

The mosquito-eating fish (gambusia) introduced here last year have been liberated in all the fresh-water swamps on the Island and have increased by millions, and have greatly reduced the mosquito pest.

Water-supply.—All public tanks on the Island have been cleaned out and whitewashed inside and outside. Six new cement and lime tanks have been built. The people provided the labour and the cement and timber were supplied by the Administration. They will be of great benefit to the people as they will give an extra 23,000 gallons of fresh water. Three private tanks have also been completed.

Public Works.—All buildings, fences, &c., have been kept in good repair.

About half a mile of new road has been formed inland.

Blasting of rock at the two passages has been carried out and the approach at Angataura has been widened.

Trade.—Sixty-five tons of copra and 15,494 cases of oranges were exported. Eleven hundred cases of oranges were crushed for juice.

Four new packing-sheds have been built, at the landing-place, of Native materials.

Domestic Crops.—Considerable crops have been planted and there is no risk of a shortage.

Orange Crops.—The indications are for a good orange crop this year, and if steamers call at the proper time about eighteen thousand cases of oranges should be available.

MITIARO.

Mitiaro, with an area of 2,500 acres, and a population of 230, lies 140 miles north-east of Rarotonga. There are large areas of makatea, or coral rock, and swamps so that the area of cultivable land is not large.

The only export is copra, and although the Island grows good oranges, the quantity is not sufficient to warrant calls of the cargo steamer.

Until his death at the beginning of 1935 the Island was in charge of Tou Ariki, but it is now administered by the Resident Agent of Mauke, which Island is some twenty-five miles distant.

An Island Council has recently been constituted, and that body takes charge of affairs during the absence of the Resident Agent.

NORTHERN COOK GROUP.

PENRHYN.

The following are extracts from the Report of the Acting Resident Agent for the year ended 31st December, 1935 :—

Health.—In July and August, and again during the latter part of September and October, there were rather severe epidemics of influenza, from which seven deaths resulted, but apart from that health conditions have been satisfactory during the year.

On her hurricane relief cruise the N.Z.G.S. " Matai " arrived on the 11th March, and sailed again the next day.

Dr. Ellison, Chief Medical Officer, was aboard, and in the short time at his disposal he attended to the medical cases requiring the attention of a doctor. Twenty-one leper patients were embarked for the Makogai Central Leper Asylum.

Once again the Island is clear of leper cases, but as more are bound to occur in the future throughout the Cook Group the Administration proposes to erect a segregation camp on one of the motus in the lagoon, where our cases in the Cook Group can be isolated and receive treatment prior to their removal to Fiji.

Considerable attention is paid to the cleanliness of the two villages, and regular inspections take place. Every three months each habitation is disinfected with Jeyes fluid.

In the village of Te Tautua a number of old and insanitary houses have been demolished.

Vital Statistics.—Births—Males, 3; females, 13: total, 16. Deaths—Males, 4; females, 7: total 11. Marriages, 2.

Population.—An unofficial census taken in December gives a total population of 452, of which 238 are males and 214 females.

Trade and Shipping.—The trade of the Island was as usual maintained by the trading auxiliary schooners " Tiare Taporo " and " Tagua " which made calls at irregular intervals.

Exports for the year were—Pearl shell, 12 tons 2 cwt., value, £115; copra, 35 tons 8 cwt., value, £127 10s.; hats, 300, value £150: total, £392 10s.

There was a big drop in the export of copra, as the following table shows: 1932, 173 tons; 1933, 164 tons; 1934, 71 tons; 1935, 35 tons.

The cause of the drop was due principally to the abnormal absence of rain, but to some extent also to the very low price being paid. It was as low as $\frac{1}{3}$ d. per pound (£1 3s. 4d. per ton) in the earlier part of the year, but later rose to $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per pound (£2 6s. 8d. per ton).

As it takes 5,000 nuts to make a ton of copra, and also a considerable amount of work, it pays the people better to keep the nuts for food.