

write to the Resident Commissioner and so inform him? The first intimation that one of the patients had died appears in a letter of the 27th February—that is, twenty-four days after his death. It seems that some days before the patient's death his life had been despaired of by his relatives. If the man was in such a sad state, why did Dr. Dawson not take him at once to the Hospital if he thought that human aid could save his life? Dr. Dawson has not explained why he did not avail himself of the offer made by the Resident Commissioner of the use of the Hospital, nor has he given any reason for not consulting Dr. Story about the case. Further, I have been unable to ascertain, though I have made application through the police, who the other two patients were who it was said required immediate treatment, nor have I been able to discover whether they are alive. I presume they must be alive, else their deaths would have been noted in some of the correspondence between Dr. Dawson and the Resident Commissioner. So far as the correspondence is concerned, if blame in connection with this affair is to rest on any one it is certainly not on the Commissioner or on Dr. Story.

The other charge, about the Hospital, is that not sufficient attention has been paid to the drainage. Dr. Perceval informs me that this is entirely incorrect. He says—as I saw—that there is no drainage going from the Hospital save from the bath, and that is carried by a pipe into the loose coral soil and passes away and leaves nothing behind. The water-closets are on the beach some slight distance from and lower than the Hospital, and are efficiently drained by passing at once into the loose coral. Dr. Perceval says the drainage is perfect. I visited the Hospital. It is a better building than will be found in many districts in New Zealand with five times the population. The floors are all concrete, and the walls are concrete. It seems to me that great attention has been paid to getting a suitable site and building for hospital purposes. There were no cases in the Hospital when I was there. There is an operating-room. The instruments, of course, are not so complete as in our larger hospitals in New Zealand, but everything seemed to me as well arranged as in our country hospitals. There is room for several beds. A nurse was needed, and one has at last been obtained, but not without some difficulty. A young woman has been engaged, and she is to be trained by Dr. Perceval. I understand also that efforts will be made to get an assistant for Dr. Perceval, so that he may be able to visit the outlying islands. Dr. Perceval's medical skill and kindness have been recognized both by Natives and Europeans. This is shown by the large numbers of patients he has had since he came to the island. In the short time he has been in the island, from the 16th March to the 15th June inclusive, he has attended 215 Natives in their homes, and over 1,500 Natives have called at the Hospital asking for medicine or treatment. Natives will avail themselves of free hospital advice if they feel a pain in their stomachs or have a finger cut, so the figures given do not imply that there is much sickness in the island.

A deputation of settlers in Avarua waited on me with a memorial, which I forward, asking that Dr. Dawson might be appointed as assistant to Dr. Perceval. The deputation said that they had no fault to find with Dr. Perceval, who had done and was doing his work to the satisfaction of all. Dr. Dawson is well liked by the large majority of white inhabitants of Rarotonga. Whether, in view of the past, employment can be found for him in the Cook Islands is a matter entirely for the consideration of the Administration. I may add that one settler said that all the trouble—I think he used the word “fuss”—that had arisen in the Islands would cease at once if Dr. Dawson were reappointed to some medical appointment in connection with the Cook Islands.

B. THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

The first charge relating to the administration of justice is that a sentence was passed on a Native, called Solomona, that was not warranted by law—namely, that he was sentenced to twenty-one days on bread and water. It is true that there is no provision in the Crimes Act allowing such a sentence to be imposed, but there is no Prisons Act in force in Rarotonga, and no regulations as to the feeding of prisoners. As to the other sentence that was imposed on him, that was warranted by law, and in fact, had Solomona been tried in a New Zealand Court, he would have been liable to have been declared an habitual criminal, or imprisoned for a long term for reformatory treatment. This charge is, as was very well said to me by one who was not accused of favouring the Resident Commissioner—the Rev. H. Bond James—a mere technicality, and not an “outrage.” I examined Solomona and asked him whether he had had enough food, and he said, “Certainly,” and that he had no complaints at all. The charge would, I am sure, never have been made by Mr. Wright had he known the facts. What happened was that Solomona for three days in a week until the twenty days expired was ordered to sleep in the lock-up at night. He got bread and water in the morning, and as much fruit as he liked—bananas, oranges, &c.