

The following is the number of births, deaths, and marriages registered during 1918 as well as for the five preceding years :—

Year.					Births.	Deaths.	Marriages.
1913-14	..	..	..	..	94	80	48
1914-15	..	..	..	..	93	73	70
1915-16	..	..	..	..	94	100	41
1916-17	..	..	..	..	82	128	63
1917 (nine months only)	..	..	..	..	100	137	37
1918	..	..	..	..	95	178	43

The excess of deaths over births was eighty-three. Adding the migration deficiency we find that the Native population decreased by 142 during the year, and this I consider the most unsatisfactory feature that I have to report. The Niue Island Council at my instigation passed an Ordinance making a fee of £1 payable by any intending Native emigrant, and this has had an appreciable effect, but it is at best a makeshift. I have endeavoured to explain to the people that this exodus of the best of their young men and women spells ultimate extinction, but the Niueans are not capable of looking very far ahead, and it is difficult to make the danger real to them.

EDUCATION.

It will be necessary to extend the education scheme of the island as soon as possible, and as a first step I propose to open a school at Hakupu and to send one of the European teachers from Tufukia School to take charge of it. The Hakupu people have presented a piece of land to the Administration for this purpose, and have already cleared it. They have also undertaken to build a school at their own expense and to my specifications. It is abundantly evident to me that no school here could be left in charge of a Native. Even should the knowledge and the ability to instruct be present, a Native without supervision cannot be entrusted with the maintenance of discipline. Five or six schools would be necessary to cater completely for the children of the island, so that a considerable expense in salaries of European teachers would be involved before education could be placed on a proper footing in Niue.

The report of the headmaster at Tufukia is enclosed. Very satisfactory work has been done during the year by the staff, and the Natives continue to show a lively appreciation of the benefits of education.

HIGH COURT AND NATIVE LAND COURT.

During the year 190 criminal cases were dealt with in the High Court: Adultery, 46; libel, 6; offences against the person, &c., 90; theft and offences against property, 13; miscellaneous, 35. The civil cases comprised: Debt, 4; divorce, 14. Fees and fines amounted to £197 9s. 3d.

As regards the Native Land Court, practically no work has been done during the past year, only seven adoptions being granted. It is impossible to deal with the granting of titles without the services of a surveyor. Land disputes are common, and these can only be settled in a temporary fashion at present. The position will become more acute as time goes on, and I therefore trust that this matter will not be allowed to rest in its present position. In view of the amount of work involved I consider that it would be more satisfactory to appoint a separate Judge of the Native Land Court, as has been done in the other islands. While the surveyor was in Niue it would be necessary to hold Native Land Court sittings almost continuously, and my other duties would naturally suffer.

ORDINANCES.

Four meetings of the Island Council were held during the past year, and the following Ordinances were passed :—

No. 10.—An Ordinance to prohibit the Sale of Dry Coconuts in Niue.

No. 11.—An Ordinance to impose Restrictions upon the Emigration of Natives from Niue.

No. 12.—An Ordinance to provide for Better Sanitation in Niue.

METEOROLOGICAL.

Summarized, the readings for 1918 are as follows: Barometer—Mean for year, 30.04. Thermometer—Highest, 94, in March and November; lowest, 60, in July; mean maximum, 84.59; mean minimum, 70.33. Rainfall—Rain fell on 156 days; total fall, 71.36 in.

POSTAL.

The following figures show the postal business transacted during the year: Money-orders—Issued, £1,145 6s. 7d.; paid, £481 6s. 9d. Savings-bank—Deposits, £598 9s. 6d.; withdrawals, £229 12s. 11d. Postal notes, &c.—Issued, £52 5s. 3d.; paid, £7 2s. 6d. War pensions, soldiers' allotments, &c., paid, £991 6s. 1d.

THE WAR.

A second Niue Contingent was in training when news of the Armistice reached us. These men, who were to have gone to Palestine, were very keen to give a good account of themselves, and doubtless they would have fared better in health than the former Contingent did in France.

Steps are being taken to celebrate Peace Day in a fitting manner. Besides speeches and festivities in the various villages, every person on the island will plant a coconut, and these trees will serve as a constant reminder to the people of the war and its significance. For even in this little