

his absence is being done by a native teacher. The opportunities of communication are so irregular that Atiu, Mitiaro, and Mauke will probably have to be left till after the hurricane season.

In concluding this report, I should not be properly performing my duty without expressing to your Excellency my conviction that no sound progress can be looked for until the natives are able to easily read and understand English. I recognise the difficulty of running against the vernacular, but am certain that with adequate means it can be overcome. I might take Makea Daniela, Clerk to the Government, and Paymaster, as a proof. His ability to fill these offices is due entirely to his having been taught English by the Rev. James Chalmers. The teaching was interrupted by Mr. Chalmers's departure, but Daniela (better known as Jimmy Tepou) has gone on reading to the best of his power ever since.

Mr. Lawrence and Mr. Harris are now teaching English in their schools, but the time at a missionary's disposal is quite insufficient. The teaching must be somewhat irregular, and confined to a few. Nor can the same results be expected as when a trained teacher makes it his exclusive work to impart instruction. What I should aim at is a wide diffusion of such instruction among all classes. To send a few sons of chiefs to other more advanced countries would render their old life and associations so distasteful on their return as almost certainly to plunge them back into old native ways in sheer despair.

Hitherto the religious sentiments have, I think, been too exclusively cultivated. The rest of the man is almost entirely neglected. None could be better conversant with the Bible—with the Old Testament particularly, which is naturally more attractive than the New to a people in a state of semi-civilisation. But the knowledge is a matter of words only. Sermons are preached by ringing the changes on such words without regard to the context, and without the faintest idea of the country, the circumstances of the time, or of the people to whom they were spoken. The result is a spirit of clever word-quibbling, which is carried into everyday affairs, and very well illustrated by the tenacity with which they still maintain that the boycotting Pearse's store, by express law and heavy fines, was not closing it, as they were only dealing with their own people. So, too, with my friend Meringatangi, who, during my stay at Mangaia, preached a rousing sermon against me and my doings, taking as his text Psalm xxvii., 3, to stimulate his hearers to resistance.

Your Excellency is aware that my experience is not limited to these islands, and that a few years ago I ventured to put into print my firm belief that a new departure in missionary enterprise was indispensable. I am quite sure that there are many among the missionaries themselves who would agree with me. But in my present position I have been able to see more clearly and closely, and to command more sure information. The subject is one on which one naturally speaks with a degree of diffidence; but my convictions are so strong that I feel bound to bring the subject as plainly as possible before your Excellency.

The introduction of Christianity has done much for these people; but in the grave question of sexual relations their condition, despite rigid laws so rigidly enforced, is worse than it was in the days of heathenism and cannibalism. Their religious manners and customs have reached perfection, for in the singing of hymns and in family or public prayer their lives are chiefly passed. In some cases the deeper effect has been proved by their volunteering for missionary work in New Guinea and other dangerous fields.

But the fact remains that, while in the old heathen days they at least held their own, the race is now steadily dying out from end to end of the Pacific, and their lovely islands are gradually becoming waste places. To look on at this with unconcern is impossible. To my mind the obvious remedy is to teach them to work steadily, and to put new life into them by an education less exclusively religious. I hope to do something with the small means now at the disposal of this Government, but they are very small, and progress must be very slow.

If, in addition, a competent surgeon could be stationed for a couple of years in the group, to investigate the habits, food, and diseases of the people, I believe that his report would be of extreme value, and apply more or less to all the Pacific islands. As a question of humanity this seems to me sufficiently large, but the commercial benefits would be also great. There is no visible reason why this group, for example, should not maintain four times its present population, with every man living in comfort and prosperity on his own plot of land. The Cook Islands produce coffee and cotton of the finest quality, and with an amount of labour so small as to be almost incredible. Against the great advantages, social, moral, and commercial, the comparatively small annual outlay required, in my humble opinion, cannot weigh.

I must ask of your Excellency to excuse the length of this despatch, but the great importance of the subject seemed to me to warrant going into it at this unusual length.

I have, &c.,

The Earl of Onslow, G.C.M.G.,
Governor of New Zealand, &c.

FREDERICK J. MOSS,
British Resident.

Enclosure No. 1.

MINUTES of the COUNCIL of MANGAIA, 17th August, 1891, at 10.30 a.m.

1. Roll of members called. All present—22.
2. Prayers by Meringatangi.
3. The British Resident addressed the Council:—

E te au Talake,—Nga Ariki, Nga Kavana e te au Mema o te Council o Mangaia. Kia ora ana kotou.

Kua rekareka au i te akara ia kotou i uipa mai nei ki konei kia rave kapiti tatou i tetai meitaki no Mangaia nei. Ko te au pekapeka o kotou i roa ana ma te akamoupu e kua maata te kino i tupu ana. I tenana na kotou uarai te ara me tupu akaou mai. Tauna ki te ai kia mate takiri e tuatoru uatu tena kino.