

ment a good suggestion that, for training purposes alone, the "Amokura" should perform this duty. This would give the Resident Commissioner an opportunity to carry out his duties in the outlying islands. Communication to those islands from Rarotonga is not frequent. The mission steamer "John Williams," which has been in the habit once or twice a year of visiting the Islands, is by no means certain to continue doing so for any length of time. As a matter of courtesy the London Missionary Society always grant passages to the Resident Commissioner and the officers of the Administration having business to perform, such as adjusting disputes and the holding of Land Courts and High Courts. In the event of the steamer's withdrawal this means of enabling public business to be transacted would be lost.

COURTS.

It will be seen from the report of the Registrar of the High Court that there is little crime among the Native population. The number of criminal cases heard was 229. On the Civil side of the Court there were 40 cases. The total fines and fees imposed on the criminal side amounted to £217, and on the Civil side to £25. The total amount of fines and fees collected and paid into the Treasury to the credit of the general revenue was £218.

Of 72 cases for drunkenness from bush-beer drinking, 258 defendants appeared before the Court. Not one of the defendants was charged with being intoxicated by liquor supplied by the Collector of Customs—in fact, I am glad to say that the licensing law is very strictly complied with. The number of defendants charged with the same offence—i.e., drunkenness from bush-beer drinking—during the previous year was 324.

LAND TITLES COURT.

The work for the year consisted of perfecting orders and plans in respect of titles investigated before the Court during the preceding year at Rarotonga and Aitutaki.

All the Aitutaki titles and plans have been completed, and also many of the Rarotonga titles and plans are available for issue on the payment of the fees.

The fees collected during the year and paid into the Treasury amounted to £745. The fees outstanding on the 31st March last amounted to £858, as compared with £1,548 on the 31st March, 1909.

PUBLIC HEALTH.

From correspondence from the outlying islands it would appear that the health of the Natives is generally good.

In a letter from the Resident Agent at Penrhyn, dated the 5th October, 1909, he asks for the assistance of a doctor to examine one or two cases which he supposes to be leprosy.

It is proposed to ask for the assistance of a medical man to report generally on the health of all the people in the outlying islands. In consequence of the rareness of communication it will be necessary for his investigations to extend for a period of at least six months or over. This will enable a comprehensive report to be rendered to you, which will help you to come to an opinion as to what it will be necessary to provide later on to safeguard the Natives. It would be almost impossible to secure the services of a medical officer who would be content to reside for any length of time on any of the small outlying islands, and there is not sufficient work for two at headquarters.

The Island of Rarotonga has been visited by an epidemic of dengue fever, fortunately without serious results. It was introduced from Tahiti, but is now almost extinct.

Drugs are supplied to the various Resident Agents free for the benefit of Europeans and Natives.

The Hospital referred to, erected at a cost of £1,368, will be of material assistance in any bad cases arriving from any of the other islands of the Group; but the distance from Rarotonga and the want of regular communication, it is feared, will permit of few such cases being treated in the institution.

The cost of medical instruments and the furnishing of the Hospital has yet to be provided for; also the erection of a residence for the Medical Officer.

As already stated, before anything of a comprehensive and thorough nature can be done for the health of the Natives in the outlying islands, it will be necessary to have such a report as stated above.

It was not possible during the year for the Medical Officer to leave Rarotonga to report on the health of the people, as his time was fully occupied at headquarters.

Dr. Dawson having tendered his resignation as Medical Officer, it will be necessary to procure at once the services of another duly qualified Medical Officer to take his place. This I have requested in despatch No. 246, of the 28th April.

SHIPPING.

On the 9th April, 1910, I received a letter from Mr. McLennan, the Union Steamship Company's Inspector for Island Trade, referring to a shipment of bananas which arrived in Auckland on or about the 8th April, per s.s. "Talune," in very bad condition, in which he states that "The first three days there was a light following wind, with bright sun, and the temperature in the shade from 78° at night to 86° in the afternoon, keeping well over 80° all day; matters improved after the fourth day." This refers to the first four days after the ship left Rarotonga.

While admitting that at this period of the year the fruit may have been shipped too full, the principal fault lies in the fact that none of the steamers carrying fruit from these Islands