

## COOK AND NORTHERN ISLANDS.—VITAL STATISTICS OF COOK ISLANDS FOR 1905.

Island.					Births.	Deaths.	Marriages.
Rarotonga	..	..	..	..	81	90	33
Atiu	..	..	..	..	25	13	..
Mangaia	..	..	..	..	62	53	17
Total	..	..	..	..	168	156	50

W. E. GUDGEON,  
Resident Commissioner.

## No. 197.

SIR,—

Niue Island Administration, Niue, 19th April, 1906.

No. 174.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 110, dated the 23rd ultimo, together with a copy of the memo. to the Right Hon. the Premier from the Secretary for Education, and I note that the question of the appointment of a teacher must remain in abeyance for the present.

With regard to the memo. referred to above, I would like to say that the system of education outlined by the Secretary for Education appears to me to be rather too elaborate and costly for Niue, although probably suitable for Rarotonga, where the conditions are different in many respects from what they are here.

Three European teachers, with incidentals, &c., involving an expenditure of £1,100 per annum, would seem to be a large amount to expend upon education in Niue, for the present at all events, although £300 might be taken off the estimate, as the students would board themselves.

I think it is unlikely that there will ever be more than a few traders, and possibly planters, settled in Niue, consequently the Native race will always remain in a large majority, and there appears to be no necessity to anglicize them to the same extent as is being done with the New Zealand Maoris.

Proposal (a) would therefore seem to be most applicable. It is quite correct that I am in favour of a scheme of education that involves the teaching of English to all Natives, together with tuition in reading, writing, and arithmetic, but I do not believe that a high degree of education is either necessary or beneficial to either Maoris or South-Sea-Islanders. My experience with the Maoris is that the well-educated Maori, when he returns to his native kainga, is in the majority of cases comparatively useless, as he has a distaste for ordinary work, and longs for something higher, which is seldom attainable. There is no reason to suppose that the Polynesian would not resemble the Maori in this respect.

With regard to the system of education to be instituted in these islands, my humble opinion is,—

(1.) That a first-class training college for student-teachers should be established in Rarotonga, where local conditions are all in its favour.

(2.) That a school should be established at Alofi, with a thoroughly competent headmaster and one assistant.

(3.) That the most forward pupils from the London Missionary Society schools already in operation should be sent to this school; ultimately the most promising of these should be selected and sent to Rarotonga, to be trained as teachers, and finally established in the various villages of this island in charge of schools. Not more than twelve would be required here; a few others could be trained to fill possible vacancies. The Native London Missionary Society teachers might be utilised as assistants to these trained teachers, so as not to lose their vocation.

I believe the best policy in these islands is to go slowly but surely, and I am confident that the scheme I have suggested would be not only economical but effective. I do not think that any difficulty is likely to be experienced with regard to training the student-teachers in Rarotonga. It would be a distinct advantage to send them out of this island for that purpose, for many reasons. In paragraph (a), page 2 of the memo., a reference is made to "industrial occupations," including agriculture apparently. In Rarotonga soil is available for that purpose; here in Niue local conditions are more in favour of instruction in quarrying than in gardening. The principal object being to teach the students English, and as they should be fairly well grounded in that language before leaving Niue, I do not think there would be any trouble with them.

Details as to cost of maintenance, &c., could be arranged between the two Administrations if necessary.

As, however, the Education Act is to be applied to these islands, I assume the entire control of future arrangements will devolve upon the Education Department of New Zealand proper.

I have, &c.,

C. F. MAXWELL,  
Resident Commissioner.

The Hon. C. H. Mills, Minister in Charge  
Cook and other Islands, Wellington.