

facing the local tribes was immediately recognised for what it was, *viz.*, one of their very survival as social units.

The first outstation to be set up, however, was that located in Alice Springs township where detribalized natives were congregating and living as "fringe dwellers". These people were in the main kinsmen of men and women already served by the Mission at Hermannsburg and to that extent had already been influenced by Christian thought. However, experience gained over many years has amply demonstrated that, in the absence of special conditions, the aboriginal population of both Central and Northern Australia is rapidly debauched by promiscuous contact with European centres of civilisation, and the social situation developing at Alice Springs in the 1930's threatened to follow this pattern. ●



Meet Frank Vale, of Armidale

WHO REMEMBERS COOTAMUNDRA?

Writing to *Dawn*, Mrs. E. Nicholls of 15 Cornwallis Street, Redfern, says: "I was sitting here by my radio to-night listening to Keith Smith, the Pied Piper, from Cootamundra Town Hall. He was telling of his visit to the Girls' Home on the Hill."

"Two girls from the Home were there with him and they sang so lovely it took me back over the years to the time when I was a little girl there."

"I remember the wonderful times we had singing and playing, and I wondered if any other Old Girls had heard the girls singing and recalled when they used to sing for visitors."

Note.—There might be some Cootamundra Old Girls, who would like to contact Mrs. Nicholls.

EDUCATION FOR ABORIGINES

Ultimately, we must all hope, aborigines will become an integral and indistinguishable part of the Australian community as a whole. To that end State Governments are actively pursuing a policy of assimilation, which involves improving aborigines' health, educating them, giving them employment opportunities, and finding homes for them among the white population. Although heartening progress has been made, nowhere do advances seem to be slower than in the field of education. It is good to see that the State Government feels some anxiety on this point.

It has decided to conduct a survey to find out why aboriginal children who win education scholarships are not pursuing their studies to Leaving standard. In its last annual report the Aborigines' Welfare Board noted that since 1946 it had granted 62 bursaries, but that only six bursars had passed the Leaving Certificate examination. In 1959-60 the board had to cancel two bursaries "because of unsatisfactory progress and application to study". This suggests either laziness or a failure to adapt.

There may also be economic reasons; aboriginal schoolchildren may wish to leave and begin earning money as soon as possible. Whatever the explanation, a survey is clearly necessary, for assimilation cannot be accomplished unless aborigines are properly educated. An A.L.P. committee has asked that "suitably trained" aborigines should be given welfare work with the board. It is an excellent suggestion, but the training must come first. Part of the solution may come from another quarter. Mr. Kelly is considering a pilot scheme for adult education among aborigines. The plan is well worth trying.

—With acknowledgment to *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

PAID HOLIDAYS FOR NATIVES

Some Arnhem Land natives in future will be paid while on hunting walkabouts.

Methodist Overseas Missions, which controls five stations along the Arnhem Land coast, has decided to give two weeks' leave on full pay to natives who work for 50 weeks.

The missions employ house workers, gardeners, storemen, stockmen, carpenters, mechanics and brick-makers.

The highest wage is about £7 a week.

The chairman of the North Australian Missions Synod, the Rev. G. J. Symons, said the move was expected to encourage people who were still semi-nomadic to remain in regular employment.