

## Enclosure.

SIR,—

I have the honour to enclose letter from Queen Makea and letter from Judge Te Pou thanking Dr. Andrews for the kind services he has rendered to the natives of this island during your ship's stay.

I shall feel obliged by your giving the letters to Dr. Andrews, and I take the opportunity of adding a request that Dr. Andrews would kindly send me at his earliest convenience a report on the health and condition of the natives of this island. His opportunities of investigation have been very great, and a report would be proportionally valuable.

I am also asked by Makea to express her own and her people's appreciation of the courtesy and kindness shown by yourself and your officers. To this you will permit me to add that the excellent behaviour of your men during an unusually prolonged stay has been to the natives a very gratifying example.

I have, &amp;c.,

FREDERICK J. MOSS,

British Resident.

Lieutenant and Commander Bain, R.N., H.M.S. "Ringdove."

## No. 4.

Mr. F. J. Moss to His Excellency the GOVERNOR.

MY LORD,—

British Residency, Rarotonga, 9th September, 1893.

Having given considerable pains to get accurate and sound information respecting the past and present institutions of the Maori people of these islands, I have compiled the enclosed paper, which I hope your Excellency will find of sufficient interest to excuse its unavoidable length. Submitting it for your Excellency's consideration,

I have, &amp;c.,

FREDERICK J. MOSS,

British Resident.

His Excellency the Earl of Glasgow, G.C.M.G., &amp;c.

## Enclosure.

THE MAORI POLITY IN THE ISLAND OF RAROTONGA.

By F. J. MOSS, British Resident.

On the 19th of August, 1893, died Mana-Rangi, chief of the Vakatini branch of the Makea family. He was the son of the great chief Te Pou, whose portrait forms the frontispiece to the Rev. John Williams's "Missionary Enterprise," published in 1835 or 1836, who protected the Tahitian teacher Papeiha, landed under great difficulties in 1823 to open the first Christian mission in Rarotonga. Mana-Rangi was then a young man, and took an active part in the protection of the teacher. His age must therefore have been between eighty-five and ninety. His memory was clear to the last, and I had frequent opportunities of obtaining from him, through an interpreter, much interesting information as to the past, and gaining a more clear idea of the present which has sprung from it. Mana-Rangi was the last intelligent living link connecting the old times with the new, and his death seems a fitting occasion to put on record as complete a sketch of the Maori polity as my imperfect knowledge will permit.

In 1823, when the mission was begun, Rarotonga was, as now, divided among three tribes, each with an independent Ariki at its head. Frequent and sanguinary wars, cannibalism, and the most cruel punishments and practices were the prevailing characteristics. The destruction of life and of food was continual. Polygamy was the rule, with much intermarrying of near blood relations. Conjugal fidelity was enforced among the women, but girls before marriage—though not till of full age—were allowed the greatest liberty. Men approaching them before full age were punished with extreme severity, and very often with death. Marriage was usually with a view to promote the aggrandisement of the family or tribe, and often against the feeling of the parties most concerned. There was no divorce, but the husband might put away his wife for adultery, and administer club law to the male offender.

The family—a group of agnates and adopted children—was then, as now, the unit in the State. The authority of the head of the family over lands and possessions was absolute, and carried with it as absolute a consequent control over the members. Community of property was the family rule, though a member might cultivate for himself any particular portion, and keep the produce for his own use—if he could.

The gradations of rank were definite, authority was strictly maintained, but intercourse between persons of all classes was, and still is, marked by the most perfect freedom. Every one knew and kept his own position; but to outward appearance, or to the casual observer, the Ariki, in a mixed assembly, was scarcely to be distinguished from the humblest of the people. None took permanent service in any capacity, and domestic service in our sense of the term was unknown.

Land was the great object of ambition. Other forms of property were few. The land carried with it the obligation to support the family, and could not be diverted from that object.

The various families were united with kindred families under a chief of the Ngati, known by that chief's ancestral name. The Ngatis in their turn were united under the Ariki of the *vaka* (or whole tribe). The *vaka* (canoe) consisted, in fact, of the Ariki and his or her *kiatos*, a name derived from the spars which connected the canoe with the outrigger (or *ama*). The *kiatos* thus consisted of all the tribe excepting the Ariki where the tribe was referred to, of all the Ngati excepting the chief, and of all the family excepting the head, when the term was applied to either of them respectively.