

SUWARROW.

This island, over which British sovereignty was proclaimed on the 22nd April, 1889, contains an estimated area of 600 acres. It was first occupied by Messrs. Lever Bros., who carried on operations in pearl-shell diving. They experimented in the planting of gold-lipped shell from Torres Straits, but without success. The hurricane of 1914 completely spoiled the island so far as pearl-shell operations were concerned, and a great deal of damage was also done to the coconut plantations on several of the motus. The island, which is 513 miles north-west of Rarotonga, and which is at present leased to Messrs. A. B. Donald, Ltd., produces very little copra at the present time. On account of the fact that there is a safe passage through the reef, a portion of the island was many years ago declared an Admiralty reserve. The island is a sanctuary for marine birds, which are extraordinarily plentiful, and there is good fishing in the lagoon and round the coast.

NASSAU.

Nassau lies about forty-five miles south of Pukapuka, and contains an area of little over 300 acres. It is held by the Samoa Shipping and Trading Co., Ltd., and is well planted with coconuts.

REPORT OF THE NIUE ISLAND ADMINISTRATION, 1931-32.

FINANCE.

Revenue for the financial year ended 31st March, 1932, amounted to £12,376, and expenditure to £11,538, leaving an excess of revenue over expenditure of £838. This has been possible only by a continuation of last year's policy of marking time in all but absolutely essential services and the strictest economy in all Departments. Trade has fallen from an average over the previous ten years of £35,176 to £18,698.

Income and Expenditure Account and Balance-sheet are printed on pages 21, 22. The Balance-sheet shows Administration assets, valued as at 31st March, at £26,897 6s. 2d.

TRADE.

Imports for the year totalled £11,507 (1930, £18,630), and exports £7,191 (1930, £15,877).

Only during four years since 1902 have the exports been less than for the year just ended.

Following on last year's disastrous hurricanes and droughts, the rainfall for the present year is the lowest on record (twenty-five years), which has seriously affected the production of copra, bananas, and other exportable produce. Added to these difficulties has been the abnormally low price for copra in the world's markets (the lowest in the history of copra).

The market for Native handicrafts—hats, baskets, &c.—which some years ago was a valuable adjunct to the trade of the Islands is now practically nil, having been ousted by cheap foreign-made articles. A Native woman requires at least twelve hours in which to make a hat—not including the time required for gathering and preparing the necessary pandanus—and obtains 6d. in “take out” from the local stores as a reward for her industry—if she is fortunate enough to sell.

Details of imports and exports are printed on pages 31-36.

SHIPPING.

Overseas shipping totalled twenty-six calls—twenty-three by the N.Z.G.M.V. “Maui Pomare.” The benefit to the island of the regular calls of this vessel, permitting as they do a banana trade with New Zealand and a regular inlet and outlet for commerce, cannot be overestimated.

LEGISLATION.

The only ordinance passed during the year was the Niue Aid to Revenue Continuance Ordinance, 1931.

ISLAND COUNCIL.

Quarterly meetings of the Island Council were held. A spirit of loyalty to the Empire and gratitude to the New Zealand Government for its sympathetic administration of Niue are noticeable features of these meetings.

HIGH COURT AND NATIVE LAND COURT.

Criminal cases totalled 300, civil cases 11, and Native Land Court cases 3. There was the usual absence of really serious crime on the island during the year.

MEDICAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH.

Summary of work for the year: Patients in hospital, 176; average length of stay in hospital, 13½ days; death, 1; out-patients, 10,645. Visits, 2,087. Confinements, 28. Operations—major, 12; minor, 55. Dental extractions, 81. Injections—bicreol, 764; novarsenobillon, 110; vaccines, &c., 73.