

were represented. The people of these settlements objected strongly to the chiefs of Iverua being sent for, as they were somewhat bitterly at issue on this question. I deemed it better not to delay the meeting by insisting upon Iverua being represented. Nor should I deem it prudent to bring them unwillingly together, unless with sufficient means at hand to secure the maintenance of order at the meeting.

After explaining that my duty was to inquire into the facts, and report to your Excellency, I read Mr. Pearse's complaint, as embodied in his letter to Mr. Consul Exham, dated the 27th August, 1890. It was as follows:—

1. In the month of January, 1889, I first landed at Mangaia, and procured from a chief named Ata a house in which to carry on my business.

2. In the month of September, 1889, I rented for building purposes a piece of land. This was done at a full meeting of the chiefs and with consent of the trustee—namely, the agent of the London Missionary Society, who are trustees for all settlement lands in Mangaia.

3. Early in July, 1890, I began building on the above land. On the 16th I was ordered by three Governors to stop building. I was also informed that any person or persons buying or selling goods or produce at my store would be fined \$100. I refused to stop work, as my permission to build was from a higher authority. On the 17th I was again ordered, by nine Judges, to stop building. I then stopped, and applied to the King (John). By him I was told that the work was not stopped by his orders, and that I was to continue building. The work then went on smoothly till the 28th, when the native carpenters were heavily fined, and were suspended from church-membership for a term of six months, and ordered not to return to the work. King John himself was fined and deposed. Ata, my landlord, who is also a Governor, was fined and suspended from church-membership. Eight other persons (two being deacons of the church) were also fined for trading at my store at Iverua. They were fined \$60 each, and the church-members among them were suspended for six months.

4. On the 25th August I commenced landing goods from the steamer "Little Agnes," and after a portion of the said goods had been landed on the beach they were taken back to the vessel. I was then informed that no goods were to be landed from the vessel. These goods were more or less damaged by salt water on being returned.

5. On the same day, 25th August, one of the Judges, named Ringiringi, entered my store, seized me by the arms, and forcibly marched me down to the landing-place, where I was lifted into a canoe and sent off to the "Little Agnes." I was given no time to take stock of my goods, which are valued at \$10,000, nor was I allowed time to take my papers.

6. All this has been done without any one giving me any valid reason for such proceedings, nor have I in any way given cause for such action. I consider that I was quite justified in building my house on the land leased to me; and, in fact, some of the people concerned in this outrage assisted at putting up the framework of the house.

Mr. Pearse also complained that the Rev. George Augustus Harris had countenanced the hostile action of the natives by suspending from church-membership those who had assisted him, whereas none of those guilty of the outrage upon him had been punished. To this Mr. Harris replied that he had not interfered at all. A breach of the laws made by the authorities of the land involved suspension from church-membership as a matter of course. It had followed in this case as in all others. Mr. Harris also said that Ata's suspension was because he refused to give any explanation of the charge of breaking the law, made against him.

Mr. Pearse also stated that he had not, since his arrival at Mangaia, landed any spirituous liquors, nor had he to his knowledge disobeyed any of the laws.

Mr. Pearse's general allegations were admitted by the natives. They also admitted that he had not landed any liquor, but declared that he had disobeyed their laws. To this Mr. Pearse rejoined that he could not be considered to have disobeyed, because in all cases—and they were of no importance in themselves—in which he had been fined, he had readily paid that fine in accordance with the law, and had always lived on the most friendly terms with them.

To Mr. Pearse's complaint generally, the natives replied that they had not forcibly expelled him, but had done so in the gentlest manner possible. They showed how they had led him off between two men, each with an arm round his neck and shoulders in the most friendly manner. One of them, after thus putting him on board the "Little Agnes," had cried over and sympathized with him. Pearse admitted this, but added that he had to go for all that.

The Natives then, in justification of their action, alleged that Pearse had frequently broken the law, and thus irritated them to the use of extreme measures. The points in which he had broken their law were summarised as follows: (1) The law of the canoe (boarding a ship before the native pilot); (2) the law of speaking evil of the King; (3) the law of the workers (only certain men, appointed by Government, to be employed in shipping produce); (4) the law of shipping men for sea; (5) the law of the married women; (6) the liquor law (total prohibition); (7) the law of fornication; (8) the law of the night (no one allowed to be out of his house at Oneroa after beat of drum at 7 p.m.); (9) the law against building a house at Oneroa (this is the house in dispute); (10) the law against stealing land; (11) the law against stealing letters, and also for making a Consul of himself; (12) a further trouble is that a letter was written by the British Consul to one of the two Kings, ignoring the other; Pearse also said that only King John could speak.

On my going into these counter-charges, the natives admitted that some of them had fallen through on investigation, and that in others the fine imposed by their law had been paid readily by Pearse. They declared that they never had, and had not now, any personal ill-feeling towards him.

The above fully summarises the case as put by the natives, but I was convinced in my own mind that the counter-charges were chiefly after-thoughts. They were not at all sufficient to account for the natives having taken the extreme measure to which they had resorted. The real