

For his midday meal he got meat and vegetables. In the evening he got bread and water and fruit again. Mr. James said he saw him continually, and he was always well fed and had nothing to complain of. In fact, Solomona got better food than he would have got if he had not been in what is called "prison." There is no prison and there are no prison officers in Rarotonga. I shall deal further with this question when I come to charge "F."

The other charge was that prisoners who were charged with drunkenness, &c., were sworn before their plea was received. This apparently seems to have been done in some instances, and was not warranted, but I am not aware that any injury was sustained by any one. If the Commissioner had had experience in Courts he would have known that persons when sworn to give evidence on their own behalf very rarely speak the truth. These are all the charges that were made in Mr. Wright's letter with reference to the administration of justice.

C. THE TERMINATION OF MR. REYNOLDS'S ENGAGEMENT.

Mr. Reynolds was engaged under a special agreement. It was as follows:—

"SIR,—

"Referring to previous correspondence with regard to your appointment at Rarotonga, I beg to inform you that you are to act in the capacity of policeman and as an officer to protect the revenue against smuggling; and also to act in any other capacity required of you.

"The appointment is to be terminated by one month's notice on either side. Salary, £150 per annum, payable by the Cook Islands Government. No lodging allowed or house-rent. Steerage passage from Wellington to Rarotonga will be paid by the Cook Islands Government. If the appointment is terminated by the Cook Islands Government, steerage passage back to Wellington will be paid, but if terminated by yourself, return passage must be paid by you. A khaki uniform and white service helmet will be provided by the Cook Islands Government. Your salary will commence when you take up your duties. You should proceed to Rarotonga by the steamer leaving Wellington on the 16th March next. I return your testimonials herewith.

"I have, &c.,

"Mr. W. Revell Reynolds, Wellington."

"F. WALDEGRAVE.

It will be noticed that he was not taken on as an ordinary Civil servant of the Cook Islands Government. He contends that he was, and that the Resident Commissioner had no power to determine his services. He relies upon the clause in the Order in Council defining the powers of the Resident Commissioner. In my opinion, as he was not appointed as a permanent officer, but as one who could be dismissed on a month's notice, it cannot be said that the Commissioner exceeded his powers. No charge was made against Mr. Reynolds on his dismissal or afterwards, save that the Commissioner thought that he was hostile to him. It may be that he thought so because of the companions he kept. It is clear that Dr. Dawson and Mr. Hosking were hostile to the Commissioner, and they were Mr. Reynolds's associates. It is also clear that there was friction between the Commissioner and Mr. Reynolds, and I am not surprised at such being the case. Mr. Reynolds, no doubt, with nothing but a desire to have crime put down and peace maintained, was in the habit, before cases came on before the Court, of writing to the Commissioner, who was the Judge, as to how he should dispose of criminal matters, and after sentence he sometimes "remonstrated" with the Judge. Of course, this was wrong. Mr. Reynolds, no doubt, wrote to the Judge with the best intentions. Magistrates or Judges in New Zealand would severely deal with a sergeant or Inspector of police who wrote long letters to them offering advice as to the manner of dealing with offenders or his opinion of their sentences. Mr. Reynolds made a long statement to me of the way in which he performed his duties. So far as his statements concerning the Commissioner were concerned they were a criticism of the sentences passed on prisoners—as to being put in the cells, &c.; on his suggestions as to putting the broad arrow on a prisoner's clothes; the want of a gaol; the use of prisoners by Government servants; wandering or stray pigs; the sale of hop-beer by the hotel; the supply of napping-hammers; the holding of *imines* (meetings at which hymns are sung). The charge against the hotel was, I was informed, to be heard after I left Rarotonga. I did not consider it my duty, nor had I the time were it my duty, to rehear the cases Mr. Reynolds mentioned and thus ascertain whether the sentences were proper. *Prima facie*, the sentences passed on four Natives for assault on Mr. Reynolds seem to be as severe as are usually passed on like offenders in New Zealand. The sentences were—on Amaru, six months; on Tearapo, three months; on Teariki Kamana, six months; and on Kautai, £2 10s. fine or three months. To commence an inquiry as to the justice of sentences upon prisoners who have not appealed against a Magistrate's or Judge's decision, at the suggestion of a police officer who has been removed from office, would be unique in the history of New Zealand. It may be that Mr. Reynolds is sincere in his opinion that in some cases some sentences were too lenient and others too severe, but I fail to see that because he thinks so there should be a rehearing of the cases or a Royal