

REPORT

COOK ISLANDS (EXCEPT NIUE)

PART I—GENERAL INFORMATION

A. GEOGRAPHY

Location

THE Cook Group (excluding Niue Island) comprises fifteen islands. These are generally small and are widely scattered throughout an area of some 850,000 square miles of ocean extending from 9 degrees south to almost 23 degrees south and from 156 degrees west to 167 degrees west, the total land area being approximately 100 square miles.

Niue Island is included within the boundary limits of the Cook Islands as defined in the First Schedule of the Cook Islands Act, 1915, but due to its remoteness from the remaining islands of the Group and to the ethnological distinctness of its people it has been administered separately since 1903, and is especially referred to in the concluding pages of this report.

The remaining islands fall naturally into two distinct areas—the Southern or Lower Group, and the Northern Group. The Lower Group consists of eight islands, of which Rarotonga, Aitutaki, Atiu, Mitiaro, Mauke, and Mangaia are permanently settled. Of the two remaining islands, Takutea is visited by parties from Atiu who make copra there, and Manuae is privately leased and is worked as a copra plantation. The Northern Group consists of seven islands, of which five—Penrhyn, Manihiki, Rakahanga, Pukapuka, and Palmerston—are continuously inhabited, and Suvarrow and Nassau. Except for a weather station on Suvarrow, neither of these islands is normally inhabited. Consideration is being given to the settlement of some of the Pukapuka people on Nassau.

Rarotonga, the seat of the Administration, is 1,633 nautical miles from Auckland and lies in latitude 21° 12' 04" south and longitude 159° 46' 33" west. Some idea of the dispersal of the Group can be derived from the following table:—

Island.	Miles From Rarotonga.	General Direction From Rarotonga.	Island.	Miles From Rarotonga.	General Direction From Rarotonga.
Mangaia ..	110	E.S.E.	Manihiki	650	N.
Mauke ..	150	E.N.E.	Rakahanga	674	N.
Mitiaro ..	142	N.E.	Penrhyn ..	737	N.
Atiu ..	116	N.E.	Manuae ..	124	N.N.E.
Aitutaki ..	140	N.	Takutea ..	118	N.E.
Palmerston	270	N.W.	Nassau ..	673	N.N.W.
Pukapuka ..	715	N.N.W.	Suvarrow	513	N.N.W.