

PALMERSTON.

This island is rarely visited, but after an absence of a call of a schooner for sixteen months the Resident Commissioner visited the island in June last.

An inspection of the island showed that the people have worked exceedingly hard repairing the damage done by the devastating hurricane and tidal wave of March, 1926, and the further visitation by heavy gales in January and February, 1931. Very heavy plantings of new coconut areas have been made, and an astonishing amount of work has been performed by the whole population (women and children included) in building and planting artificial puraka and taro beds, which are now bearing. There is now no shortage of native foods, and pigs, fowls, and fish are in plenty. They had no flour, rice, sugar, or other European foods, soap, matches, or tobacco, &c. The people were very short of clothes.

The village and houses were clean and in good order, and the health of the people was very good on the whole.

The population was eighty-eight, of which number thirty-eight are on the school roll—a number, of course, being over school age. Good work was being done by the Government subsidized school of the London Missionary Society.

Water-supply is adequate, there being a large concrete tank erected for this purpose by the Government.

PUKAPUKA.

Owing to lack of communication on account of the hurricane season, this report is for the year ended 30th September, 1933.

Health.—Health conditions have fortunately remained good. No Medical Officer visited the island during the year, but when H.M.S. “Veronica” called at the island on 3rd August, the ship’s doctor kindly did all the medical work possible in the few hours at his disposal.

In October, through the kindly offices of the Samoan Administration, a Native medical practitioner visited Pukapuka. He was able to stay only five days on the island, but during that time he carried out some good medical work, and the visit was of great assistance to the people of Pukapuka.

Vital Statistics.—Births, deaths, and marriages for the year ended 30th September, 1933: Births—Males, 12; females, 7: total, 19. Deaths—Males, 4; females, 5: total, 9. Marriages, 6.

Trade and Shipping.—Again this year there was no direct communication with Rarotonga, and only three schooner calls were made from Samoa.

Copra export amounted to 125 tons, as compared with 108 tons for last year. The value of imports dropped to £260, as against £1,413 for the previous year.

Planting of Lands.—Special attention has been paid to the planting of coconuts, taro, puraka, breadfruit, and bananas. Since the drop in the price of copra the people have been able to buy very little in the way of European foods, but they are subsisting without difficulty on fish and an abundance of domestic crops. Their main difficulty is to provide money for clothes.

High Court.—There were no serious charges amongst the twenty-five cases dealt with during the year. The three Native police officers have carried out their duties satisfactorily, and there has been no difficulty in maintaining law and order.

Island Council.—Three meetings of the Council were held during the year, when various matters affecting island affairs were discussed.

Schools.—Satisfactory progress is being made in school work, and attendances are good.