

I have also taken a further step by endeavouring to get the Ali'i and Faipule (chiefs and orators) of districts to sign their names to a document accepting responsibility for nominating their Faipule when a vacancy occurs. This has not been entirely successful, as instances occur where chiefs apparently do not care to sign their names to a paper to give what they consider to be increased *pule*, or authority, to another chief, and in some cases I have not been able to get them to do so.

In selecting Faipule to fill a vacancy the method the Samoans have always hitherto preferred is for the suggestion as to the nominee to come in the first place from the Administrator, and then for the Ali'i and Faipule to discuss and agree among themselves, after which one or more chiefs come in to the Native Office and notify their approval.

The system of throwing the entire responsibility upon the Ali'i and Faipule to nominate their representatives has in one case caused a delay of eighteen months, and a decision has not yet been reached, so that I anticipate having to revert to the former method and make the first suggestion myself.

These progressive steps taken during my regime are in excess of what the law provides, but they are educational processes in the necessarily slow development of the Samoan people, and merely mark a very little advance towards that goal to which the Natives are being directed—viz., to some day stand alone and play their full part in controlling their own affairs. That goal is far distant, and at the present time it is not only unsafe but dangerous to introduce modern electoral methods for this backward people.

The Faipules are a thoroughly representative body, who know the wishes and needs of their people, whose welfare they do their best to promote.

The evidence of Asi Mama (at page 271) is instructive on this point. He was suggested as Faipule for the Vaimaugu district, and a meeting of the district took place to consider his appointment. A part of his district objected to his being appointed, but ultimately withdrew their objection, and his name was then sent on to the Administrator as a suitable person for the position. He was accordingly appointed by the Administrator.

We are satisfied that there is no foundation for this, the important charge made against the administration of Sir George Richardson. We are satisfied that he did consult the people of the district before appointing a Faipule and assured himself that the appointment would be an agreeable one to them. We are satisfied that this was also done during Colonel Tate's administration. We are satisfied that no complaint was ever made as to the method of the appointment of Faipules by the Administrator until after the meeting of October, 1926. It was then taken up by the Mau as a cry or slogan against the Administration.

It was urged by Mr. Baxter in his concluding speech that after the making of the Order of 1925 relating to District Councils and Village Committees the Administrator ought to have again gone through the process of ascertaining whether or not each of the existing Faipules was acceptable to his district. It is clear that the Samoan Amendment Act of 1923 contemplated the continuance in office of the existing Faipules. We cannot see any ground of complaint against the Administrator that he did not reconsider the appointment of all the Faipules. It is to be remembered that the amending Act confers on the Administrator the power to revoke the appointment of a Faipule at any time for any cause that he deems sufficient. As a fact, prior to the statutory provision the Administrator had revoked the appointments of Faipules whose conduct he did not approve of.

3. ALLEGED ACTS OF MISCONDUCT ON THE PART OF FAIPULES.

The third matter investigated by us was the following allegation: That the Faipules were guilty of misconduct in the performance of their duties and of interference with the duties of other Native officials, such as Native Magistrates (*fa'amasinos*), Agricultural Inspectors (*pulefa'atoagas*), and village officials (*pulenu'us*), see paragraph 12 of the petition to Parliament. A great deal of evidence was called under this heading, and, with two or three exceptions, every Faipule whose conduct was impugned by the evidence was called to answer the charge against him and to submit himself to cross-examination.

The first observation about the evidence called before us in support of this charge is that, generally speaking, it disclosed instances of a most trivial nature. All the alleged acts of misconduct which we were able to investigate were disproved, and, as we have said, nearly every Faipule against whom a charge was made, no matter how trivial, was called before us. This character of the charges against the Faipules is shown by a few extracts from the evidence to be presently given by us.