

SHIPPING.

Fifteen vessels visited Niue during the year. The N.Z.G.S. "Hinemoa" made seven trips to Niue from Auckland; the s.s. "Waiotapu" called twice; and the s.s. "Tutanekai," "Hauraki," "Wairuna," and "John William," once each. The H.M.S. "Diomedé" paid her annual visit, and, in addition, called in and lifted a mail for New Zealand when *en route* from Rarotonga to Vavau. Five vessels passed within sight of the island—the s.s. "Wairuna," "Waiotapu," "Hauraki," "Oliva," and "Pulpit Point"—but owing to the rough state of sea and boat-passage mails could not be despatched by them.

TRADE.

Imports for the year 1926 totalled £17,563, as against £18,747 for 1925. Exports amounted to £17,655, as against £17,429 for 1925, all of which went to New Zealand. The main items were: Copra, 699½ tons; basketware, 972 dozen; hats, 1,749½ dozen; and fungus, 11,070 lb.

From the 1st September, 1925, to the 22nd November, 1926, the island suffered from a very severe drought, which completely ruined the Native food crops and severely affected the coconut-trees and banana-plants. On the 22nd November, the drought broke with torrential rains and gave the ground a thorough soaking, which it was badly in need of. The planting of Native food crops immediately commenced, and since that date good growing-weather, to which all plants have responded well, has been experienced. From the present indications there is every prospect of a good season ahead, but owing to the set-back due to the prolonged drought the coconut crop will probably be rather later than usual.

Cotton.—An attempt to again reintroduce the cotton industry on Niue was made during the year. To stimulate Native interest a statement was prepared and issued in the Niue language on "Instructions on Planting and Cultivation of the Cotton-seed," and, to show that the Administration was anxious to establish the industry and to set an example, the Government reserve, known as "Palaiti," which has an area of about 3 acres was cleared, cleaned, and planted in cotton-seed. As soon as the Natives saw this they were all keen to plant, and the balance of the 200 lb. of seed obtained from Samoa was distributed among twenty Natives who had cleared land for this purpose. Unfortunately, the results were very disappointing as not more than 5 per cent. of the seed germinated. This was due to the use of seed of the variety known as "Durango," and not the Sea Island cotton. It was therefore decided not to further experiment with the former, but to obtain a supply of the latter variety. An order for 300 lb. was placed for this seed and was expected to arrive here in December last, but unfortunately it did not come to hand in time for this season's planting. It is interesting to note that the cotton industry some thirty to forty years ago was the main industry of this island, but, owing to the poor prices obtained at that time, it was allowed to die out. The Administration desires to again establish this industry, as it gives promise of being of great benefit to the people.

Import and export returns for the year under review, together with a summary of same for the past twenty-five years, are attached hereto, from which it will be seen that trade has been well maintained.

Return of Imports for the Year ended 31st December, 1926.

Article.	Whence imported.	Value.
		£ £
Agricultural produce	New Zealand	.. 70
Ale and stout	"	.. 37
Apparel n.e.i.	"	528
	Western Samoa	30
	United Kingdom	148
	Australia	11
	Canada	78
	Fiji	1
	Tonga	6
	Japan	50
	U.S. America, West Coast	87
	American Samoa	8
		— 947
Arms, ammunition, and explosives	New Zealand	.. 284
Bacon and ham	"	.. 31
Bags and sacks	"	.. 793
Beverages, non-alccholic	"	.. 18
Bicycles and parts	"	.. 186
Biscuits	"	1,246
	Western Samoa	21
		— 1,267
Blue	New Zealand	.. 17
Boots and shoes	"	326
	Western Samoa	3
	United Kingdom	20
	U.S. America, West Coast	2
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