES FOR YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1935 (ISLANDS OF LOWER GROUP), AND FOR YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER, 1934 (NORTHERN GROUP ISLANDS).

Name of Islands.	Births.		Deaths.		Marriages.
	M.	F.	M.	F.	
Lower Group—					
Rarotonga	108	89	42	31	54
Aitutaki	44	41	25	29	10
Mangaia	29	30	7	7	8
Atiu	22	17	10	8	2
Mauke	16	11	4	7	2
Mitiaro	6	6	4	1	..
Northern Islands—					
Manihiki	6	13	6	1	2
Rakahanga	6	9	5	1	6
Penrhyn	4	9	2	6	4
Pukapuka	15	16	9	8	11
Totals	256	241	114	99	99