

Agriculture Class.—In April last a class in agriculture was instituted, by which boys from all the schools in Rarotonga were given instruction in this necessary and valuable subject. The class closed in December last after working for thirty-five weeks, the average attendance of pupils being 56.5. All the work was done in Avarua, the theoretical part in Avarua School and the practical work on the Government farm. For the year 1925 it is intended to continue the work with the members of last year's class as a senior class, and to institute a junior class.

Northern Group.—The seven schools there formerly existing merely as mission schools were last May brought under the control of the Administration as far as inspection, instruction, and equipment are concerned. This marks an era in the progress of education in that far-away part of the Group. These schools increase the number to seventeen schools now under the control of the local Administration.

PUBLIC WORKS.

New Buildings.—During the year the following new buildings have been completed: The Arorangi School buildings were completed at a cost of £422, making the total expenditure £1,570 2s. 11d. The wireless stations at Aitutaki and Mangaia were erected by Mr. Reid, Officer in Charge of Public Works, and Mr. Hampton, Radio Superintendent. They deserve great credit for their work. The cost to this Administration for the erection of these stations and necessary buildings was £441 10s. 8d. for the Aitutaki Station, and £651 18s. 9d. for Mangaia. This is in addition to the New Zealand votes for the plant and machinery. A commodious residence for the Resident Agent at Atiu (including offices) was completed, at a cost of £1,527 16s. 6d. A cargo-shed has been provided at the Island of Mauke, the material for which cost £116 9s. 1d. 2,500-gallon tanks have been built at Mauke and Atiu, and at the leper station at Penrhyn, material costing £180. The new telephone from Avarua to Matavera cost £183 11s., and the material for the three school class-rooms at Aitutaki £115 6s. 6d. A residence for single male officials was built at a cost of £359 12s. 1d. Various additions and repairs have also been done to Government buildings in the different islands.

Roads and Bridges.—The main road round the Island of Rarotonga has been kept in a good state of repair, and various improvements made, including the provision of a new bridge at Nikao. In the coming year it is proposed to build three bridges on the Avatiu Valley Road in order to open up this fine valley. The amount spent on roads and bridges during the year was £1,537. It is worthy of note that all the amounts expended under the above headings of "New Buildings" and "Roads and Bridges" have been provided out of local revenue.

New Works in Hand or Contemplated.—The alterations and additions to the hospital at Rarotonga, and the erection of the out-patients department, are well in hand, the total cost being estimated at £2,000, of which the local Treasury is finding £1,000, and the balance of £1,000 was provided by a vote on last year's New Zealand estimates. The new refrigerating plant and buildings are estimated to cost £2,000, of which New Zealand has provided £1,000. The local funds are finding the remaining £1,000. In addition various works will be undertaken, such as alterations to the Whare Manuhiri (accommodation-house), extension of telephone to Ngatangia and Arorangi, &c., and as mentioned elsewhere in this report. A scheme of electric lighting for the main village of Avarua is also under consideration.

HIGH COURT.

Criminal Jurisdiction.—The total number of cases heard for criminal offences, breaches of regulations, and for breaches of local Ordinances are as follows: Manufacturing intoxicating liquor, 110; consuming intoxicating liquor, 585; drunkenness, 29; wilful damage, 1; being in possession of intoxicating liquor, 1; giving intoxicating liquor to Natives, 2; wilful trespass, 12; theft, 32; contempt of Court, 4; animals trespassing, 85; landing intoxicating liquor, 9; gambling, 20; assault, 22; adultery, 11; obscene language, 4; disorderly conduct, 14; resisting the police, 1; perjury, 1; rape, 2; escape from lawful custody, 1; slander, 1; indecent language, 1; riding bicycle at night without a conspicuous light, 2; breaches of Fruit Regulations, 80; breaches of Education Regulations, 3; breaches of Noxious Weeds Regulations, 2; adjourned cases which involved title to Native lands, 14: total, 1,163. Of the above total cases heard, 75 were sentenced to imprisonment, 938 convicted and fined, 82 convicted and discharged, 35 cases dismissed, 16 withdrawn, 3 remanded to Mangaia and there dealt with, 14 adjourned as above stated. It will be noticed in the foregoing return 403 more cases than last year, but this fact does not indicate more crime, but is the result of greater energy displayed by the police in apprehending offenders. Changes made by the Chief of Police combined with proper control and instruction have resulted in the Police Force being brought up to a more efficient standard.

NATIVE LAND COURT.

Sittings of the Native Land Court were held at Penrhyn and Pukapuka during the visit of the Chief Judge in May and June, 1924, as set forth in my report of 3rd October, 1924. During this visit several important matters that had been waiting for some time were heard and dealt with.

Outstanding Fees.—The following are the outstanding fees on the 31st March, 1925: Rarotonga, £274 6s. 9d.; Aitutaki, £490 3s. 9d.; Mangaia, £1; Atiu, £37 19s.; Mauke, £15 14s.: total, £819 3s. 6d.

PRINTING DEPARTMENT.

The printing plant could be very much improved by installing an up-to-date press, to be run by a small-power engine, and other necessary appliances. The following is the revised value of plant, bulk material, and printed stock on hand on the 31st March, 1925: Printing-press and accessories, £238 10s.; type, cases, &c., £130; material for use in working, £6 10s.; bulk paper in stock, £65; total value of printed stock in hand, £107 0s. 9d.; total, £547 0s. 9d.