

of the Resident to supplement local revenue, the natives, seeing the good result of a regular government, would soon learn to pay for its proper maintenance themselves. It is also to be hoped that their position would then be sufficiently improved to make it the more easy for them to do so.

The currency is in great confusion, consisting almost entirely of debased South American coins that drive all good money out of the market. A General Council only could deal with this question, and with the raising of a revenue for the whole group.

Rarotonga is a very beautiful, healthy, and fertile island, noted for its coffee, fruits, tobacco, and similar produce. The only road is one round the island, near the sea, and others are much required to open up the country and stimulate industry. The natives are an intelligent and teachable race, and ought to become competent to manage their own affairs. They are very loyal and very proud of belonging to Great Britain.

The first step towards improvement must be the immediate and effective handling of the liquor-traffic, with the prevention of their secret manufacture of a "bush-beer," said by some here to be worse than the imported spirits sold among them. The beer is made in secret places in the dense and uninhabited bush, of which there is a considerable extent in this mountainous little island. The only apparatus required is a large tub, in which the oranges, bananas, or pine-apples are left to ferment for a short time. The effect of the liquor drunk in this state is said to be maddening. The sale of imported spirits can perhaps be effectually controlled by dealing with them in the same way that arms and ammunition are treated in New Zealand—only allowing the sale to persons receiving permits from properly-authorized officials. If this were found to fail, prohibition will be the only alternative, but is so likely to lead to continued breaches and contempt of the law that, in my opinion, it should only be regarded as a last resource. Scenes of drunkenness and debauchery amongst the natives, resulting from imported drink and from their bush beer, are becoming too marked a feature in their social life, and demand immediate attention.

It will be necessary to have a small body of regularly-paid though inexpensive native police; but how to raise the money in the first instance is a difficulty that will cause grievous delay, unless a small annual grant-in-aid be made for a few years.

Venereal is becoming sadly prevalent amongst the natives, and there is no means at present of dealing with this disease, as deadly as their drink, and perhaps even more so. There is no surgeon and no place for the treatment of patients. One case of supposed leprosy occurred. This was treated by the natives in their own barbarous way by burying the patient, who was killed, some say, by the process.

The natives are expert whalers, and build their own fine whaleboats; have one schooner which they use for trading with Tahiti, and are building—entirely by themselves—a vessel of some 90 or 100 tons, now on the stocks at this island. She is constructed of Rarotongan timber, cut by themselves, and the hull is nearly completed.

The French authorities at Tahiti have been very considerate in the past, but the absence of a flag for the protectorate and a regular registry for shipping may cause trouble at any moment to Native vessels trading to the French colonies.

I shall perhaps be able to inform your Excellency by the steamer, expected at any moment, of the result of the meeting of Arikis and chiefs convened by Makea; also of the result of an informal meeting to which I have invited the white residents this afternoon. I am very anxious to get their co-operation in suppressing drunkenness, and in securing respect for the Courts by which the law is now supposed to be enforced. These are beyond the purposes for which I am specially here, but I shall be careful to have it understood that I am acting on my personal responsibility only. The evil is so crying that I feel no time should be lost in dealing with it, and trust your Excellency will approve the steps I am thus taking.

I have, &c.,

FREDERICK J. MOSS.

His Excellency the Earl of Onslow, G.C.M.G., Governor of New Zealand, &c.

No. 8.

Mr. F. J. Moss to His Excellency the GOVERNOR of NEW ZEALAND.

MY LORD,—

Avarua, Rarotonga, 21st November, 1890.

I have great pleasure in stating that Queen Makea has agreed to put up a suitable building for the Residency. Makea and her husband (Ngamaru), who is the Ariki or King of the three islands of Mauke, Atiu, and Mitiaro, take upon themselves the task of securing contributions to the cost from other islands. Makea proposed this at once on Mr. Exham speaking to her about the provision of a proper dwelling. She has since left it to me to select a site from any land at her disposal. I have chosen a very beautiful site near to Makea's own residence and the Mission. Makea will convey the land to Her Majesty the Queen.

Makea has also placed at my disposal a room for an office, and has invited me to take up my quarters at her residence—called here the palace—on my return from the tour of the islands. The palace is a large, double-storied, stone house well built, and furnished with good taste and in good style.

Makea will probably not write herself to your Excellency, and I would beg to suggest an acknowledgment to her direct, which I am sure would be much appreciated.

In communicating with the Arikis, it would be well if some regular official style were prescribed. I find that among the natives Makea is simply spoken of as "Makea," the name of the long line of ancestors from whom she is descended. The Europeans speak of her as "Makea" or "Queen Makea"