

The District Watchmen Force, numbering 100, to which the Government contributes \$2,000 per annum, was well supported by the Chinese during the year. These watchmen patrol the streets in the Chinese quarter of the City. They are placed on police beats and are supervised by the European police on section patrol.

The total number of persons committed to Victoria Gaol was 5,153 as compared with 5,212 in 1919. Of these 1,999 were committed for criminal offences against 2,552 in 1919. Of committals for non-criminal offences there were 64 more for hawking without a licence, and 5 more for unlawfully boarding steamers, than in 1919.

The daily average of prisoners confined in the Gaol was 755, the average for 1919 being 756, and the highest previous average being 726 in 1904. The percentage of prisoners to population, according to the daily average of the former and the estimated number of the latter, was 0.12. The average percentage for the last ten years was 0.13. Owing, however, to the large floating population, which is constantly moving between the Colony and Canton, the percentage of crime to population does not convey an accurate idea of the comparative criminality of the residents of the Colony. The Victoria Gaol has accommodation for 707 prisoners. The Branch Prison at Laichikok has accommodation for 200 prisoners.

The prison discipline was satisfactory, the average of punishments per prisoner being 0.99 as compared with 0.96 in 1919 and 1.05 in 1918.

Long sentence prisoners serving two years and upwards are taught useful trades, including printing, book-binding, tin-smithing, mat-making, tailoring, carpentering, etc. The profit on the work done was \$64,014 as against \$67,735 in 1919. A sum of \$3,598 was received and credited to Government for non-Government work as against \$3,363 in 1919.

IX.—VITAL STATISTICS.

(a.)—POPULATION.

The civil population of the Colony, according to the Census taken on May 20th, 1911, was 456,739, of whom 104,287 reside in the New Territories and in New Kowloon; at the Census taken in 1906 it was 301,967 exclusive of the New Territories and of New Kowloon. The estimated total population at the middle of the year under review was 648,150, but this includes the New Territories; and, as the birth and death figures given below do not include those from this area (with the exception of New Kowloon), the population for the purposes of calculating these rates is estimated at 547,350, of whom 14,000 were Non-Chinese.

The distribution of population estimated to the middle of 1920 was as follows :—

| | | |
|------------------------|---|----------------|
| | Non-Chinese Civil Community, | 14,000 |
| Chinese Population. | { City of Victoria (including Peak), | 342,000 |
| | { Villages of Hongkong, | 18,050 |
| | { Kowloon (including New Kowloon), | 104,000 |
| | { New Territories, | 100,800 |
| | { Population afloat, | 69,300 |
| | Total Chinese Population, | <u>634,150</u> |
| | Total Civil Population, | <u>648,150</u> |

(b.)—PUBLIC HEALTH AND SANITATION.

The activity in building operations, which has been so noticeable a feature since 1912, has not abated, and the demand for housing accommodation by the Chinese continued to be greatly in excess of the supply, as many of those who fled with their families to Hongkong during 1911, 1912, and 1913 elected to remain in the Colony.

The birth-rate for the year was 3·96* per 1,000 among the Chinese community and 21·9 per 1,000 among the Non-Chinese community, as compared with 3·9 and 20·6 for 1919.

The death-rate for the year was 22·78 per 1,000 among the Chinese community and 17·9 among the Non-Chinese civil community, as compared with 23·3 and 21·9 for 1919.

The number of deaths from Malaria (332) shows an increase on the previous year (319). The deaths of Chinese from this cause in the City of Victoria numbered 124 out of a population of 342,000 or a rate of 0·36 per 1,000 per annum.

The deaths from Plague numbered 120 as compared with 426 in 1919.

Small-pox deaths numbered 21, all Chinese.

There were 3,834 deaths from respiratory diseases other than Pulmonary Tuberculosis as compared with 3,049 in 1918, and 45 of these were among the Non-Chinese community. Pulmonary Tuberculosis claimed 1,380 Chinese and 21 Non-Chinese victims whilst other forms of Tuberculosis represent an additional 681 deaths making a total of 2,082 or 16·7 per cent. of the total deaths among the community.

Beri-beri was responsible for 361 deaths, as compared with 555 during 1919 and 804 in 1918. During the past few years circulars have been distributed to all large employers of coolie labour calling their attention to the fact that Beri-beri is produced by the consumption of white rice as the staple article of diet without a sufficiency of other foods, and advising that beans should be supplied with the rice, when fresh meat or fresh fish cannot be afforded.

A tabular statement of the principal causes of death is appended.

* This figure is wholly misleading as it is impossible to register more than a portion of the births.