

The Conference prepared an agreement\* establishing a South Pacific Commission, the functions of which are, broadly speaking, to give advice and assistance to the Governments concerned on measures designed to promote the economic and social rights and welfare of the inhabitants of the territories within its scope.

### VISITS

In May, 1946 an official visit to Rarotonga was paid by Mr. A. G. Osborne, M.P., Parliamentary Under-Secretary to the Right Honourable the Prime Minister, who was accompanied by the Secretary of Island Territories, Mr. C. G. R. McKay. The Resident Agents and representatives of the Island Councils of the Lower Group islands were present in Rarotonga for discussions with Mr. Osborne.

Visits to the Group were also paid by Dr. J. C. R. Buchanan, Inspector-General, South Pacific Health Service, Suva; Dr. F. S. Maclean, Director, Division of Public Hygiene, New Zealand Health Department; Dr. C. A. Taylor, Director, Division of Tuberculosis, New Zealand Health Department; Mr. W. Parsonage, Officer for Islands Education, Wellington; and Sir Leonard Isitt, Chairman of Directors, National Airways Corporation. Mr. D. W. Amos, of the Fiji Health Department, also visited Rarotonga in connection with anti-mosquito measures.

H.M.N.Z.S. "Arbutus" visited all inhabited islands of the Group except Palmerston in October, 1946; the Commander and his ship's company were given an enthusiastic and loyal welcome by the people of all the islands.

The Resident Commissioner visited Palmerston, Suwarrow, Manihiki, Pukapuka, and Nassau by schooner in July and August, 1946. In October he travelled through the Group in H.M.N.Z.S. "Arbutus," and also visited Makatea, where Cook Islanders are engaged in the phosphate industry.

### III. POSTAL AND RADIO

These Departments function in close liaison with the New Zealand Post and Telegraph Department, and their senior technical officers are seconded from that Department. Cook Islands Native telegraphists are in charge of all outer islands radio sub-stations, and are also employed in the Rarotonga Radio Station. In the outer islands the Resident Agents are the Postmasters of their respective islands. Financial and executive responsibility for the Postal and Radio Departments rests with the Cook Islands Administration.

In November, 1946, a money-order and savings-bank office was opened at Manihiki.

The operation of a second trading schooner within the Group has greatly improved the mail-service to and from the outer islands.

Particulars of business dealt with are set out below:—

—	1942-43.	1943-44.	1944-45.	1945-46.	1946-47.
Money-orders issued .. ..	£59,016	£106,883	£86,230	£98,483	£99,012
Money-orders paid .. ..	£8,003	£27,210	£23,024	£13,640	£32,800
Post Office Savings-bank deposits ..	£18,892	£40,689	£44,949	£45,929	£60,778
Post Office Savings-bank withdrawals	£14,060	£23,629	£26,470	£38,150	£57,105
Number of depositors as at 31st March	2,487	3,173	3,676	4,145	4,489
Amount held to their credit .. ..	£39,083	£57,333	£77,408	£87,020	£92,714
Number of Native depositors .. ..	2,361	3,037	3,553	4,026	4,352
Amount held to their credit .. ..	£23,105	£39,929	£44,780	£60,670	£59,368
Number of radio messages handled	6,778	7,895	9,170	12,125	14,309

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