

## Leprosy Work in Nyasaland.

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### REPORT ON LOUDON LEPER COLONY, 1928.\*

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During the year three new in-patients were admitted, and one new out-patient applied for treatment. The total number of in-patients is sixteen, of whom seven are at present at their villages. Six out-patients attend for treatment, five women and one boy who now shows no lesions and is allowed to live with his mother. So far we have no accommodation for women in-patients, no application having been made for such.

The inmates of the camp number ten or twelve as a rule, the number fluctuating with leave granted to patients so far improved as to be non-infective and permitted to go home for a period.

All our patients show great improvement under treatment, some half-a-dozen are at present ready for investigation with a view to discharge if repeated examination proves negative for the *Leptra bacillus*.

Treatment : "Alepol" has now been adopted for injection in place of "Moogrol" or "Hydnocreol." It appears to be equally effective and to provoke less pain and swelling at the site of injection.

Each patient is examined for intestinal parasites and treated for these and other concurrent diseases. Where necessary general tonics are exhibited with beneficial effect.

The diet consists of the usual ration of native flour, beans, salt, etc. In addition skimmed milk is provided daily ; this the patients mix with a portion of their ration of flour to make a gruel, Meat and green vegetables are given as occasion offers, and the patients get the benefit of a good deal of fresh fruit grown on the station.

Exercise : The patients are encouraged to work, and are paid for their labour. The work is mainly with the hoe, and consists of keeping the station premises clean, weeding and the like—digging pits for timber planting, and tending the young trees. There is no question that this work has a decided effect on their health. One or two refused to do anything, and remained in poor condition ; of these one committed suicide in the early part of the year. No reason for this act could be

\**Note.*—The Leper Colony referred to is being conducted by the Staff of The United Free Church of Scotland Mission at Loudon.

found except that he seemed always to be moping and bemoaning his condition—a marked contrast to the others, who are usually happily singing hymns in their off time !

The Expenditure for 1928 has been as follows :—

Salaries : £12 8s. 6d. (recoverable from Nyasaland Government).

Running expenses : £12 15s. 10d. ; this low figure is accounted for by the fact that the patients buy most of their own clothing with the pay they get for their work.

Fees from patients amounted to 8s.

The brick dispensary and ward under construction could not be finished before the rains, but will be completed next building season. It is of special construction, roofed completely by brick arches, which prevents the accumulation of vermin to which thatch is liable. The patients, however, will continue to be housed in ordinary native huts which will be burnt from time to time.

Staff : At present we have no hospital assistant. The staff consists of Doctor, Nurse, one student, one woman who acts as cook, and sterilises the needles, etc., and another who pounds flour, etc. Treatment of minor sores, etc., is done as part of the work of the general hospital, which reduces the running expenses as shown above.

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## Success in Nyasaland.

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Dr. H. A. Erickson, of the Hospital for Lepers, Malamulo, Nyasaland, writes :—

“ We are treating 105 patients now. We discharged eleven patients this month ; each of these patients were given Potassium Iodide for two weeks previous to the examination and then a skin clip and nose smear was made three times, a month apart. So as far as we know they are free from all infection. I ordered them to report every three months for examination.”

In another letter there is this further news :—

“ You will be very interested to know that the Malamulo Colony recently discharged eleven more patients, who have been pronounced cured. This makes a total of about 25 who have been discharged from this colony since it began to operate. I think that is a fairly good record considering the obstinacy of this disease.”