

It was intended that the headmaster of Tufukia School, should visit each of the London Missionary Society's subsidized schools in turn and report thereon, but owing to his time being so fully occupied in reorganizing the Tufukia School he was unable to carry out this proposal.

The following are extracts from the annual report of the headmaster of the Tufukia School:—

“ This has been the busiest year experienced during our career as schoolteachers.

“ *Preparation of Schemes of Work.*—Two weeks excepted, the whole of the midsummer holidays were taken advantage of to draw out schemes of work in detail for each of the five Native assistant teachers. Time-tables in keeping with the syllabus were also prepared, as was also the first page on all work-books. A good deal of other work of less importance was also made ready. All work of this preliminary nature was carried out during the holidays, so that, when school opened, there would be no waste of time and each teacher could go straight ahead with the consecutive system of lessons immediately school reopened.

“ *New Syllabus.*—This came as a result of the deliberations at the Conference. Speaking generally, this new syllabus is splendid. It is practical and eminently suited to the educational requirements of South Sea Island Natives. As far as Niue is concerned, the most outstanding features of the new syllabus were their remarkable similarity to the system of teaching put into operation here about two years ago. It emphasized the teaching of such subjects as agriculture, nature-study, sewing, handicraft, and similar subjects, some of which never seem to have been taught here. It was found necessary to pay less attention to some of the school subjects usually taught, in order to establish firmly those mentioned above. In regards to school-gardens and agricultural plots this was particularly true.

“ *System of Teaching.*—Late in 1925 we were transferred from the Hakupu to the Tufukia School, so that this year 1926 really completes our first year in this school. The system of teaching found here was neither in keeping with the syllabus, nor was it suited to the conditions prevailing and the natural requirements of these people. It was scrapped at once, and one in keeping with the syllabus and slightly modified to suit local conditions put into operation. Conditions here were very similar to those that we found at Hakupu. All lessons have been made as practical as possible, and applicable, as far as can be managed, to their daily work and all that belongs to the Niuean life and its callings. The children responded to the new system at once. The enthusiasm displayed indicated that the instinctive wants had been discovered and had at last found suitable outlets. This was most satisfactory and encouraging, and the results speak for themselves.

“ *Attendance.*—Children come from almost every village to the Tufukia School. Some have to walk many miles, and leave home about daylight, so keen are they to learn. On account of this, the attendance must be regarded as fairly good for the year 1926, especially when we remember that this year the island suffered from drought, and children were required by their parents to assist in the obtaining of food from the bush.

“ *Medical Inspection.*—Dr. Boyd made an inspection for yaws and other diseases during the year. Fifteen children were ordered to attend hospital for treatment and are now completely cured. It is pleasing to note how clean and fresh these children are in the skin. Nasty sores about the body, scaly skin, and ugly cracks, especially upon the soles of the feet, have disappeared.

“ *School-grounds.*—Niue is one of the few large islands that is non-volcanic in origin. It is purely coral in formation. In fact, it seems to be a high coral mass, honeycombed with caves, rifts, and grottoes. There are no lakes or streams, and all drinking-water is caught from roofs. Rocky outcrops, hummocks, and pinnacles obtrude themselves from all parts of the school area. It is difficult to understand the rough and rocky nature of the surface unless actually seen. There was but a small playing area when we took over the Tufukia School, and much of it was dangerous to children at play. With mattock, sledge-hammer, and crowbar a considerable area of this rugged surface was levelled and top-dressed in the worst places with a film of soil carried in coconut-leaf baskets from other parts. Couch-grass is now growing over this area, and two basket-ball grounds, one for the senior and one for the junior girls, stand where once was a rough and uneven surface. The lumps of rock and tons of rubble broken off were carried in baskets and dumped into large yawning cavities found in many parts of the school-ground, particularly that part that skirts the coast. Many of these deep holes have been completely filled in and top-dressed with small stones, and extend the school-grounds considerably. Much land has been reclaimed around the flag pole, and at the Point, in this way. In order to take away the bareness and break the monotony of the reclaimed areas, it was decided to beautify the place by planting those native flowers and shrubs which we had learned by observation and experience would grow on practically a rubble heap. Although the drought killed most of the plants, a second sowing was made, and now the hardy but pretty aspidistra, mummy-apple, wild fern, oleus, bird's-nest plants, wandering-willie, and moses-in-the-bulrushes cover more or less the whole area.

“ *Pruning Forest-trees.*—Several of the large forest-trees at the point almost died on account of the drought. These were severely pruned and have responded well to the treatment by making denser leaf and branch growth.

“ *Agricultural Plot.*—To establish this has been a real ‘test piece.’ When it is remembered that before planting can take place a hole must be made among the coral with a crowbar, the difficulty of our undertaking will be more readily understood. During our first attempt, 109 fruit-trees of all descriptions were planted. Niue suffered from a prolonged drought, and everything planted died, except three banana-trees out of fifty-four. A second attempt was made. It was on a larger scale than the first, but rain refused to fall, and once again everything withered and died. This was discouraging, because much hard work had been done. However, a third attempt on a grand scale was made, and the result has justified the effort expended.