

any cases of the disease. It is, of course, possible that there may be cases as yet undetected, but there can only be few, and the above figures show conclusively that the disease cannot be looked upon as rife in these islands.

A difficult problem, but one which ought, in the name of humanity, to be dealt with at once, is that of providing for the lepers. The present state of affairs is far from satisfactory and should not be allowed to continue. I do not think that any one will deny the importance of constant medical supervision for these cases, both for their own sake and for the sake of the community. The unfortunate sufferers are made virtual prisoners and isolated from their friends and kindred in order that the community may not suffer; and it must be recognized by every one that they have every right to all that medical knowledge and skill can do for them, possibly to cure, but in any case to alleviate their condition. Proper housing-accommodation should also be erected, and suitable arrangements made for a sufficient supply of water; while clothing and food should be provided by the Administration, and not depend on the irregular impulses of charity or the oft-times torpid sense of duty of relatives.

In my opinion, the only way in which the problem can be solved satisfactorily is to collect the lepers from the various islands and segregate them in one leper colony, where they can have at least weekly visits from a medical officer, who can also supervise the food and water supply and generally attend to their welfare. As things are at present, the lepers are in instances shockingly neglected, and in few cases is the law of quarantine rigidly enforced.

The Chief Medical Officer.

I have, &c.,  
A. R. MACLURKIN.

#### REPORT OF ENGINEER.

SIR,—

Rarotonga, 15th April, 1915.

I have the honour to submit the following report on public works for the year ended the 31st March, 1915:—

#### *Survey of Lands.*

During the year no Land Court was held in the Group, therefore very little surveying was required. Nearly all the sections in Rarotonga have been surveyed, and where the boundaries of the different sections are on flattish land the Natives, as a rule, are quite content with the boundaries as passed by the Land Court; but where the boundaries extend into the hills there sometimes now arise disputes as to the proper boundary. The Natives in most cases have only themselves to blame, as in many instances when the back boundaries were surveyed they paid little or no attention to the back land; but now that land is becoming scarce for planting the Natives are beginning to look at the back lands, and boundary disputes arise. I submit that where just cause can be shown that the boundaries as surveyed are in error they should be amended.

Another trouble arising is that of the rights-of-way through certain sections, though not shown on the plan of a section. There is a law providing against the closing of any track if the Land Court should decide that it be left open. Not much trouble has been had so far while such a section is in Native hands, but trouble arises when the land is leased to a European.

With the annual report for the year ending the 31st March, 1913, I forwarded a tracing of the Island of Rarotonga, and asked that 200 copies be lithographed. These we have not received yet, and they are much needed.

#### *Lands the Administration should acquire.*

There are several pieces of land I think that the Administration should acquire for public purposes:—

At Aitutaki a strip of land on the northern side of the landing-place.

At Mauke a piece of land between the Resident Agent's quarters and the landing-place.

At Atiu the area of the landing-place is too small, and more land is necessary. Also, the piece of land on which the Resident Agent's quarters have been built should be properly acquired at the first sitting of the Land Court there.

At Mangaia the landing area should be increased, and a piece at the back of the Resident Agent's quarters should be acquired. Both pieces are at present in the hands of the London Missionary Society.

#### *Meteorological.*

The total rainfall at Avarua, on the northern side of Rarotonga, for the year ending the 31st December, 1914, was 70.31 in. The average for the last sixteen years is 79.50 in. The highest reading of the Fahrenheit thermometer in the shade for the same period was 88°, on the 9th February and 8th March, and the lowest 51°, on the 24th June. The mean of the maximum was 79.2°, and the mean of the minimum 68.3°. The lowest reading of the barometer at sea-level for 1914 was 29.37 in., on the 10th January, as before reported.