

Zealand, and the reports were excellent, but owing to a dull market the prices were not satisfactory. A consignment of grapefruit and mandarins was also sent away. The reports were exceptionally good, and the price most satisfactory. Over two hundred local citrus trees have recently been topped, and budded to Marsh Seedless and Royal grapefruit. There is a very promising demand for this variety of citrus in New Zealand. As in previous years, a portion of the nursery was allotted for the school-boys agricultural classes. These classes were well attended twice a week, and were instructed in many subjects appertaining to agriculture, keen interest being taken by both teachers and pupils. Several varieties of watermelons were tested for the purpose of introducing better varieties. Tom Watson proved an easy first, whilst Panmura All Heart was also a good sweet variety. Seed of Tom Watson and Panmura All Heart were distributed. Several American varieties of muskmelon were under test, but did not prove very successful, although sprayed with Bordeaux mixture. Two cases of this fruit were exported to New Zealand realizing 12s. 2d. per case. Tests with muskmelons will again be carried out this year."

ETHNOLOGICAL RESEARCH.

Under the auspices of the Maori Ethnological Research Board Dr. P. H. Buck, the distinguished New Zealand ethnologist, carried out three months' research work, principally in the ethnological fields of somatology and material culture. On account of shortage of time his work had to be confined to Rarotonga and Aitutaki. It is to be hoped that Dr. Buck's appointment with the Bishop Museum at Honolulu will enable him to complete researches in the whole of the Group, which offers a wide scope for investigation of the arts, language, customs, history, and traditions of the Maori inhabitants of these islands.

RAROTONGA FRUIT COMPANY.

During last year this company shipped to New Zealand 20,878 cases of fruit, made up of 14,448 cases of bananas and 6,430 cases of oranges. The net proceeds were £6,543 11s. 1d., giving an average of 7s. 2½d. per case for bananas, and 4s. 2d. per case for oranges. This is for the fruit alone, and does not include cost of boxes nor freight. At the close of the season the membership of the company totalled 454.

RETIREMENT OF MR. J. C. CAMERON.

It is regretted that it is necessary to record the impending retirement, on account of age-limit, of Mr. J. C. Cameron, Resident Agent at Mangaia. During his twenty-four years' service with the Administration Mr. Cameron has been Resident Agent at several islands, including Mangaia, Mauke, and Aitutaki. He has a wonderful record, not only for length of service but for general efficiency, invariably displaying ability, tact, and energy in the several branches of his work. He will be succeeded by Mr. J. McGruther, schoolmaster at Mangaia, who will combine the two positions.

METEOROLOGICAL.

The total rainfall at Avarua (Rarotonga) for the twelve months ended the 31st March, 1927, was 61.38 in., the highest fall recorded for twenty-four hours being 6.57 in., on the 15th December. Highest readings of the Fahrenheit thermometer in the shade at 9 a.m. were 89°, on the 11th January and 25th February, 1927, and the lowest was 56°, on the 28th August, 1926. For the twelve-months period the mean of the maximum was 80.3°, and the mean of the minimum 69.4°.

The exceptionally heavy rainfall on the 15th December did considerable damage to plantations. Slips destroyed a large number of bananas growing on the hillsides, and numerous taro, kumara, and melon plantations were completely destroyed by the flooded creeks. The inland roads also suffered a great deal. The Avatiu Valley Road was completely washed away in places, and will take a considerable amount of time and money to repair. Water-supply to all villages was cut off, the intakes being smashed by heavy rocks and washed away down the creeks. The mains themselves were also badly smashed by rocks and falling trees. All have been repaired with the exception of the Avatiu system, the delay here being occasioned by the necessity of ordering material from New Zealand.
