

must have been long and arduous labour, because of the temporary impecuniosity of their parents, so, as I had fortunately arrived in Aitutaki the day before the school broke up, I arranged with the Henrys to keep it on and give free tuition to as many as they could accommodate, at a salary of £100 per annum, the money to come out of the £2,000 appropriated on our estimates for education until the educational matters for these Islands were settled. I reported immediately to you. I made it quite clear that this arrangement would only be carried on until you had, with the Education Department, devised a definite and permanent scheme. The Araura school-buildings suffered considerably from the hurricane, and as the people had not the means to procure the material for the repairs, I arranged with the Island Council that it should find all the labour necessary if the Administration provided the material—iron and timber for veranda, glass for casements smashed by the force of the wind, and a bag or two of cement to repair the building where cracked. All this has been done, and since the 1st January, 1915, the school has been under the New Zealand Education Department and the teachers paid by it.

Mr. H. Rogers, Superintendent of Education, opened the Arorangi School on the 15th February last. His report is attached hereto.

I had hoped that the teacher's residence which has been built at Ngatangiia, at a cost to date of £780 9s., would be ready by the end of February, as you wished, but unfortunate circumstances have prevented the fruition of this desire and very materially increased the cost. Mr. and Mrs. Smith arrived here from New Zealand on the 6th April and opened the school at Ngatangiia on the 12th April, with an attendance of 190.

As the Avarua Arikis, Mataiapos, and Rangatiras repudiated the agreement contained in Mr. P. H. Hall's letter of the 10th April, 1913, the matter of a school there has been suspended for the present. Mr. Rogers has seen them, and has reported to the Secretary for Education (*vide* his report).

Mr. Rogers has also reported on the offer made by the Mangaia people. This is undoubtedly the best offer made by any of the Natives except Aitutaki, and I sincerely hope that if their offer still holds good something may be done for them. The buildings should be erected from Government plans, and I think it would be advisable for the plans to be sent to the Resident Agent there for the people to see and decide if they are willing to erect buildings as required by the Department of Education, for the school buildings as built hitherto are only large one-roomed structures like barns.

The Natives everywhere are very pleased at the prospect of having their children educated. They have never before had the opportunity, and are very grateful to the Government for giving it to them now. The New Zealand Education Department is to be sincerely commended for the manner in which it has grappled with the question. We are now for the first time trying to carry out what seems to me to be our duty to these islanders in the matter of education.

Appended hereto is a copy of memoranda from the Hon. the Minister of Education to the Hon. Dr. Pomare outlining the whole educational scheme approved by Cabinet, dated the 22nd April and the 11th May, 1914; the report of Mr. H. Rogers, Superintendent of Education, dated 5th March, 1915; and a letter from Mr. Cameron, Resident Agent at Mangaia, dated 6th June, 1914.

LABOUR.

This last year, owing to the devastation of some of the northern islands by the hurricane of January, 1914, the food-supply and produce output has been greatly reduced, and, in direct ratio, the earning and spending power of the Natives. Many were anxious to go abroad to earn money. Accordingly, forty-eight went from Manihiki and Rakahanga to Makatea, and eighty-five from Aitutaki and eight from Rarotonga to Malden Island. Their contracts are for nine months, at £3 per month, all found. They are provided with medical treatment if sick, and returned to their own islands on the expiration of their contract at the expense of the company. If they wish it, the Natives receive £1 a month while away. The balance is to be paid to them on their return, through the Resident Commissioner. This provision is made to guard their interests: being British subjects, they really could come and go as they liked, but the Administration considers it its duty to safeguard them in every way possible.

Each year there is a tendency to increase the rate of wages in Rarotonga, and this, together with the picture-house and other amusements, attracts the young men from the other islands. The Arikis, chiefs, and elder people oppose their departure, as they naturally wish them to remain and help to carry out the work necessary in their own islands, and are desirous of legislation to prevent the young men leaving. I have explained to them that, in my opinion, no such law is possible.

HEALTH.

The health of the Natives in these Islands, as reported last year, still remains in a most unsatisfactory and deplorable condition. For the Islands of Mangaia, Atiu, Mauke, Mitiaro, Aitutaki, Palmerston, Rakahanga, Manihiki, Penrhyn, and Pukapuka we are doing little or nothing, though in October, 1911, Dr. Percival reported that the health of these Islands was in such a bad condition that "it would take a medical man six months on each island to rectify before they could be visited at stated intervals." It is true that Dr. Maclurkin visited these Islands during this last year, stopping a few days at each, but his visits were too short to be of any real benefit. He brought some Natives back with him, and advised others to come to the Hospital to be operated on.

The health of these islanders demands our earnest attention if they are not to be allowed to die out. Dr. Norman reports (7th April, 1915) that "the outlook as regards the future of the Native race is far from reassuring. I refer to the frequency among the Natives of syphilis and tuberculosis. The former disease is a frequent cause of sterility and premature birth, while the children that are born at full term are often destined to die before they reach maturity." This report is based on