

The following is a summary of Court proceedings for the years 1944-48 :—

—	1944.	1945.	1946.	1947.	1948.
Criminal convictions ..	566	629	400	599	506
Civil judgments .. ..	3	..	1	..	..
Divorces granted .. ..	7	8	14	13	10

Offences for which convictions were recorded during the year were mainly of a minor nature. There were two convictions on charges of causing actual bodily harm and five convictions for the offence of manufacturing intoxicating liquor.

The Native Land Court administers the land laws of the island. This Court's immediate duties are concerned particularly with the determination of individual claims for the ownership of Native lands. The Resident Commissioner is Judge of the Native Land Court, and there is, in addition, a Commissioner of this Court.

No sittings of the Native Land Court were held during the year under review.

### *Penal Administration*

The police establishment at 31st March, 1949, comprised one Niuean sergeant in charge, and twelve Niuean constables. A European officer was in charge until December, 1948, but a replacement is not yet available.

There is a Niuean constable in each village of the island, with a sergeant and one constable in the main village of Alofi. The constables act as liaison officers between the Administration and the people.

The conduct of the Force has been good. Two Niuean policemen have qualified for long-service medals and have been granted long-service allowances. The standard of efficiency of the Niuean constabulary is showing improvement.

## E. HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights are, as in other British countries, safeguarded by the laws of the territory. The islanders enjoy full Civil rights as subjects of His Majesty, without discrimination on grounds of creed or race in the administration of justice. The admission of immigrants is strictly controlled and no undesirable person is allowed to enter. Land is handed down from one generation to another according to custom, and the right to ownership and possession is safeguarded by the Native Land Court.

## PART II--SOCIAL CONDITIONS

### A. INTRODUCTORY

The life of the Niuean is extremely simple, and there are practically no social problems. Church laws and statute law together regulate the code of living of the Niuean. The London Missionary Society plays a predominant part in the organization of Niuean social life. On this account the authority of the heads of families is less accentuated than in other Polynesian societies. There is no ruling class or servant class of people.

The Cook Islands Act, 1915, applies equally to the indigenous and non-indigenous population, and makes no discrimination between male and female.