

PUKAPUKA.

Trade and Shipping.—There were two calls of the schooner "Tagua," one call of the Burns Philp schooner "Matafele," and a visit by H.M.S. "Leith." "Tui Cakau" called on her leper cruise.

Trade has been very poor, and only 37 tons of copra were shipped.

High Court.—Fifty-two criminal cases were dealt with; only one, attempted murder, was of a serious nature. This case was heard by Mr. J. Morling, Chief Judge of Western Samoa, during the course of a special visit by H.M.S. "Leith."

Medical and Public Health.—The general health of the people, except for two fairly serious epidemics of food poisoning and influenza in September and November, has been good.

Public Works.—A new Residency, partly of native materials, has been built. A small cottage was also built of native materials for the wireless operator. The boat-house has been kept in good repair and painted.

Education.—Attendance and work at the school were satisfactory.

Planting of Lands.—Taro and puraka planting have been steadily carried on.

General.—Ariki Pilato Vauvai died on 16th September, and Pilato Aritoa was elected Ariki in his stead.

Owing to the low price of copra the people are not producing any great quantity and are using the nuts for food.

PALMERSTON.

This Island (which consists of a number of islets of a total area of about 1,000 acres) lies 270 miles to the north-west of Rarotonga.

It is inhabited by about ninety descendants of William Marsters the elder, who went to Palmerston in 1862 to manage the Island for one Brander, a trader. The head of the family from the first wife is William Marsters the second, who is still alive at seventy-five.

Palmerston is an unfortunate Island so far as hurricanes are concerned. In 1914 there was a hurricane. At the end of March, 1926, the Island was completely devastated. Heavy gales damaged the island in February, 1931. The hurricane of February, 1935, again completely wiped out all coconuts and ground crops, and left the inhabitants dependent almost entirely upon fish. The Island is slowly recovering, but the people are still very poor.

The London Missionary Society (subsidized by the Government) maintains a school on the Island.

A large concrete tank erected by the Administration provides the water-supply.

During the coming year the Administration will erect a wireless-station at Palmerston, not only to provide communication but for meteorological purposes.

SUWARROW.

This Island, over which British sovereignty was proclaimed on 22nd April, 1889, contains an estimated area of 600 acres. It was first occupied by Messrs. Lever Bros., who carried on operations in pearl-shell diving, and experimented in the planting of gold-lipped shell from Torres Straits, but without success. The hurricane of 1914 completely spoiled the Island so far as pearl-shell was concerned, and a great deal of damage was also done to coconut-plantations on several of the islets.

The Island is 513 miles north-west of Rarotonga. It produces very little copra at the present time.

Owing to the fact that there is a safe passage through the reef, a portion of the Island was many years ago declared an Admiralty reserve.

The Island is a sanctuary for sea-birds, which are very numerous, and there is also good fishing in the lagoon and round the coast. A new lease of the Island is now being negotiated.

NASSAU.

Nassau lies about forty-five miles south of Pukapuka, and contains an area of a little over 300 acres. It is owned by the Samoa Shipping and Trading Co., Ltd., and is well planted with coconuts.