

MANIHIKI.

Visits were paid during the year by the Resident Commissioner and the Chief Medical Officer and by H.M.S. "Achilles." The periodical visit of officials from Rarotonga do much good and create an incentive to the people to improve their conditions. No rain fell from April to September and the drought conditions seriously reduced the copra output. The effect will be very seriously felt by the people, who have become accustomed in past years to supplementing their meagre food-supplies by purchasing additional supplies from the local stores. Copra exports were reduced to 287 tons. The price paid was £2 8s. 6d. a ton, which requires the growing, gathering, and making into copra of some 5,000 nuts.

Shipping and Trade.—The Island was visited by schooner periodically. Value of imports, £2,086. Two and a half tons of pearl-shell were exported. Owing to poor markets for this commodity, diving-machines have not operated, the work being done by skin-diving.

Planting.—An endeavour is being made to cultivate bananas, kumera, taro, and arrowroot. Plants have been supplied by the Agriculture Department, Rarotonga. The coral sand of these Northern Islands, however, renders difficult the successful introduction of many plants which flourish in the Lower Group Islands. Land-title disputes are very common and retard the planting of lands. There is considerable work for the Native Land Court to undertake.

Public Works.—All public buildings, water-tanks, and roads were kept in good order. Amongst many of the works done largely by community effort are the following :—

- (a) Leper-houses built on an islet in the lagoon and the land cleared.
- (b) Resident Agent's house and Courthouse painted and repaired.
- (c) Tanks renovated.
- (d) All roads covered with clean sand.
- (e) Every house in the village of Tauhunu whitewashed.
- (f) Permanent holes dug in swamps to preserve gambusia during periods of drought.
- (g) Public latrines built.
- (h) Village cleared of coconut stumps.
- (i) A number of houses reroofed.

High Court.—One hundred and fifty-two cases were dealt with, none being of a serious nature.

SUWARROW.

An uninhabited island, part being leased to a trading firm. No visit was possible during the year.

RAKAHANGA.

During the year much appreciated visits were paid by the Resident Commissioner, and the Chief Medical Officer, and also by H.M.S. "Achilles."

There was no hurricane experienced during the year, but the island suffered from a six months' drought, no rain falling from March to September, resulting in a shortage of water and a set-back to the coconut-trees. The normal copra crop has been reduced by one-half, and with the price at £2 6s. 8d. per ton the year will be for the people of Rakahanga one of hardship and poverty. Copra shipment, 175½ tons.

During the visit of the Chief Medical Officer four males were pronounced positive lepers and were isolated on an outlying islet to await transport to Te Sauma, Penrhyn. They are visited twice weekly, and all possible care and attention is bestowed upon them.

Shipping and Trade.—Visits were made by two Rarotonga trader-owned schooners. Value of imports, £1,214.

Plantings.—Good attention is being paid to the planting of lands. Supplies of food-plants have been forwarded from the Department of Agriculture, Rarotonga.

Land Titles.—The absence of any extensive Land Court for a number of years is the cause of many land-title disputes, and this seriously retards planting.

Public Works.—All public buildings, water-tanks, and roads have been maintained in good order. The people at their own expense erected a fine modern schoolroom of permanent construction which does them great credit. They also erected other public buildings without expense to the Administration, showing a splendid community spirit.

High Court.—Fifty-three cases were dealt with, none of a serious nature.

PUKAPUKA.

During the year direct communication between Rarotonga and Pukapuka was re-established. The only connection for nine years previously was through Apia, Samoa, which was the port of entry.

The absence of the Resident Agent on long furlough precludes the inclusion herein of the year's report.

A radio-telegraph station has been erected during the year and thus the most remote island of the Group has been linked up with the outside world.

PALMERSTON.

No official visit to Palmerston has been possible during the year under review. One schooner call only has been made. The opportunity was taken of repatriating a number of the people to their lands in Northern Islands where they have a better opportunity of livelihood.

The island is slowly recovering from the disastrous hurricane of 1935, but the people are not finding it easy to exist with the available food-supplies.

NASSAU.

The island is under lease to private enterprise, only a labour gang residing there. No visit has been possible for a number of years.