



The South West Pacific.

The old tools had mostly disappeared. Conventional European articles such as axes and knives are now bought or traded, and they are not always specially adapted to the particular needs of the native, as were usually the ones which he used to make for himself. European building materials and methods had penetrated to some extent, and have tended to destroy the sense of functional design.

War has intensified this process of disintegration in some cases. For example, over a period of about six months the unfortunate natives of northern Guadalcanal had tens of thousands of troops fighting fiercely over their land. They were apparently a hybrid race, not of the highest type, but those we saw there, a few miles from our camp, were an extreme example of social breakdown. Their ordinary way of life had disappeared temporarily, and they were wearing cast-off military clothing, and eating canned rations. They were dejected in appearance, and lived in squalor.

What, then, must be done? What is already a geographical fact seems likely

to become a political one in the near future—these people will be living in the sphere of the influence of Australia and New Zealand. It will be necessary for us in this event to develop a national sense of responsibility for the Pacific-Islanders. Clearly the old order was unenlightened in many respects, and with our knowledge, resources, and superior social experience we are able to do a great deal to improve their life.

Our first thought might well be that the native needs more of the material things of life, and should have cheap goods made available to him in abundance. If a well-intentioned policy were based on this assumption, it would probably prove a disaster for the native before very long. Its effect would be that which we saw in an exaggerated way in Guadalcanal. These fertile tropical islands will readily supply their inhabitants with a simple, natural living as a reward for moderate effort. This kind of life should not be disturbed fundamentally, nor should native culture be disintegrated by letting the natives learn to rely on our manufactured articles, which have superficial advantages for them. At present the need of the native is not so much for wealth, as for some-



Nissan Natives.