

be made to advantage, or if it is necessary at all at the present time. However, I shall bring the matter before my colleagues when I return. The main thing, in my opinion, for all of you to study is what is best to be done with your lands, so as to reclaim what has not been cultivated from its primitive condition. Now, an old friend of mine in New Zealand told me that he once owned 1,000 acres of good land, and made a certain sum of money from it every year. When his eldest boy grew up he gave him 250 acres of land, which left 750 for himself, and he made as much money that year as before. A year or two afterwards another boy got married, and he gave him 250 acres, leaving 500, and still he reaped the same financial result. Then his only girl was married, and he gave her 250 acres, and he made more money every year from the remaining 250 acres than he had made from the 1,000. So you see it does not necessarily require a great area of land to produce a good return. Therefore I ask you to think it over very quietly, calmly, and considerately, and then decide what you think is the best way to deal with your lands. I know you are getting portions of them surveyed, and it seems to me that if you cannot let them amongst yourselves you should let them to respectable Europeans. You would then get into much closer communication with Auckland and Wellington, and make more money for yourselves; and I can assure you that the Government, of which I am a representative, will do what they think is best for you. Now, I thank you very kindly for the earnest consideration you have given to what I have had to say; and while I was never a man to make great promises, I always endeavour to carry out more than I promise, and do what I think is best for those I have to represent.

Pa Ariki thanked the Minister for his reply, and said the people had great faith and trust in the Government of New Zealand.

Monday, 27th April (Sunday, Rarotonga time).—Early on Monday morning a heavy gale arose, and members awoke to find the steamer plunging heavily, the captain having wisely decided to run out to sea rather than risk remaining at anchor off the coral reef. By daybreak, however, we were back to our anchorage again, the wind having turned, although it was still blowing hard. The gale continued throughout the day, accompanied by heavy rain, but the Minister decided to lose no chance of seeing as much of Rarotonga as possible during our limited stay. He accordingly arranged to drive round the island with Colonel Gudgeon and as many of the party as cared to make the journey. The wind was blowing with almost hurricane force, but the little horses struggled bravely on over the muddy road, in the face of a blinding rain and amid falling cocoanuts. Here and there large trees had been thrown down by the storm, almost blocking up the way, but despite such drawbacks the scenery of the island was greatly admired, and members had ample opportunity of observing the fertility of the soil. We noticed several small sections fenced off, with the young cocoanut-palms in splendid condition. These were plantations belonging to young New Zealanders, and if all goes well they will in a few years yield the owners a very handsome profit on their outlay. During the drive the Minister called at the residence of Pa Ariki. We reached the Government Buildings again at dusk, very wet and cold, but well pleased with our outing. The storm had a very disastrous effect on the banana-crop, and will mean a loss to the island of something like £2,000. The Natives were very much impressed by the determination of the New Zealanders to see the island regardless of difficulties.

Tuesday, 28th April.—The Minister was early ashore, and spent the greater part of the morning transacting departmental business with the Resident Commissioner. During the morning the villagers of Arorangi and Takitumu came in, and after making presentations of fruit, mats, &c., in front of the Government Buildings they proceeded to the palace-grounds, where dancing went on for the rest of the day. While this was in progress a second conference with the Arikis was held, all the New Zealand legislators being present. The following is a report:—

SECOND CONFERENCE at Rarotonga, 28th April, 1903.

Present: Makea Ariki, Pa Ariki, and Tinomana Ariki, and the members of the parliamentary party.

The Rev. Mr. Lawrence interpreted.

Hon. Mr. Mills: Queen Makea, Pa Ariki, and Tinomana Ariki. The party who are present here to-day with me comprise ten Legislative Councillors and twenty-two members of the House of Representatives. They are gentlemen who occupy very high social and political positions in the Colony of New Zealand, and their object in making this tour is to form a better acquaintance with you and your people, and to obtain and carry back with them whatever useful information they can glean regarding the islands. I have requested you to meet us before we leave Rarotonga so that we might have the opportunity of asking you if there were any vital public questions, or any matters of importance to yourselves, that you would like to speak to us about while we are all present. I can assure you that we are all most anxious to gain any reliable information we possibly can that will lead to improving matters in the Cook and other islands. I shall not detain you any time, but simply say that so far as I have gathered from my party they fully appreciate the cordial welcome you have given them, and it will be many a long year before we forget your hearty reception and the many kindnesses we have received in this gem of the Pacific. [*Hon. members:* Hear, hear.] In our further movements round these islands, with which we are now all connected, we shall not forget to inform the other Natives how kindly and cordially we have been treated here. In terminating our visit we feel sure that a closer and warmer friendship will certainly exist between us in the future, and after the object-lessons on different subjects we have studied while moving round here we shall be able on our return to New Zealand to give much practical and reliable information which we have gained to the Premier, my colleagues, and the other members of both Houses, while those members who were unable to come with us will only regret it once, and that will probably be all their lives. We shall now be pleased to hear your views.

Pa Ariki: You, the Minister and members of the Upper House and the members of the Lower House, we are exceedingly glad to have met with you, and to meet with you now. By the grace