

## Motion-Pictures to Brighten Life of Leper Colony in Fiji Islands.

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In all the world there is no more tragic figure than the leper. Throughout history we meet him, a lonely, forbidding creature, condemned by man to live apart until death, moving at a maddeningly slow pace, breaks his sentence.

Men, for their own protection, have been forced to be cruel to the leper, not out of desire to be cruel, but because there was nothing left to do.

Lately, however, there has been an awakening interest in how to care for the leper. The first attempt, of course, has been to find a cure. The second is to find amusement, at least momentary relief for him.

Doctors are attending to the first. The motion-picture is meeting the requirements of the second. There are difficulties in the way of supplying pictures, however, for whatever goes into a leper colony must remain there. No booking of films is possible. The film once shown to lepers must not be shown elsewhere.

The motion-picture industry has for a long time recognised these facts and these needs. The late General Wood was one of the first to stress the importance of entertainment by films for lepers ; and while he was governor of the Philippines he laboured earnestly to make the leper's lot easier.

The matter was brought to the attention of Mr. Hays, and the members of the Motion-Picture Producers and Distributors of America were advised of the needs of the lepers. Generous responses were made, and for several years now films have been shipped regularly—as outright gifts—to the lepers.

A few months ago prints of thirty-one separate pictures were donated by several member companies and shipped aboard the S.S. *Benholm* for use in the leper colonies at Makogai and Makadruga, in Fiji. The films will be taken off at Suva, the only port in Fiji where the steamer touches, and from there will be transported to the leper islands and turned over to Dr. E. Aubrey Neff, medical director.—*The Motion Picture.*