

*Correspondence with New Zealand Children.*—Since correspondence was opened up between these young Polynesians and the children at the school that adopted us, some three years ago, much pleasure has been brought into the lives of these little folks. They feel that there is something very much alive in the whole business, and the children at both ends are keener than ever. Pupils with beaming faces and wreathed in smiles bring their letters to school to have some part not clearly understood explained. They also come along fairly dancing in their excitement and happiness to show their teacher the *fakalofa*, or gift, received from their New Zealand friends. Specimens of work also exchanged add further interest. This correspondence is a great success. It has struck a vital chord in their natures, and satisfied a want that they have unconsciously longed for. If it serves no other purpose, this is enough. It has, however, done more: it is one of the finest educational subjects that has been introduced into Niue, and the high standard of English mentioned by Mr. Caughley is in part traceable to this correspondence.

*Mr. Caughley's Visit.*—During the month of August, Mr. J. Caughley paid a visit to Niue. He examined the Tufukia School, and was well satisfied with the class of work being done. Mr. Caughley perceived immediately that a considerable amount of what was specified in the school syllabus was quite unsuited to the life of the present generation, even though it may be what is required by the Natives in other islands. Niue seems to stand alone in its requirements, and it seems difficult to compare it with other islands. An educational conference was held and an expression of opinion invited. It was unanimously agreed that the present standard of education is too high, and that it would be an advantage to the pupils as well as to the general welfare of the island, if a modified course omitting all that is foreign to the life and experiences of these people, whose general outlook and environment is so very limited were adopted. It was thought that to overburden with facts and a form of education out of harmony with their life would be education of the wrong kind and out of touch with the needs of the people. It was recognized that the education must be in advance of that which is required at the present time, but not too much so, as has been the case in the past, and that the basic principle should be a course of instruction to suit and develop the present conditions of life.

*The Vernacular.*—As a policy measure, greater attention is to be paid to teaching in the vernacular, particularly among the very young pupils—the aim being that Niue children should know their own language first and thoroughly, and that the teaching of English should receive secondary consideration as a school subject. Native language, particularly where the population is small, tends to die out soon enough, and every attempt is to be made to preserve it so long as it is possible to do so, rather than to hasten its death by overemphasizing English. Rather much stress has been placed on English during the past, but it is intended that this fault will be rectified in the new programme of instruction to be brought out in the near future. The younger members were taught to read and write in their native tongue at once, and rapid progress was made. The upper classes seem to know their own language very well; they write and speak it fluently.

*Books in the Vernacular.*—Now that Niueans must pay more attention to their mother tongue, it will be an advantage and even necessary to have some books, particularly for the lower classes, prepared in the vernacular. The children are at the present time making good progress in spoken or conversational work, as well as with written work on slates, paper, and on blackboard.

*Athletics and Games.*—Athletics of all kinds are encouraged, and the boys are keen on this class of play. An island sports meeting coinciding with the annual Church gathering is held every year. Many of the senior pupils compete at these sports, and win their share of the prizes. Cricket, modified football to suit the rugged nature of the ground, basketball, and hockey are the principal games played. Minor games, such as rounders, skipping, marbles, tops, stilts, and a purely native game of throwing a large dart, called tika-throwing, are all indulged in. Competitions are held among the different classes at school, and there is keen rivalry among the pupils. Inter-school competitions are not held to any great extent because the villages are scattered and the only practical way to travel from one village to another with the great majority of Niueans is to walk.

#### *Hakupu School.*

The year's work just completed has been very satisfactory in all respects. The children have made excellent progress in all branches of study, and the staff have rendered good service in both school and playground. Attendance has been very good—only a few individual cases of sickness—and with these exceptions the children have attended regularly throughout the year.

*Appearance, Cleanliness, &c.*—The general standard of cleanliness is fairly good, considering the distance from the sea and the lack of natural running water. The majority of the children are always cleanly and tidily dressed, hair neatly brushed, and generally clean in person; but such standard is only maintained by constant supervision and attention on the part of the staff, except in the case of the senior boys and girls, who seem to realize the advantage and need of personal cleanliness. There being an ample supply of water at the school, the Administration was approached and timber wash-stand, sink, and locks supplied. Lockers were built by the boys, and the children encouraged to bring soap and towels. They responded well, practically all the seniors availing themselves of the opportunity, with good and, it is hoped, lasting results.

*Instruction, &c.*—The children are keen and intelligent, and good progress has been made. The various subjects are simplified and taught along such lines as seem best suited to meet the requirements of the local environment. The arithmetic syllabus has been curtailed and simplified, while an attempt is being made to improve local methods of agriculture along the lines of surface mulching, conserving moisture, rotation of crops, and the introduction of new crops and varieties. Unfortunately the work