

Atiu.—Blasting operations at the landing-place on this island were carried out by Mr. H. Williams. This has made a much-needed improvement to the Atiu landing, and fruit has not now to be carried as great a distance as formerly.

Mauke.—Under the supervision of Mr. Williams the landing-place at this island has also been improved, and the road to the beach widened and graded.

Mangaia.—Improvements have been made to the schoolhouse, and the intake to the large supply tank at Oneroa has been fitted with larger piping.

Aitutaki.—Good work has been done by the Resident Agent in sinking wells in several places on the island. These wells have been fitted with serviceable pumps. A boat-passage has been blasted out on the Tautu side of the island, thus enabling boats to work there when the passage on the northern side is too rough. Considerable improvement has been made to the roads. The work of repairing the wharf is still in progress. The labour of procuring suitable rock is laborious, as it has to be blasted and conveyed some distance in punts; consequently, the work can only progress slowly.

The Administration was greatly indebted to Mr. J. B. Thompson, Under-Secretary for Lands, New Zealand, who during his furlough here in December, and January devoted a considerable amount of his leisure time to an examination of the Islands' more important public-works problems, including water-supply, drainage, and bridges. His valuable reports on these subjects, and on the Ngatangia Harbour, will be most helpful.

HIGH COURT.

Criminal Jurisdiction.—In Rarotonga the total number of cases heard for criminal offences, breaches of regulations and of local Ordinances, was 1,157 for the year, as follows: Manufacturing intoxicating liquor, 57; consuming intoxicating liquor, 624; drunkenness, 18; having possession intoxicating liquor, 2; breaches of Fruit Regulations, 81; breaches of Noxious Weeds Regulations, 12; breaches of School Regulations, 15; breaches of local Ordinances, 7; breaches of regulations and offences (failing to register dogs), 100; animal trespassing, 53; wilfully trespassing, 19; wilful damage, 2; wilful mischief, 2; wilful destroying tomato-vines, 1; obstructing the police, 1; assault, 20; assault causing bodily harm, 2; manslaughter, 1; murder, 1; theft, 42; breaking, entering, and theft, 3; escaping from lawful custody, 6; driving a vehicle without a light, 1; riding bicycle without lights, 9; driving vehicle furiously, 3; adultery, 22; cohabiting together without being married, 38; breach of Traffic Regulations, 1; gambling, 5; permitting a private house to be used for gambling, 1; inciting one to commit forgery, 1; committing forgery, 1; disorderly conduct, 2; for throwing stones, 1; contempt of Court, 1; discharging fire-arms in settlement, 2; total, 1,157. These cases were dealt with as follows: 879 convicted and fined; 103 convicted and discharged; 53 convicted and sentenced to imprisonment; 53 cases adjourned *sine die*; 7 convicted and ordered to come up for sentence if called upon; 2 ordered to come up for sentence within twelve months; 1 exiled from the Cook Islands; 2 withdrawn; 57 dismissed.

Civil Jurisdiction.—The following civil cases were dealt with at Rarotonga during the year:—50 actions for recovery of debts and damages, which involved the sum of £1,989 14s. 3d.; 17 actions for divorce; 2 actions for possession; 3 actions on judgment summons; 4 applications for grant of letters of administration in deceased persons' estates; 3 applications for probate; 2 applications under section 117 of the Cook Islands Act, 1915; 1 application for charging-order; 1 application to hear and determine question of a lease; 1 application to wind up a Native company; 3 affiliation cases; 7 applications to award and fix compensation for land taken for public purposes: total, 94—cases which involved Court fees in the amount of £43 18s.

NATIVE LAND COURT.

The Registrar's report shows that in August and September the Court sat at Aitutaki, when the following applications were dealt with: 56 applications for investigation of title; 69 applications for investigation of succession; 11 applications for investigation of partition; 10 applications for investigation of amendment of title; 16 applications for investigation of adoption (including one to annul adoption order.)

The Court also sat at Rarotonga in October, November, and December, when orders were made as follows: 11 orders on investigation of title; 4 orders amending titles; 95 orders for succession to deceased persons; 16 applications for succession part heard; 18 orders confirming alienation of land (leases); 2 applications for confirmation of alienation part heard; 2 orders which involved disputes as to tribal titles.

Owing to the duties of the Resident Commissioner and Chief Judge of both High Court and Native Land Court being combined, it is impossible to cope with arrears of Land Court work, although as much time as possible is devoted to it.

POLICE DEPARTMENT.

The following are extracts from the annual report of the Inspector of Police:—

“The strength of the Police Force remains the same as last year—viz., one Inspector (European), two sergeants, and eight constables (Natives); total, eleven.

“Generally speaking, the conduct of all members of the Force has been good, and I have had no reason to complain. From time to time classes are held at which all members are compelled to attend. At these classes instructions are given by myself on police duties and general law, and this has had a very good effect. All members are keen to improve themselves in police work and I am pleased to state it is quite a pleasure to find such an interest taken by the Native police.