

Annual report of the Medical and Health Department / Colony of Seychelles.

Contributors

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COLONY OF SEYCHELLES.

ABBREVIATED

ANNUAL REPORT

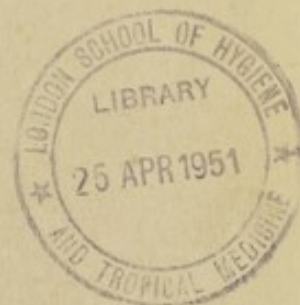
OF THE

MEDICAL and HEALTH

DEPARTMENT

FOR THE YEAR

1946.



Published by Command of His Excellency the Governor.

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Medical Department,
Seychelles, 30th May, 1947.

**Annual Medical and Health report for the Year
ending 31st December, 1946.**

I have the honour to submit for the information of His Excellency the Governor, and for transmission to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State, the Medical Report on the Health and Sanitary conditions of the Seychelles for the year 1946.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

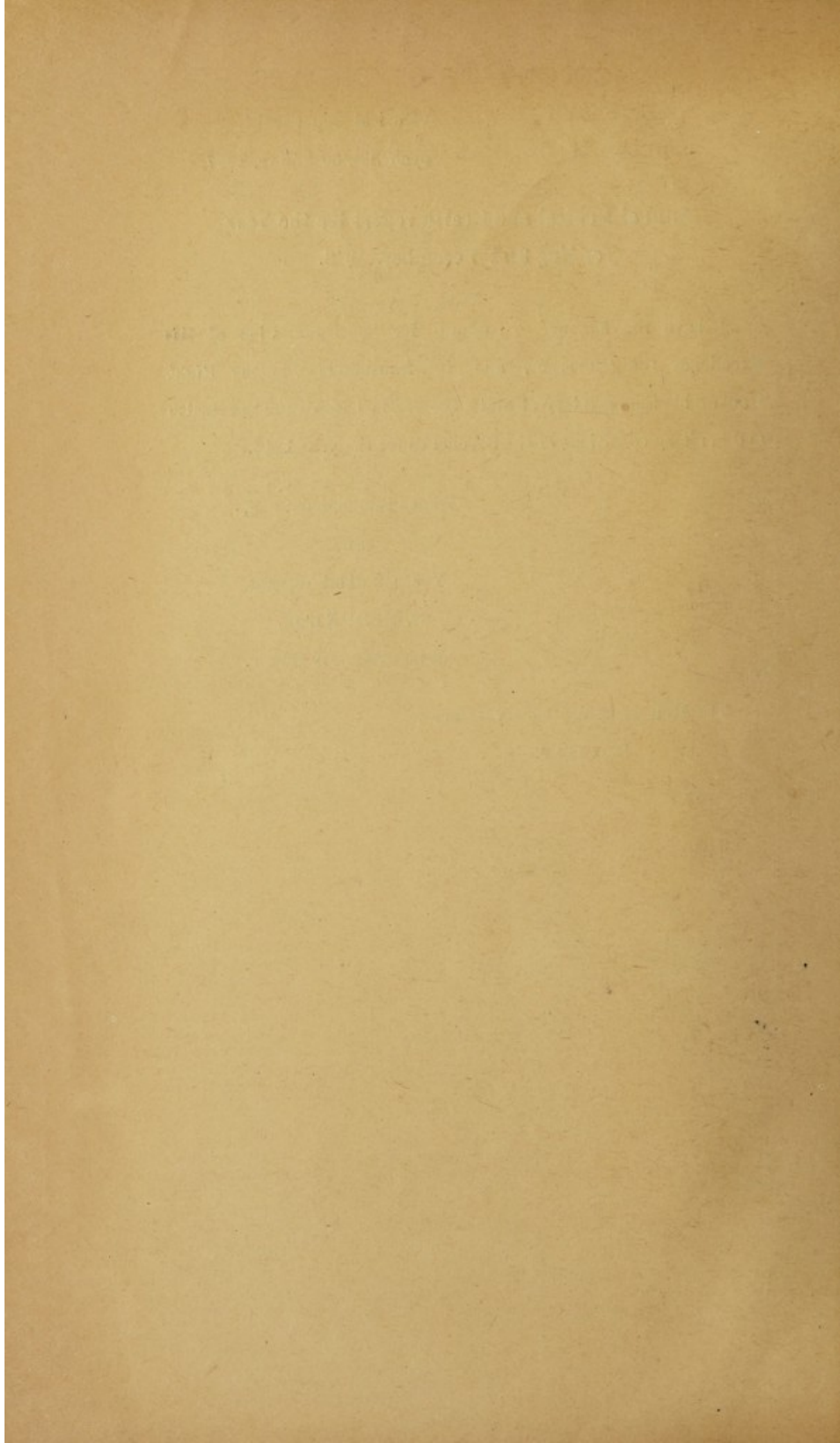
R. Y. DUNLOP,

Senior Medical Officer.

To

The Hon. Secretary to Government,

Seychelles.



COLONY OF SEYCHELLES.

ABBREVIATED ANNUAL REPORT

On the Medical and Health Department

1st January to 31st December 1946.

I. ADMINISTRATION.

A. (i) STAFF MEDICAL.

Dr. Rainsford seconded from Uganda proceeded on leave on 1.2.46.
 Dr. R. Y. Dunlop was seconded from Uganda as Senior Medical Officer and assumed duty on 4.2.46.

Dr. P. M. Joseph returned from leave on 17.1.46.
 Dr. Singleton on secondment returned to Kenya on 18.1.46.
 Dr. d'Offay arrived on first appointment on 22.6.46.
 Dr. Kantilal, Assistant Medical Officer arrived on first appointment on 4.7.46.
 Mrs. Rampezzotti S. R. N., C. M. B. (locally engaged) acted as Sister Tutor from 1.6.46.
 Sister Perpetua proceeded on leave on 23.6.46. (She will not be returning to the Colony owing to ill health).

(ii) STAFF PUBLIC HEALTH.

Mr. C. W. Grove arrived and took up his appointment as Public Health Officer on 21.12.46.
 Seven Health Inspectors and two mosquito searchers (locally trained) assist him in this side of the work throughout the Islands.

(iii) STAFF DISPOSITION.

| | Doctors. | Sisters. |
|---|---|--|
| <i>Victoria Hospital :</i> | Dr. Dunlop Dr. Joseph Dr. Christianson Dr. d'Offay | Sr Laurence (Matron) Sr Patricia (Maternity) Sr Perpetua (Theatre & 1st class) Sr Marie (3rd class male ward) |
| <i>Praslin, Curieuse & La Digue :</i> | Dr. Kantilal Dr. Singh | |

The Public Health staff have Victoria Township as their focal centre. Health Inspectors are stationed at Praslin and North and South Mahé.

REORGANISATION MEDICAL SERVICES.

In November 1946 the Service was reorganised. The part time medical officers i.e. Dr Joseph and Dr Christianson who were entitled to private practice besides drawing a salary for their part time work entered the Colonial Service as full time pensionable officers without private practice. All fees are now credited to Government. Half operation fees are paid to all officers. This Service now conforms completely with the circular sent by the Colonial Office to all Colonies on the question of private practice. It is estimated that the yearly revenue from all the Officers will be Rs. 50,000. All patients are now seen at the Hospital and not at private residences. Emergency calls are of course made to private homes. The reorganisation has gone well and it is felt the population are more happy about their medical attention now.

TRAINING.

A new teaching school was opened in July 1946 and 20 probationer nurses began training. Mrs. Rampezzotti was locally engaged to train these girls. A Sister Tutor was expected to arrive from England in 1946 to carry on with this work but it has not been possible to find one and Mrs Rampezzotti is to stay in 1947. Half the probationer nurses work in the wards in the morning and attend classes in the afternoon and the other half attend classes in the morning and do practical ward work in the afternoon. There has been a considerable advance in nursing knowledge and proficiency in the hospital since the school was opened. All probationers are under contract for 3 years in training and after 2 years service Marriage and ill health are the only contingencies which allow a nurse to leave the service until 5 years have elapsed unless she refunds her training expenses.

B. NEW BUILDINGS.

Great strides have been made during the year.

Praslin Cottage Hospital : The Maternity wing was completed and equipped.

La Digue Cottage Hospital : This was all but completed during 1946.

Quarantine Island : The buildings there were almost completed comprising :—

- A. New 1st Class quarters.
- B. New 3rd class quarters.
- C. A Yellow Fever Isolation Block.
- D. Renovations to the 2nd class quarters.
- E. Kitchens, latrines, bathrooms for the above units.

Victoria Hospital : Victoria Hospital, water borne sanitation almost complete.

Plans have been discussed and passed for the new Cottage Hospital at Anse Royale Mahé, and a Health Centre at Grand Anse Praslin. These will be built in 1947. Plans have also been passed for the extensions to the Victoria Hospital and the foundations have been laid for part of this scheme comprising :—

- A. New 3rd Class wards (42 beds).
- B. New laboratory.
- C. New stores.
- D. New maternity labour unit.
- E. New kitchen.
- F. New dispensary.
- G. New X-ray unit.

D. FINANCE.

HOSPITAL, MEDICAL AND SANITARY REVENUE.

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| Hospital, maternity and mental hospital fees | Rs. 23,109.75 |
| Quarantine fees | 155.00 |
| Sale of medicines | 6,765.68 |
| Receipts from medical officers | 12,289.50 |
| Total | Rs. 42,321.93 |

MEDICAL AND SANITARY EXPENDITURE.

The estimated expenditure for 1946 was :—

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Personal emoluments | Rs. 93,538 |
| Other charges | 99,080 |
| Total | Rs. 192,618 |

The actual expenditure for 1946 was :—

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Personal emoluments | Rs. 106,315.70 |
| Other charges | 129,236.75 |
| Total | Rs. 235,552.46 |

Excess expenditure Rs. 42,934.46

Minor alterations are to be made also to the existing hospital in the way of ventilation, exits, and operating theatre facilities.

C. LEGISLATION.

The following were enacted :—

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| Regulations : Leprosy (Amendment) Regulations, 1946 | G. N. 16 of 1946. |
| Yellow Fever Regulations, 1946 | G. N. 55 of 1946. |
| Quarantine (Small pox) | G. N. 138 of 1946. |
| Vaccination Regulations, 1946. | G. N. 154 of 1946. |
| V. T. B. Washing Limit Regulations | G. N. 153 of 1946. |

II. PUBLIC HEALTH.

(i) GENERAL REMARKS.

There was a small epidemic of influenza in July 1946. Quite a few cases were admitted to Hospital with pneumonia during this period following influenza. The death rate was negligible with the use of penicillin and sulphapyridine.

There is still evidence of malnutrition in these Islands. It takes two forms. In one, the majority of the cases, there appears to be a general deficiency in all classes, of foodstuffs where loss of weight, asthenia and mental apathy is seen. In the other a distinct lack of Vitamin B is noticeable where true beri beri and other border line cases of beri beri together with the skin conditions associated with a lack of B2 have been encountered. These latter appear particularly in young children. With the appointment to the Colony of a domestic Science Teacher in the Education Department it is hoped conditions will improve. An effort to obtain "food yeast" is being made. The local milk and vegetable supply in the islands has been if anything a little improved in 1946. More tinned milk was imported but this is still inadequate for the need of the population.

The supply of drugs especially penicillin has improved and many cases of gonorrhoea have been cured during 1946. Resistant cases are not often encountered.

(ii) HOSPITAL AND DISPENSARIES.

The number of cases treated at the Seychelles Hospital and outlying Hospitals has considerably increased in 1946.

IN-PATIENTS.

| | 1945 | 1946 |
|---|-------|-------|
| Seychelles hospital and maternity Section | 2,983 | 3,813 |
| Cottage hospital Praslin | 100 | 238 |
| Total | 3,083 | 4,051 |

OUT-PATIENTS.

| | Seychelles Hospital | | Anse Royale | | Praslin and La Digue. | |
|----------------|---------------------|-------|-------------|-------|-----------------------|-------|
| | 1945 | 1946 | 1945 | 1946 | 1945 | 1946 |
| New cases | 3,730 | 2,215 | 1,129 | 1,588 | 790 | 1,561 |
| Re-attendances | 2,219 | 6,649 | 2,335 | 3,203 | 601 | 2,325 |
| Total | 6,649 | 8,854 | 3,464 | 4,793 | 1,391 | 3,886 |

(iii) GENERAL DISEASES.

Asthma: This again was prevalent in 1946. A trial was given to the eradication of *Ascaris lumbricoides* in those who suffered as it was felt this might be a possible cause of Asthma. Since then the number of return cases have fallen somewhat. There were 281 cases in 1946 compared with 304 in 1945.

Appendicitis: There was a marked increase in cases, 21 in 1945, 105 in 1946. The increase has no obvious background except that patients have been more willing to have operations generally. Many of the cases operated on had been chronic sufferers for years.

Hernia: There has also been an increase of patients submitting themselves for this operation, 21 in 1945—46 in 1946.

Rheumatism: This is frequently seen together with fibrositis and myalgia. The damp climate accounts for the condition. There were 347 cases in 1945—421 cases in 1946. The increase is relative to the general increase in attendances.

Bronchitis: This is prevalent 396 cases in 1945—354 cases in 1946. It is associated at times with Asthma.

Constipation: A very common complaint in these Islands. Possibly due to the after effect of castor oil which is a common remedy for most ills in the Seychelles.

Pneumonia: In July 1946 quite a few cases were seen following an influenza outbreak.

| 1945 | | 1946 | |
|-------|--------|-------|--------|
| Cases | Deaths | Cases | Deaths |
| 71 | 2 | 142 | 6 |

(iv) COMMUNICABLE DISEASES.

Dysentery : This is perhaps the most common disease seen. The figures are :—

| | 1945 | | 1946 | |
|-------------------------|-------|--------|-------|--------|
| | Cases | Deaths | Cases | Deaths |
| Amoebiasis | 389 | 5 | 476 | 5 |
| Hepatitis (amoebic) | 391 | nil | 203 | nil |
| Liver Abscess (amoebic) | 10 | 1 | 28 | 2 |

Amoebic hepatitis is an acute painful disease with considerable pyrexia. It occurs almost wholly in the adult male section of the population and it is thought that excessive bacca and calou damage the liver cells allowing entry of the amoeba.

Diarrhoea and Enteritis : These in 1946 were again mild infections. There were 3.2 cases and 3 deaths in 1945 as against 338 cases and no death in 1946.

| <i>Tuberculosis</i> : | 1945 | | 1946 | |
|-----------------------|-------|--------|-------|--------|
| | Cases | Deaths | Cases | Deaths |
| of lungs | 29 | 2 | 34 | 2 |
| of other organs | 2 | 2 | 16 | 3 |

There is an increase here. It is generally thought that over-crowding and poor nourishment make for the increase of the disease.

Helminthic diseases : With the present sanitary conditions this group of diseases will never remain prevalent.

| 1945 | 1946 |
|------|------|
| 52 | 135 |

The above figures are those of patients who actually came for treatment for this condition. Close on 90% of the population are infected with one of the followings :—

| | | |
|------------------------------|-------|-----|
| <i>Ascaris lubricoides</i> | about | 85% |
| <i>Trichuris trichiura</i> | „ | 80% |
| <i>Ankylostoma duodenale</i> | „ | 20% |

Giardia : This was introduced by returning Pioneer Corps in 1945. The disease is on the increase and it has been found that Mepacrine is not a complete cure in all cases. In these cases even in massive doses the response at first is good but the disease is only held in check for the period the patient is on Mepacrine.

Infective hepatitis : A marked decrease in cases were seen.

| 1945 | 1946 |
|-----------------------|------|
| There were 73 | 10 |
| There were no deaths. | |

Veneral disease : Syphilis and Gonorrhoea are still most prevalent. The venereal disease clinic has been very well attended in 1946 and is one of the most encouraging features of the year's work.

| 1945 | | 1946 | |
|------------------|---------------|------------|---------------|
| New cases. | Re-attendance | New cases. | Re-attendance |
| Syphilis primary | 20 | 33 | 181 |
| secondary | 24 | 8 | 43 |
| tertiary | 79 | 179 | 3132 |
| Gonorrhoea | 41 | 337 | 269 |

Many cases of gonorrhoea have also been treated in the wards during 1946 as compared with 1945 the figures are :—

| 1945 | 1946 |
|------|------|
| 133 | 353 |

There is little doubt the certain cure with penicillin has attracted these patients.

III VITAL STATISTICS.

The estimated population on the 31st December 1946 was 35,327 an increase of 818 over 1945.

Births :—1,004 births were registered as compared with 875 in 1945. The birth rate was 28.42 as compared with 25.42 in 1945.

Still-births :—500 still-births were registered in 1946, an increase of 6 over 1945.

Deaths :—400 deaths were registered, an increase of 25 over 1945 and the death rate was 11.32 compared in 1945.

Infantile mortality :—The infantile mortality was 60. Infantile mortality rate 59.3.

CAUSES OF DEATH.

| | Correspond- ing No. in International List 1938 Revision. | Total. |
|--|--|------------|
| Typhoid | ... 1/2 | 2 |
| Tetanus | ... 12 | 3 |
| Tuberculosis of respiratory system | ... 13 | 35 |
| Other form of tuberculosis | ... 14/22 | 4 |
| Leprosy | ... 23 | 4 |
| Dysentery (a) amœbic | ... 27 | 7 |
| (b) bacillary | ... — | 4 |
| (c) undefined | ... — | 5 |
| Venereal diseases (a) syphilis | ... 30 | 19 |
| Other infective or parasitic diseases | ... 7, 11, 24, 26 37, 41, 43/44 | 2 |
| Cancer and other tumours | ... 45/55 | 18 |
| Diabetes | ... 61 | 1 |
| Diseases of endocrine glands | ... 62/66 | 1 |
| Anæmias (a) pernicious | ... 73 | 6 |
| (b) other | ... — | 13 |
| Mental diseases | ... 84 | 1 |
| Other diseases of the nervous system | ... 80/1, 85/7 | 32 |
| Heart diseases | ... 90/5 | 15 |
| Other diseases of the circulatory system | ... 96/103 | 8 |
| Bronchitis (a) acute | ... 106 | 1 |
| (b) chronic | ... — | 1 |
| Pneumonia (a) broncho | ... 107 | 7 |
| (b) lobar | ... — | 1 |
| (c) unspecified | ... — | 7 |
| Other respiratory diseases | ... 104/5, 110/4 | 3 |
| Ulcers of stomach and duodenum | ... 117 | 2 |
| Diarrhoea and enteritis | ... 119 | |
| (a) under 2 years | ... — | 8 |
| (b) 2 years and over | ... — | 7 |
| Hernias | ... 122 | 5 |
| Cirrhosis of liver | ... 124 | 6 |
| Other diseases of the liver and biliary passages | ... 125/7 | 4 |
| Other diseases of the digestive system | ... 123, 128/9 | 7 |
| Nephritis | ... 130/2 | 4 |
| Other non-venereal diseases of the genito-urinary system | ... 133/9 | 5 |
| Abortions | ... 140/1 | 2 |
| Other conditions of the puerperal state | ... 140, 142/3 145/6 149/50 | 3 |
| Other skin diseases | ... 151/2 | 1 |
| Congenital malformation | ... 157 | 1 |
| Disease of early infancy | ... — | |
| (a) congenital | ... 158 | 11 |
| (b) premature | ... 159 | 11 |
| (d) other conditions | ... 161 | 5 |
| Senility | ... 162 | 69 |
| External causes (c) other causes | ... 169/98 | 6 |
| Ill-defined causes | ... 199/200 | 38 |
| Total | ... | 400 |

The figures shown above include those of the whole Colony in contrast to the figures in the text which are inpatients only.

HYGIENE AND SANITATION.

1. MOSQUITO AND INSECT DISEASES.

The usual precautions were taken to prevent the introduction of Anopheline mosquitoes.

Yellow Fever precautions: No persons coming from an endemic area were allowed into the Colony unless they were in possession of a valid Yellow Fever Certificate, or could satisfy the Department that they had left an endemic area not less than 6 days previously.

2. EPIDEMIC AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Small pox: There were no cases of small pox. 31,297 vaccinations were performed. This was due to a mass vaccination campaign in 1946.

Leprosy: No change to report. The number of lepers in the Colony at the end of 1946 was 77.

Helminthiasis: 10,972 doses of chenopodium were dispensed at the various clinics throughout the Colony.

SCHOOL HYGIENE.

Most of the school children were inspected by a medical officer at least once during 1946. The number of pupils inspected totalled 2,075 as against 1,982 the previous year.

Schools and grounds were kept clean and tidy. Nearly all schools had a good and abundant water supply which came by pipeline from hill reservoirs. Some few country schools obtained their water supply from a nearby running stream. Overcrowding was noticeable in some schools. Ventilation and lighting were of a good standard.

The latrines were kept clean; some were in a good condition, others were old and dilapidated.

The pupils generally were better nourished, though some of them still showed evidence of undernourishment.

Helminthiasis associated with anaemia were less common amongst the pupils.

Free meals for school children on school days, instituted in 1945 at St. Elisabeth Catholic Mission, have been continued, and extended to include the Anglican Mission Schools in Victoria. Altogether 213 pupils were fed daily.

The giving of condensed milk in the forenoon to most of the school children was resumed and continued during 1946. Supplies were more plentiful in 1946.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE WORK.

| | |
|---|-----|
| Number of admissions | 449 |
| Number of labours | 310 |
| Number of kahn taken (* 23 + 34) | 57 |
| No. of babies born before arrival at Hospital | 11 |
| „ still births | 18 |
| „ baby births | 332 |
| „ maternal deaths | 3 |
| „ primipara | 140 |
| „ women who have babies over 5th pregnancy | 66 |
| „ oldest and youngest (46—14) | |
| <i>Age groups of confinements.</i> | |
| 13 — 15 | 2 |
| 15 — 18 | 30 |
| 18 — 30 | 298 |
| 30 — 45 | 120 |
| No. of forceps delivery | 4 |
| No. of caesarian section | 17 |

ACCIDENTS OF PREGNANCY.

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| Retained placenta | 4 |
| Eclampsia | 3 |
| Post partum haemorrhage | 8 |
| Placenta praevia | 7 |
| Threatened abortion | 11 |
| Abortion | 14 |
| Miscarriage | 7 |

Number of Baby deaths 7.

- 1 Premature (lived 10 minutes — asphyxia).
- 2 Congenital syphilis (lived 1 month the other 4 days).
- 1 Congenital heart (lived 14 hours).
- 2 Asphyxia (lived 2½ days other 3 days).
- 1 Post natal shock (lived 1 hour).

* Positive

† Negative

NUMBER AND SPECIFICATION OF ABNORMALITIES IN BABIES BORN.

| | |
|----------------------------|----------|
| Talipes equinovarus | 2 cases. |
| Extra digit (both hands) | 2 cases. |
| Extra digit (one hand) | 1 case. |
| Congenital absence of anus | 1 case. |

The work in the maternity section has increased considerably. There were 82 more babies born in the hospital than in 1945 and 16 more caesarian sections. Maternal mortality remained the same as in 1945. The number of still births were two less than in 1945.

ANTE-NATAL EXAMINATIONS.

| | |
|------|------|
| 1945 | 1946 |
| 191 | 144 |

DENTAL CLINIC.

The Dental Surgeon visited the schools in Mahé, Praslin and La Digue. The following work was carried out :—

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| 1. Schools :— | Extractions 1,775, fillings 264. scalings 47. |
| 2. Public Dental Service : | Extractions 2,392. |

PORT HEALTH.

36 ships were granted full pratique.
18 ships were granted partial pratique.
1 ship was placed in quarantine for small pox.

LABORATORY.

The work done in the Laboratory again showed an increase over the previous year.

Summary of work done :—

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| Urine examinations | 2,264 |
| Faeces " | 3,727 |
| Sputum " | 408 |
| Blood films examined | 167 |
| Examinations of smear and swabs | 738 |
| Throat cultures | 4 |
| Miscellaneous | 77 |
| Khan tests | 1,718 |
| Total | 9,103 |

About 33% of the Khan tests taken were positive.

X-RAY DEPARTMENT.

Summary of work done :—

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Radiography | 207 |
| Radioscopy | 11 |
| Ultra-violet rays | 127 |

PRISONS AND ASYLUM.

The Central Prison was visited on numerous occasions by a medical officer. The health of the prisoners was satisfactory.

MENTAL HOSPITAL ANSE ROYALE.

| | |
|---|----|
| Number of patients remaining from 1945 | 45 |
| Admitted during the year | 9 |
| Discharged as recovered | 8 |
| Number of patients out on trial | 4 |
| Remaining at end of 1946 including those out on trial | 48 |

PAUPER ASYLUM FIENNES INSTITUTE.

Much good work has been done here. New surface drains and some new buildings have been erected besides minor repairs to many buildings. The daily average number of inmates was 68, there 33 deaths.

R. Y. DUNLOP,
Senior Medical Officer.

Diseases and Deaths by Groups Classified in accordance with Manual of International List of causes of Deaths 1938 Edition.

| | Seychelles Hospital. | | | Anse Royale Out-Patients. | Praslin and La Digue. | | |
|---|----------------------|-----------|---------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|---------------|
| | In-Patients. | Deaths. | Out-Patients. | | In-Patients. | Deaths. | Out-Patients. |
| I. Infective and parasitic diseases | 931 | 15 | 368 | 211 | 17 | ... | 182 |
| II. Cancer and other tumours | 46 | 6 | 18 | 8 | 3 | ... | 19 |
| III. Rheumatism &c. | 60 | 2 | 552 | 88 | 9 | ... | 171 |
| IV. Disease of the blood &c. | 20 | 1 | 344 | 45 | ... | ... | 24 |
| V. Chronic poisoning and intoxication | 4 | ... | ... | 1 | ... | ... | 4 |
| VI. Diseases of the nervous system | 149 | 8 | 201 | 84 | 6 | ... | 144 |
| VII. Diseases of the circulatory system | 104 | 5 | 50 | 27 | 10 | ... | 91 |
| VIII. Diseases of the respiratory system | 552 | 11 | 539 | 78 | 49 | ... | 213 |
| IX. Diseases of the digestive system | 631 | 15 | 966 | 255 | 35 | ... | 367 |
| X. Diseases of the urinary and genital system (non-venerea!) | 217 | 7 | 111 | 73 | 13 | ... | 84 |
| XI. Diseases of pregnancy | 483 | 8 | 28 | ... | 58 | ... | 8 |
| XII. Diseases of the skin | 339 | ... | 156 | 167 | 4 | ... | 141 |
| XIII. Diseases of the bones | 29 | ... | 30 | 37 | 13 | ... | 24 |
| XIV. Congenital malformations | 3 | ... | ... | 2 | ... | ... | ... |
| XV. Diseases peculiar to 1st year | 10 | 1 | 21 | 14 | 2 | ... | 24 |
| XVI. Senility and old age | 3 | 1 | ... | 16 | 2 | ... | 44 |
| XVII. Violence | 196 | 2 | 89 | 133 | 11 | ... | 110 |
| XVIII. Ill-defined causes | 36 | 1 | 32 | 25 | 6 | ... | 17 |
| Total | 3,813 | 78 | 3,505 | 1,264 | 238 | ... | 1,662 |

