

announced their approach ere they arrive ; the guest-house is prepared for their reception ; the virgins of the village attend to prepare the kava-bowl and entertain them with the dance ; time flies in the enjoyment of every pleasure which an islander conceives ; and when the *malaga* sets forth, the same welcome and the same joys expect them beyond the next cape, where the nearest village nestles in its grove of palms. To the visitors it is all golden ; for the hosts it has another side. In one or two words of the language the fact slyly peeps forth. The same word (*afemoeima*) expresses 'a long call' and 'to come as a calamity' ; the same word (*lesolosolou*) signifies 'to have no intermission of pain' and 'to have no cessation, as in the arrival of visitors' ; and *soua*, used of epidemics, bears the sense of being overcome as with 'fire, flood, or visitors.' But the gem of the dictionary is the verb *alovao*, which illustrates its pages like a humorous wood-cut. It is used in the sense of 'to avoid visitors,' but it means literally 'hide in the wood.' So, by the sure hand of popular speech, we have the picture of the house deserted, the *malaga* disappointed, and the host that should have been, quaking in the bush."

I cannot, therefore, agree that any motive for the good of the Samoans has prompted your request for the reinstatement of this custom, and refer you again to the views of the Fono :—

"Their agitation *re* fine mats is only so that many barrels of beef may be bought from their stores in connection with fine mat *malagas*. We know that they in the past meant trouble, dissension, waste time, and even war and bloodshed."

Your suggestion that by "a stroke of the pen" the Administration prohibited the custom by which the Native people of Apia were inflicted for indefinite periods with visitors from other districts (who in courtesy they could not refuse to maintain) is again incorrect. Over a period of two years the Administrator had received repeated requests from every district to prevent its boys and girls from going to Apia, where they became idle persons, learnt undesirable habits, and were often a cause of trouble, and to require them to return to their homes where they were needed and would lead useful lives. No prohibition is made upon those who are actually in employment in Apia, and I am advised by His Excellency that this is one of the best regulations which have been formulated by the Faipules, for it is supported by all Samoans excepting those whose idle habits it has curtailed. Only recently in Suva the Fijians held a meeting and decided to adopt the same principle to their own people from out-districts who come to Suva and who remained there out of employment, as they become a burden to the local Natives, as well as a discredit to their race. You have not alluded to this in your comparison of Samoa with Fiji.

Individualization of Land.—I am assured that this policy does not mean the alienation of Native lands, or the abolition of the communal system, but merely the allocation of areas of land to individual Natives who have no land for their own use. The previous system made no provision for any land to be cultivated other than that held under the control of the Matai—*i.e.*, head of the family—and thus no young man would fell bush and cultivate land for himself, because he could not be assured of benefiting from the results of his labour. The proposal to allocate a section of land to each young man without land was considered a good proposal by most of the Matais themselves, and it is indeed difficult to see in what manner the cultivation of land by the Samoan can progress without this incentive. The policy is not being forced upon the Natives, but is being taken up in each district only with the concurrence and approval of the District Councils, and at present, out of 156 villages in Samoa, only about fifty have commenced any activity in this direction. Again I call your attention to the fact that an entirely identical system is now in operation in the Native Kingdom of Tonga, though your committee have not mentioned this fact in your comparison of Samoa with Tonga.

I cannot conclude my reply to your committee's representations on matters purely affecting the Samoans without stressing the fact that each individual item which has been advanced is entirely repudiated by the Samoans themselves through their District Councils and their Fono of Faipules.

PROHIBITION.

The policy of absolute prohibition for Western Samoa was the unanimous decision of the National Government of New Zealand (which represented all political parties) in 1919, and the present Government have no intention of altering the existing law, which is essential in the interests of the Samoan people. The policy has been imposed in pursuance of the mandate injunction that the supply of intoxicating spirits and beverages to the Natives shall be prohibited. But I cannot believe that the Natives themselves support your committee in this request for the repeal of the law prohibiting the open sale of alcoholic liquor.

LABOUR AND AGRICULTURE.

Your report upon these subjects is forwarded to me with the reservation that your committee as a whole cannot endorse it in full. The Planters' Association, when interviewing me at Apia, publicly disassociated themselves entirely from your movement. In short, they repudiated your committee. However, as you and the individual members of your committee have attacked the policy of the New Zealand Government in respect of their Reparation Estates in Western Samoa, and of the Samoan Administration in respect of the assistance granted to the Native copra-growers to market their produce, I deem it right to state the actual position regarding these two points for the information of the general public.

In the first place, the New Zealand Government, having regard to the terms of the mandate and to the future welfare of the indigenous people of Samoa, decided as a matter of considered policy to retain the fee-simple of the estates which they acquired in Samoa as part of their war-reparation payment. This policy was definitely stated in the first Mandate Report sent to the League of