

quarantine buildings, Rarotonga; new cargo-shed and repairs, and teacher's residence, Mangaia; teacher's residence, Mauke.

At Aitutaki considerable improvement was effected during the year in the waterworks in several of the villages, but that work is also delayed by the difficulty of obtaining material.

EDUCATION.

The reports of last year's work of the schools established by the Administration are satisfactory.

The industrial classes—agriculture, carpentry, mat and basket weaving, and cookery—which the Administration makes a special feature of in its scheme of education, continue to do excellent work.

Three more scholarships at St. Stephen's School, Auckland, have been awarded. Four lads have been chosen for apprenticeship to useful trades in Wellington. Like those already serving their apprenticeship there, these lads are under a bond to return to the islands. From them will be drawn the skilled artisans required in the Group. They are in charge of the Y.M.C.A., to whom the Administration is very much indebted for the great care it devotes to their welfare.

This year we hope to open a school at Atiu, where it is very urgently required, and where one has been promised for several years. Mitiaro, a beautiful little island, with a population of about one hundred and forty Natives, is also crying out for a teacher; and several teachers are required for Mangaia and for Aitutaki.

At Ngatangia, Pa Ariki and some of her leading mataiapos have very generously presented the Administration with an excellent site and a large playground for the new school. This building, designed by our architect, Mr. H. M. Connal, C.E., on the latest open-air principles, will provide accommodation for two hundred pupils. Its erection is now being proceeded with.

We experience great difficulty in securing teachers, even for Rarotonga, where two of our principal schools are still understaffed. For the outer islands it seems impossible to obtain them. The teacher with a missionary spirit has a great opportunity here. The members of Parliament recently with us saw how eagerly the people take advantage of the facilities for the education of their children. They saw some of the results, and they seemed to be unanimous in the opinion that in education lies the hope of the future for the people of these islands. Whilst there are undoubtedly privations and hardships in the outer islands where communication is infrequent and where many of the comforts of civilization are lacking, nowhere in the world can the school-master do more noble work or earn more lasting gratitude.

THE COURTS.

The Registrar's report shows that 609 criminal cases and sixty-nine civil cases were dealt with in the High Court.

The vital statistics disclose a higher percentage of births over deaths than usual, but infant mortality is still very heavy, and there is no doubt that the universal practice of adoption is largely responsible for it.

The Native Land Court (Judge H. F. Ayson) held a sitting at Atiu last year, and dealt with a considerable volume of business, including 126 freehold orders and eleven adoption orders. The fees amounted to £390 4s.

Fees and fines received: Criminal, £295 4s.; civil, £30 18s.; miscellaneous, £18 16s.: total, £344 18s.

PUBLIC LIBRARY.

A library has at last been established in Rarotonga. The Administration has provided the nucleus of a collection of books, the book-cases, &c., and has handed the control to a committee of residents, with a promise of further assistance until the library is able to pay its way. It is housed in the Courtroom. Arrangements have been made by which the Resident Agents and other Europeans living in the outer islands will be able to join the library, and so secure a monthly supply of books.

VISIT OF THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL.

Their Excellencies Lord and Lady Liverpool, accompanied by the Hon. Dr. Pomare and Mrs. Pomare, made their farewell visit to the Group in June last. Everywhere the viceregal party received a most loyal and hospitable welcome. The Arikis and members of the Island Council of Rarotonga, in bidding them good-bye, thanked the Governor-General and Lady Liverpool for the great interest shown by them in the welfare of the Native race.

VISIT OF THE PARLIAMENTARY PARTY.

In February last a large and representative party of members of both Houses of Parliament, under the leadership of Sir James Allen, Minister of External Affairs, visited Rarotonga, Mangaia, and Aitutaki on their way to Samoa. The party was enabled to see something of the work of the Administration and of its great responsibilities in regard to the welfare of the people of these islands; and, although their stay was all too short, we may express the hope that it proved as interesting and entertaining to the visitors as it was agreeable to the residents, both Maori and European.

A Trade Commission comprising Mr. George Elliot (Chairman) and Messrs. T. Wilson and W. R. Pearson accompanied the parliamentary party. The Commission's order of reference charged it to inquire into and report upon the best means of improving trade between the Cook Islands and New Zealand. The very short time at their disposal and the preoccupation of the people in the reception of the parliamentary party militated against the work of the Commission, but by assiduously sticking to its task it secured a considerable amount of evidence.

I have, &c.,

F. W. PLATTS, Resident Commissioner.

The Hon. the Minister in Charge of the Cook Islands, Wellington.