

Return of Exports for the Year ended 31st December, 1923.

Article.	Where exported.	Quantity.	Value.
Coconuts	New Zealand .. ..	..	£ 1
Copra	New Zealand	689½ tons	
	Western Samoa	12½ „	
		702 „	10,979
Fancy goods	New Zealand .. ..	..	} 162
	Western Samoa .. ..	..
Fungus	New Zealand	3,317 lb.	92
Hats	New Zealand	2,900¾ doz.	
	Western Samoa	22 „	
		2,922¾ „	1,881
Taro	New Zealand	2 cases	1
Re-exports .. ..	.. ..	..	111
			£13,227

SUMMARY.				£
New Zealand .. ..	..	..	..	12,960
Western Samoa .. ..	..	..	..	267
				£13,227

HIGH COURT AND NATIVE LAND COURT.

During the year 478 criminal cases were dealt with by the High Court. One prisoner was sent to New Zealand on conviction for indecent assault on a child. Otherwise there was no serious crime. Civil work was, as usual, negligible. Fees and fines for the financial year amounted to £241 5s. 3d.

The provisions of section 9 of the Cook Islands Amendment Act, 1921, led to an abnormal number of applications for adoption, and eighty-seven were granted during the year. Otherwise no Native Land Court business came before the Court.

COUNCIL.

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

The Emigration Ordinance Repeal Ordinance, which does away with the tax of £1 paid by Niueans leaving the island. The old Ordinance failed in its purpose, as the fee was not large enough to deter Natives from leaving, while at the same time it caused a good deal of resentment. This matter is, however, gone into more fully elsewhere in this report.

The Water-supply Ordinance, which sets apart certain of the waterholes and caves for drinking purposes only. Hitherto all such places were used indiscriminately for bathing, washing clothes, and drinking.

The Debt Limitation Ordinance.—There was a similar Ordinance in force here before the Cook Islands Act came into operation, and it worked well. A meeting of traders requested the Resident Commissioner to attempt to reinstate it, and the Natives agreed. Traders are now allowed to give credit to Natives only in certain special cases, and always under a contract made before the Resident Commissioner, who estimates that a sum of £4,500 was due to the traders by the Natives when this Ordinance came into force, or well over £1 per head of population. But once the initial hardship of paying off this sum is over he is satisfied that nothing but good can result. The Ordinance is working smoothly, and there have been no complaints, while substantial reductions have been made in the amounts owing in at least some of the villages.

EDUCATION.

It will be observed that a sum of only £46 7s. 11d. has been expended under this heading during the year. At the 1st April, 1923, the New Zealand Government took over the payment of the salaries of all teachers, and further refunded a sum of £150 on account of pay of one teacher for the previous year. These facts account for the low expenditure. Mr. Bolton, M.A., at present in charge of both schools, states that the equipment is adequate, so that working-expenses should not be heavy in future.

A residence has been erected for the head teacher at Hakupu, and special care has been taken to make this a comfortable dwelling as some compensation for living in a back village with little or no contact with other Europeans.