

and general management of the school in January. Satisfactory progress has been made by the pupils, their work consisting of English, arithmetic, reading, drawing, writing, and geography. During the next three months Mr. Malcolm will start the technical work, the construction of the workshop being well under way. This work is being carried out by Mr. Malcolm and the boys. Sleeping-bunks capable of accommodating all the boarders have been constructed by the pupils under the supervision of Mr. Malcolm, and the system has proved eminently satisfactory. Only the cost of the timber used was charged against the Administration.

Since the school was opened the pupils have devoted one hour each day towards improving the school grounds, and already they have effected a complete transformation. Mr. Malcolm reports that the school buildings and grounds have proved all that could be desired for school purposes. It was found that certain of the pupils had received some previous tuition at the mission schools, but, owing to the instruction having been imparted in the Native language, it was of no practical use from a European point of view.

The teacher reports that he has found the Niue Native children to be above the average in intelligence, and their diligence and enthusiasm leave little to be desired. The teacher further reports: "The difficulty now being felt of retaining the pupils after a certain length of time is the greatest this school will have to face, and in first drafting the rules of the school, after consultation with the Native mission teachers, I arranged that each parent should enter into an agreement to maintain the child at the school for one year or to forfeit £1. This has been very effective. Any money so obtained is to be devoted to technical work. The difficulty arises thus: The children who are pupils are chosen on a population basis from the various townships, and reside at the school, as their homes are in some cases nine and eleven miles distant by the nearest road. The parents bring in food weekly, such as taro, yams, fruits, fowl, and fish, some of which is cooked at the school. They have no carts, the food being packed on horseback, and the parent walking. This, therefore, means one day's work bringing in the food, and at least one day's work procuring and preparing it. It therefore entails a considerable amount of hard work. A wet day means that the food is brought in at a great amount of discomfort, and, though the boy likes his school, in deference to his parents' wishes he is persuaded to stay at home."

With reference to Mr. Malcolm's remarks, I may say that the question of feeding the children has all along been looked upon as the greatest difficulty the school will have to contend with. I propose to keep to the present system as long as possible; but if a change is forced upon us, there remain several alternatives, viz. :—

- (a.) That the parents pay to the school a fixed sum yearly, and the Administration undertake to feed the children.
- (b.) That a piece of land of sufficient area be acquired on which the children would grow their food, and thus make the school self-contained.
- (c.) Allow the children to go to their homes every Friday afternoon, and return on Monday morning, with their food-supply for the week.

With regard to proposition (a), this would be a satisfactory system, but I am afraid the majority of the Natives would not be able to find the necessary money. It would therefore place the poorer Natives under a disability. As regards (b), this appears to my mind to be the only satisfactory solution of the difficulty, and the adoption of it would settle the question once and for all time. Suggestion (c) appears a very good one on the face of it; but the people in certain villages are so dirty and unhealthy that the children would be continually bringing itch and kindred diseases into the school. Even now, with only one week's holiday every three months, as many as twenty-five children have returned to the school suffering from those complaints. A most irregular attendance would result from such a change, and the school-time would be greatly lessened. I may add for the benefit of those who are not aware of the conditions in Niue, that many of the villages from which the pupils are drawn are from seven to eleven miles distant from the school by the nearest practicable road; consequently a day-school is out of the question.

In conclusion, I can safely say that the progress of the school has so far exceeded my expectations. There has been some undercurrent of opposition to the scheme, chiefly from certain of the traders; but that sort of thing was expected, and is easily combated.

The total expenditure on the school buildings, &c., up to the 31st March, 1910, has been as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Levelling site and grounds ... ..	66	10	8
Erection of school buildings ... ..	835	9	7
School stationery (initial supply) ... ..	17	14	6
School furniture, including timber for sleeping-bunks ... ..	96	1	3
Erection of schoolmaster's residence and outbuildings ... ..	543	3	9
Construction of reservoir in school grounds ... ..	56	6	7
Erecting boundary-walls and gates ... ..	20	14	2
Workshop for technical training ... ..	24	6	7
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	£1,660	7	1

There are still liabilities amounting to about £50, principally on account of tools and equipment for the school workshop.

H. CORNWALL,  
Resident Commissioner.

Niue, 15th April, 1910.