

That the efforts being made in regard to education are being appreciated by the Natives, and that they are willingly co-operating with the Administration, is shown by the fact that, during this year, at Tamarua (Mangaia) the people donated a site for a new school and themselves erected a new school building without expense to the Administration, and at Oneroa (the main village in Mangaia) a site for a new school is being provided free of cost. This site is a valuable one and is of considerable extent, and will be sufficient to provide for the school, large playing-areas, and also areas for agricultural classes. At Ivirua (also in Mangaia) the people have offered a similar site for a new school. At Ngatangia (Rarotonga) during the recent severe storm four Native-built class-rooms were destroyed, and these have been replaced by the parents at practically no cost to the Administration. Similarly, at Aitutaki the people have, at small cost to the Administration, reroofed three detached class-rooms which had been demolished by recent cyclones.

Special classes in agriculture have been held once a week for all Native assistant teachers on the islands, as well as for all the senior boys attending the Avarua School.

The dental nurse has attended to the children from all the schools in Rarotonga. There is a marked improvement in the dental condition of pupils. The most essential medical supplies are provided for each school.

PUBLIC WORKS.

Owing to the financial position, the programme of public works was necessarily curtailed during the year under review.

Government buildings, roads, bridges, and all Government properties have been maintained in good order.

In January, Mr. A. Tyndall, Engineer of the Main Highways Board, New Zealand, inspected all roads and bridges of Rarotonga, and reported upon the future policy in regard to maintenance and necessary new works. He reports that good value is being received for the outlay on roads and bridges.

Water-supply.—Full bore services have been maintained throughout the year. The Ngatangia Muri Matavera supplies, and also the Arorangi supply, require constant attention during heavy rains, and the question of removing the mains from creek-beds will have to be considered at an early date.

Foreshore Wall.—A lightly reinforced concrete retaining-wall has been built along the Avarua foreshore, where considerable erosion was taking place. The wall was severely buffeted during the gale and heavy seas in February, and stood the test without damage. Considerable expense was incurred in clearing away rocks and debris thrown on the main road and foreshore by the very heavy seas breaking over the wall.

Boat-slip.—A new boat-slip has also been built.

Reef-passages.—A further effort is being made to improve reef-passages in the Lower Group islands, and a considerable amount of work has been done on the main and subsidiary passages at the Islands of Mauke and Mangaia. Good work has also been done at the latter island in giving road access to plantation areas across the difficult *makatea* belt surrounding the island.

AGRICULTURE AND FRUIT INDUSTRY.

Throughout the Group crops for domestic use continue to be heavily planted.

Oranges.—The orange crop at Rarotonga was a heavy one, and large consignments were shipped to New Zealand. In comparison with former seasons the percentage of loss was not so high. Very poor prices were returned to growers during the season.

A slight increase is noticeable in orange-planting of budded trees of approved varieties. It is becoming apparent each season that the Valencia Late and Washington Navel oranges shipped to New Zealand stand handling and keep better than the native seedling. This is being constantly brought under the notice of Native growers, and it is anticipated that more extensive planting of approved varieties will result.

A considerable portion of the surplus orange crop was utilized by the Rarotonga Pure Food Products Co. in the making of orange-juice, and to some extent this compensated growers for the poor prices obtained in New Zealand markets.

Tomatoes.—Although there is a decrease in the area planted, cultivation was good. The pulping locally of ripe tomatoes obviated a considerable part of the usual loss by wastage of this fruit.

Grapefruit.—The small consignments of grapefruit which were sent to New Zealand realized good prices. The quality of this grapefruit has been very favourably commented upon, and it is stated to be better than the Californian varieties and equal to those of Florida. Plants of this variety are being propagated and distributed from the Experimental Nursery.

Bananas.—Each year more cultivated land is being utilized for banana-planting, with a wider use of cover-crops, such as cow-peas, and with more attention being given to crop-rotation.

Kumara.—An attempt is again being made to work up a trade with New Zealand in kumara, and prices at present being obtained give a satisfactory return to growers.

Domestic Crops.—Considerable attention has been given to the planting and cultivation of domestic crops. The *Au Vaine* (Women's Committees) of the different villages were mainly responsible for this activity.

February Gale.—Considerable damage from the gale in February resulted to the banana, orange, and domestic plants.

Monthly Notes.—The following subjects were dealt with during the year in the "Monthly Notes" issued to growers: January, "White Island Product"; February, "Tomato-culture"; March, "Tomato-mildew Control"; April, "Revised List of Growers"; May, "Fruit for Export"; June, "Citrus-preservation Investigations"; July, "Packing Citrus Fruit for Export"; August, "Banana Grading and Packing"; September, "Rat-control"; October, "Marking Cases for Export"; November, "Crop Tests—Experimental Farm"; December, "Papan."