

REPORT OF THE NIUE ISLAND ADMINISTRATION.

FINANCE.

The financial year closed with a credit balance of £353 14s. 9d. The finances of the island have been crippled not only by the visitation of no less than four cyclonic storms, which have devastated the growing crops, food-supplies, and houses of the people, but also by the fact that the world market for copra has so depreciated as to render the product almost unsaleable. By the strictest economy the total expenditure was kept down to a minimum. Receipts amounted to £15,000 13s. 10d., and payments to £16,357 1s. 5d., which reduced the cash balance of £5,029 2s. 3d. brought forward from the previous year and which had been accumulated with so much difficulty. Revenue included grants from New Zealand amounting to £4,556, principally on account of education and medical services. The Income and Expenditure Account and Balance-sheet are printed on page 15. The Balance-sheet takes into account the value of all Administration assets as at 31st March, 1931, and shows an excess of assets amounting to £27,233 19s. 9d. With an uncertain revenue, it has been a difficult matter during the past two years to carry on the general services of the islands, and projects such as road-improvements, additional village reservoirs, &c., have of necessity been held over.

TRADE.

Imports for the year totalled a value of £18,630 (1929, £19,107), and exports £15,877 (1929, £22,206).

The year has been a particularly unfortunate one for Niue. Severe drought conditions prevailed over the first half of the year, resulting in heavy loss of crops, especially Native food-supplies. Good rains came in October, but were followed almost immediately by a severe cyclonic storm on the 30th November, which caused heavy damage to plantations and the abandonment of a large cargo of bananas awaiting shipment—a heavy and serious loss to the Natives. Again, on Christmas Day, the island was swept by a severe cyclonic storm of hurricane force, which destroyed the greater part of the remaining crop, including almost the whole of the banana crop. 225 Native houses and two churches were blown down and all arterial roads were blocked, but fortunately there was no loss of life. With copra almost unsaleable in the world's markets, the Native people have been reduced to sore straits. They have borne their losses and hardships with wonderful fortitude, and are again busily engaged replanting their lands.

SHIPPING.

Overseas shipping totalled twenty calls—twelve by the New Zealand Government m.v. "Maui Pomare," upon which the island depends for its regular trade. The service given by this vessel is greatly appreciated by the islanders.

HIGH COURT AND NATIVE LAND COURT.

Criminal cases totalled 277, the majority being offences against morality and local Ordinances. Land Court work was light.

NIUE ISLAND COUNCIL.

Four meetings were held during the year.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Native births and deaths were 114 and 66 respectively, most of the deaths being of persons sixty years of age and over.

Migration: 95 persons (11 Europeans) arrived, and 94 (10 Europeans) departed.

The total population at 31st December, 1930 (European and Native) was: Males, 1,828; females, 2,006: a total of 3,834.

MEDICAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH.

Health conditions have remained satisfactory generally. The principal diseases continue to be tuberculosis, filariasis, gonorrhœa, and yaws. Nothing can be done in the direction of a T.B. sanatorium with the present dearth of capital. With persistent treatment, the island has been practically cleared of yaws. The tendency of the past to conceal gonorrhœa or to have it treated with Native remedies is fast disappearing, and particular attention has been given to this disease for some years past. All lepers are under treatment at Makogai.

Care of Infants.—Much good has resulted from the careful and untiring attention of the medical and nursing staff.

POSTAL.

Total volume of business amounted to £10,304, as against £9,318 for the previous year.

METEOROLOGICAL.

Barometer mean for year, 29.928. Thermometer: Highest, 92; lowest, 55. As previously reported, the year has been one of the worst in the history of Niue. Weather reports are sent out twice daily by radiogram for the purpose of the weather report and storm warnings in the South Pacific.

WIRELESS.

The wireless has worked smoothly and well, and an efficient service has been maintained.

PUBLIC WORKS.

Roads, Government buildings, jetty, surf-boats, and motor transport have all been maintained in good order.

EDUCATION.

Average roll number, 265; average attendance, 234. The past year has been a successful one. The standard of work of former years has been maintained. With only one European teacher in Niue, it has not been possible to maintain the close supervision over Tufukia that is possible at Hakupu. The work at the former school, however, is being well carried out by the Native teacher in charge and his assistants. Native handicraft is maintained at a high level, and has very greatly improved during the last two years. Woodwork has been carried out by the senior boys, and a considerable quantity of school furniture has been made by them. Agriculture and gardening have been carried out as far as possible. At Hakupu a considerable area of fresh land was cleared and planted, with good results. At both schools good work has been carried out by the primers and juniors in improving the environment of the schools. Attention to school-gardens is a regular part of the work.