

During the coming year, in addition to sittings in Rarotonga and the Lower Group islands, the Court proposes to make a special visit to Rakahanga and Manihiki, in the Northern Group, in order to deal with urgent cases.

POSTAL DEPARTMENT.

During the year extensions of the telephone system were completed from the wireless-station to the Village of Arorangi, and from the Village of Ngatangiia to the Village of Titikaveka. These two sections involved six miles of new construction work. All villages on the island are now connected by telephone.

The following are extracts from the report of the Postmaster at Rarotonga :—

"Savings-bank.—For the year under review deposits amounted to £13,235 4s. 8d., and with drawals to £11,159 8s. ; 201 accounts were opened, and 48 closed, against 188 opened and 36 closed last year. Interest accrued to depositors amounted to £803 6s. 9d., and interest accrued to this Administration from investment in New Zealand to £1,067 8s. 3d., leaving a balance in favour of the Administration of £264 1s. 6d., an increase of £25 5s. 1d. over the previous year. On the 31st March 975 accounts remain open, with a credit to depositors of £22,544 10s. 9d., of which £22,457 is invested in New Zealand.

"Money-orders.—In this branch of the service a considerable decrease is shown compared with the previous year, no doubt greatly due to the shortness of the fruit season. 1,272 orders were issued, representing £79 8s. 6d. for commission, and £17,552 0s. 3d., value of orders issued. 428 were paid, to the value of £10,082 7s. 4d., compared with the previous year, of 1,400 issued ; commission, £91 18s. ; value of orders issued, £20,473 13s. 10d. ; and 582 paid to the value of £14,487 1s.

"Stamps.—The new 2½d. and 4d. pictorial stamps and the 3s. New Zealand overprinted "Rarotonga" have had the effect of largely increasing our stamp-sales for the year.

"Telephones.—The service continues to give satisfaction. Lines have now been completed and telephones installed in the houses of village constables at Arorangi, Muri, and Titikaveka, thus connecting up all villages with telephones for public use.

"Radios.—£1,169 2s. 3d. was received during the year for forward radio messages, an increase of £45 12s. 9d. over the previous year. The above amount includes all forward charges.

"Mails.—A satisfactory service continues to be maintained with all offices in the district."

WIRELESS.

During the year an efficient service has been maintained at the main station at Rarotonga, and also at the sub-stations on the Islands of Aitutaki, Atiu, and Mangaia.

Plans have been completed for a new radio station at the Island of Mauke, and the necessary transmitting and receiving sets have been procured. As soon as communication with that island is established, after the hurricane season, a new station will be erected there, and this will be in working-order before the commencement of the fruit season. This station will be operated by one of our Natives who was educated at St. Stephen's College and afterwards trained in wireless work in Wellington and Rarotonga.

A small radio station is to be erected at the Island of Penrhyn when funds will permit. As this island is situated 740 miles north of Rarotonga, such a station would be a great convenience to the Administration, shippers, and the public generally.

This year an application will be made to the Government for a vote to cover the cost of installing a modern low-powered high-frequency transmitter for Rarotonga, which will enable Rarotonga to get direct communication with New Zealand and other distant stations.

Attached is the annual report of the Superintendent of the Rarotonga Wireless Station :—

"During the year an efficient wireless service has been maintained by the radio-stations in the Cook Group with all other radio-stations concerned. The outer-island stations, Atiu, Aitutaki, and Mangaia, the two latter being operated by Natives, are giving satisfactory service and a good standard is being maintained. Within the next few weeks a small wireless plant will be erected at Mauke. This station will also be operated by a Native, who is at present undergoing training at Radio-Rarotonga.

"At Atiu, it was found necessary to replace the wooden aerial masts, which were showing signs of decay, with iron ones.

"In June a complete replatal of the main storage battery at Radio-Rarotonga was satisfactorily carried out. This has reduced the necessary charging of the battery to approximately half that which was formerly required, resulting in a big saving of fuel. To further stabilize the main steel tower, four steel supporting-stays were erected in August. The steel tower and the outer wooden masts were also thoroughly overhauled.

"The transmitter at Rarotonga is a standard ship's installation and of comparatively low power for a parent station. While it has provided an efficient service on current routes, the need for direct communication between the Cook Islands and New Zealand has become apparent. The installation of a suitable short-wave valve transmitter would enable Rarotonga to establish direct communication with New Zealand, and would also bring this station in line with other main Pacific-island stations. If this could be accomplished it would then be possible to reduce the present high rate of 1s. 6d. per word to 1s. per word. This would mean an increase in radio traffic of at least twenty per cent.

"The liberal broadcast of free press news from Radio-Wellington has enabled us, as in former years, to keep the inhabitants of these islands well informed regarding current events.

"Four radio receiving licenses were granted during the year and one applicant's license was cancelled for a breach of the Cook Island's Amateur Radio Regulations."