

Health of the People.

The island has been practically free from epidemic diseases during the past year, and, generally speaking, the year has been a good one from a health point of view. The following are the vital statistics for 1909-10, and those for the preceding four years:—

	Births.	Deaths.	Marriages.
1905-6	90	95	53
1906-7	106	110	30
1907-8	97	104	31
1908-9	115	95	56
1909-10	104	79	40

In my last report I mentioned that steps were being taken towards obtaining the services of a resident Medical Officer, but that owing to the influence of the tohungas, the movement was being opposed by the Natives in some quarters. As the result of much discussion on the subject, I have succeeded in breaking down the opposition to the appointment of a doctor, and the Natives of the island have, through the *patus* (chiefs), agreed to subscribe £150 per annum towards the project for a period of three years, with a condition that they have the option of altering this arrangement at the end of the term. The Niue Island Council has supplemented the Natives' contribution by voting a sum of £150 per annum out of the funds of the Administration, making £300 per annum secured for three years. In addition to the foregoing, the Niue Island Administration has purchased for a sum of £60 a piece of land in Alofi as a site for a doctor's residence, and as soon as the negotiations with respect to the appointment of a doctor are concluded, a start will be made with the erection of a suitable residence. The white residents declined to give any guarantee towards a doctor, preferring to make their own terms with him when he is appointed. The European population numbers some thirty souls.

Emigration and Immigration.

Two hundred and eleven persons left Niue during the year, and 252 persons arrived, the net gain being 41. The great majority of the travellers were Natives of Niue, whose love of travel is well known. The comparatively large number of departures and arrivals was due to the increased shipping facilities offered since the "Kereru" commenced running. In each of the last three years there has been an excess of arrivals over departures, which appears to indicate that the great tide of emigration, which for so many years robbed Niue of its most promising manhood, has at last been turned. However, there are still a great many Natives of Niue resident in neighbouring islands, chiefly in Tonga and Samoa, many of whom will probably never return to their homes.

Following are the particulars of the departures and arrivals for the past year:—

Place of Departure to or Arrival from.	Departures.	Arrivals.
New Zealand	8	19
Cook Islands	1	4
United Kingdom	...	2
Christmas Island	18	18
American Samoa	7	20
German Samoa	60	80
Malden Island	...	28
Friendly Islands	117	76
New Guinea	...	5
	211	252

Schooner Service.

The negotiations in progress when my last report was made were carried to a successful issue, and a contract has been entered into between the Government and Mr. W. F. Utting, of Auckland, for a service of five trips in each year between Auckland and Niue, for a period of three years, at a subsidy of £500 per annum. The first year's service commenced at Auckland in April, 1909, with the schooner "Kereru," of 100 tons, and the vessel was able to complete all the five voyages contracted for by the 8th January of this year. The result of the first year's working has given complete satisfaction at Niue, and the island is now as well served as it can hope to be until such time as the trade may warrant the employment of a larger vessel or a more frequent service.

Following is a schedule of the voyages made during the first year of the contract:—

Auckland to Niue.

Left Auckland.	Route.	Arrived Niue.*	Number of Days.
April 1	Direct	April 18	18
June 18	"	June 28]	11
July 26	"	August 12	18
September 11	Via Tonga and Vavau. Left Vavau September 25	October 3	23
November 10	Via Tonga. Left Tonga December 2	December 13	34

* Local time one day behind New Zealand time.

Average time for direct trips, 15½ days.

Average time via Tonga, 28½ days.