

When in the latitude of Mangaia we met with adverse winds, and the master of the "Torea" decided on calling at that island for trade purposes. I spent the day (the 17th) ashore, and learned much about the general condition of affairs there. The Rev. Mr. Harris, who has been the missionary in charge for the London Missionary Society during the last twenty years, kindly acted as interpreter with the natives, and explained the purposes for which I had come among them. They assembled in considerable number in front of the mission-house, with presents of fruit and food in token of welcome.

The number of healthy-looking children at the gathering was a pleasant and noticeable feature. The Mangaians are a robust, manly people, of the same race as the Maoris, and calling themselves by the same name, but with ruggedness toned down by a milder climate, and habits modified by the more attractive temperature of the fresh and salt water. Like the Maoris they are a proud people, with strong feelings and great determination of character. Their old tribal fights were marked for generations by the same savage passion and obstinacy as those of New Zealand.

The chiefs connected with the expulsion of Mr. Pearse—the trader into whose case I came more particularly to inquire—had prepared a written statement in anticipation of the visit of a man-of-war. I explained that my present visit was accidental, and that I should return soon to hold a public inquiry at which all concerned would be present. To save time, however, I accepted the statement on the understanding that it should be handed to the Rev. Mr. Hutchin, the Missionary at Rarotonga, to be translated and retained by him till Mr. Pearse's statement should also be in my possession. On my arrival here I found that Mr. Hutchin was absent in the mission ship "John Williams," on a distant inspecting tour; but Mr. Exham, the Acting British Consul, gave me a copy of Pearse's official complaint, and undertook to find a trustworthy interpreter for the papers given to me by the Natives.

I have received from Mr. Exham ready help, and have also been fortunate in meeting here the Rev. James Chalmers, of New Guinea, who was, for fourteen years, the Missionary at Rarotonga, and is now on a visit to obtain Rarotongan teachers for New Guinea. Mr. Chalmers returns to his distant charge by way of New Zealand, and will be a passenger on the steamer "Richmond," now hourly expected. The great confidence placed in him by both Natives and Europeans has rendered Mr. Chalmers's help especially valuable.

The existing native governments have grown up under missionary guidance, are somewhat theocratic in character, and take their tone in the different islands from the missionary for the time being. At Mangaia church-membership is an indispensable qualification for public life, from the King to the policeman. All church-members are also *ex officio* "policemen" (more properly, elders and deacons), and responsible for the due observance of the law. The officials thus comprise a large number of the adult male population. Their pay depends entirely on the fines levied for offences, the fines being divided among them. Originally these offences were breaches of moral law or of church discipline. To them are now added offences of a purely secular character, but the old penalty, suspension of church-membership "for breaking the law," still follows the fine. The suspension is regarded as a grave discredit by both chiefs and people, deprives the suspended of all civil privileges, and isolates him. This development of the old system and its application under new conditions, play a large part in the troubles at Mangaia where the old law is still stringently enforced.

The islands of the group differ from each other in their legislative and political arrangements. In Rarotonga the Arikis, or kings and queens, are supreme. At Mangaia the chiefs really rule, and make or unmake the Arikis at their pleasure. The Arikis there do not exercise any direct power, but, as they always represent old and illustrious families, their *prestige* is great. Their chief office is to communicate the will of the chiefs to the people. The chiefs make the laws. The Judges (Magistrates) administer them, with few checks and no regular forms of procedure or record. The "policemen" give effect to their decisions. At Mangaia two kings were ruling the same tribe; but one of them, being found guilty of aiding Pearse and the other traders contrary to law, has been publicly deposed. This involves the loss also of his church-membership, which seems to be regarded as a much the more serious of the two.

The traders at Mangaia are only three in number. One of them, a Mr. Craig, has been less than three months on the island, having gone there to take temporary charge of the buildings and property left by Mr. Pearse on his expulsion. Mr. Craig, the day before my arrival, had successfully amputated the hand of a native, damaged by rashly using dynamite to catch fish. He was less successful in dealing with a troublesome back tooth for the Rev. Mr. Harris, having, after many energetic efforts, broken it at the stump and caused the reverend gentleman much pain, from which he was still suffering when I saw him. This did not prevent Mr. Harris helping me, though it made him unable to leave his own house.

These incidents will not, I trust, be considered trivial by your Excellency. I mention them as casting a useful side-light on the relations, under trying circumstances, between the traders, the natives, and the missionary, who are all at violent issue, and make the most bitter formal complaints against each other. As to the natives, all the traders agree that their behaviour is courteous and kindly. The traders are on the best terms with them personally, but complain bitterly of the laws they are expected to obey, and of the humiliation to which they are subjected by the native methods of giving the laws effect.

The second trader is a Mr. Ward, connected with the "Société Commerciale," a German company established at Tahiti. He has been only two months at Mangaia, and on arrival was refused either land or building—in effect, boycotted by law. The natives took charge of his goods and placed them in a native building. They still remain there, though he is allowed access to them for inspection and for removal to the Market-house when that building is opened for business on a vessel's arrival. The third European is a Mr. Brown, in Pearse's employ when the latter was removed from the island.