

complaint of such proceedings is made, the complainant is quickly turned into a victim, being sure of fine for "lying statements," "malicious statements," or some such charge made against him.

I should have hesitated to refer to these charges against the police, and the whole long-established system, if it were not for the persistency and the circumstantiality with which they were related to me, but, above all, if I had not fortunately had the most convincing proof on two points.

The first of these was the deliberate torture of girls and women by forcing them to stand (bare-foot, of course) for long hours on the rounded end of an inverted *paté* (drum), about 4in. in breadth and 18in. to 20in. in length. A stick is also held in the hands, which are raised to the full length of the arms above the head. In this position they are watched by the policeman, who strikes the arms sharply at the elbow if there is any attempt to lower them, and the heels and ankles as sharply if there is any attempt at movement in their direction. Under these circumstances a confession is sure to be obtained. It is reported to the Judge next day—for this "questioning" is always done late in the night—and the penalty is at once fixed. So certain was I of my information on that point that I charged them with it at a public meeting, and it was there as publicly admitted to be true by Meringatangi, a Judge and a very bigoted church-member, but I believe an honest man. He sought to extenuate by adding that it had not been done since the British flag was hoisted. My information is to the contrary; and why it should have stopped then I do not clearly see. But I believe and hope that we shall hear no more of it in the time to come.

The second point is, that I was able one night, at half-past 10, to surprise three of these policemen "questioning" (it is their own phrase) half a dozen frightened girls in the low, dark hovel used for this purpose. The three were squatting solemnly on the ground. The girls were crouched against the low wall. The only light was a small, smoky candle-nut torch, and the object was to get a criminating confession and, of course, secure a fine. The possibilities of very grave abuse under such conditions are plain. I rated the men soundly, told them such things would not be allowed under the flag now over them, and that henceforth their inquiries must be conducted in open daylight and where all could witness their proceedings. The girls were at once released; but it was necessary to guard against a recurrence after my departure from the island.

For this purpose I called the Government together at once, on the 21st August, to give effect to the law of the 17th (No. 1) intended to provide a remedy for the state of affairs that there was then too much reason to believe existed, though not susceptible of satisfactory proof.

I enclose for your Excellency's information the minute of proceedings on that occasion (Enclosure No. 10). It was resolved to take the police entirely under the control of the Government, who would be held responsible for their conduct; also, that no man should in future be a policeman merely on his becoming a church-member, but that he should be appointed by the Government, and entered on the minutes in due form. To reduce the number to half a dozen, and make a thorough change, would have been desirable; but, having no funds wherewith to pay regular salaries, it was impossible to interfere with that part of the existing arrangements. The precautions taken will, I hope, materially lessen, if they do not at once entirely abolish, abuses; and I have asked Mr. Charles Ward, a trader in whom I have confidence, to be good enough to forward to me any complaints from the natives who may not have the courage to send them direct. I have also great hopes that the Government will before long acquire courage, and be ready to act for themselves.

Before leaving I also laid formal complaint against one of the chief policemen—*Taapiti*—for having wantonly and grossly ill-treated some women on the 31st December last. The evidence was very strong; but I had to leave before the case could be heard. Whatever the result, it will teach the people that the police can be made responsible for abuses of their power.

Proper records of the proceedings in Courts of law must hereafter be kept (sections 12 and 13), and this alone will be a great safeguard.

Section 14 was the subject of much doubt and debate, but on my pointing out that three great chiefs then present were not church-members, and ought not to be in the Council if this law did not pass, the section was adopted without dissent. The three chiefs were King John, Vaipo, and Pute, all expelled in connection with the troubles arising from the Pearse affair, and who have declined since to return.

The Rev. Mr. Harris expressed himself to me as being well pleased with these changes, which would save him much and serious trouble. I was well pleased to receive this assurance, for there can be no doubt that it is in Mr. Harris's power, by encouraging the natives in their new course, to do a great deal to insure its success. The old system was not of his making. It existed from the first, and was perhaps suitable in the earliest days of the mission. But the abuses developed seem to me inherent in the attempt to enforce church-discipline by secular law, and to establish a Government under Church control. In other islands the system has been much moderated or entirely abandoned by the missionary when that missionary was a European, though rigidly enforced when a native teacher is placed in charge. In Mangaia the system has been suffered to last longer; but I hope that the end of it has now been seen.

Tepou and his colleagues of the Commission, seeing what had been done by me previous to their arrival at Mangaia, did not hold any official inquiry. The result of their observations will, however, be embodied in a report which I am informed that Tepou is preparing for Makea.

It will be necessary now to remain here for a few months, till affairs are finally settled; and, as Parliament will probably have been prorogued in New Zealand before this arrives, I hope to have your Excellency's sanction in postponing my visit accordingly. Meanwhile I propose to visit Aitutaki. The *Arikis* and chiefs of that island, who went with me to Mangaia, are anxious to have affairs put on a sound basis in their island. No trouble is likely to be experienced in this, the rigour of the old system having always been materially modified by the influence of the Rev. W. Lawrence, the resident missionary, but now temporarily stationed in Rarotonga. The work in the island during