

MAUKE.

The following are extracts from the annual report of the Resident Agent :—

Health.—Apart from an epidemic of influenza, which was of rather a serious nature, health conditions, generally speaking, have been satisfactory. The influenza epidemic commenced in November, and it was necessary for some time to close all schools and churches, and to prohibit public meetings.

A Native medical practitioner was sent over from Rarotonga, and he remained on the island until February.

Trade.—Exports : 5,650 cases of oranges and 125 tons of copra.

Orange exports could have been considerably increased if shipping had been available, but for some years we have had to rely almost entirely on casual calls of trans-Pacific cargo-steamers.

Planting of Lands.—Since the hurricane the people have made a big effort to rehabilitate their food-supplies, and in a little over six weeks they had planted 50,000 kumara plants, 3,000 arrowroot, 2,000 taro, 9,000 yams, 870 bananas, and 600 tarotarua.

Public Works.—All roads, public buildings, and fences have been maintained in good order.

High Court.—Fifty-three cases have been dealt with on the criminal side, and thirteen civil cases heard.

NORTHERN COOK GROUP.

PENRHYN.

The following are extracts from the report of the Resident Agent. Owing to lack of communication the report is for the year ended 31st December, 1934 :—

Health.—Apart from the incidence of leprosy, health conditions have been reasonably satisfactory throughout the year.

A Native medical practitioner arrived here from Rarotonga in December, 1933, and carried out work until his departure in March, 1934. This was the first medical attention received by Penrhyn since the last visit of a Medical Officer in October, 1930, and was much appreciated by the people.

Dr. W. C. Macknight, Acting Chief Medical Officer, visited the island for a few days at the end of July, 1934. He then went on to Manihiki, and on his return journey to Rarotonga he again had the opportunity of paying a short visit to Penrhyn, which permitted him to inspect the villages, to examine the school-children, and also to give attention to lepers.

The transport of lepers to the Makogai Leper Station is much desired in order that proper treatment can be received before the cases become too far advanced.

Village inspections have been carried out regularly, and this has resulted in considerable improvement in their cleanliness.

Trade.—The local trading schooners “Tiare Taporo” and “Tagua” made seven calls at the island during the year.

Copra shipped amounted to only 71½ tons, as against 173 tons for 1932 and 164 tons for 1933. Lack of rain during the first nine months of the year resulted in very poor crops of coconuts, and this, combined with the low price paid for copra, was responsible for the large falling-off in exports for this year.

Hatmaking is on the increase, and this year six hundred locally-made hats resulted in a return of £300.

No mother-of-pearl shell has been exported for the past twelve months, due to the fact that the low price of shell in London precludes any inducement to trade in this commodity. The lagoon abounds in mother-of-pearl shell, and, in order to encourage the industry, the Administration has since 1928 thrown both lagoon reserves open for both machine and naked diving. Nevertheless, the small price which trading firms are able to offer in an attempt to revive the trade to some extent has resulted in only a small amount of diving being done.

The pipi pearls industry has declined for some considerable time on account of the poor prices obtainable in London and on the Continent. Supplies of pearls from other fisheries throughout the world, and also the competition from culture pearls, have decreased the demand for the pipi pearl.

Planting of Lands.—Although planting of food crops has been regularly undertaken, the results this year have been poor on account of the low rainfall.

Particular attention has been paid to puraka, bread-fruit, pawpaws, and bananas, and the sufficient rains of the last three months have revived plantings considerably.

High Court.—Sixty-five cases for minor offences were brought before the Court during the year, and resulted in fifty-eight convictions.