The whole tribe, or *vaka*, was known by the name of the Ariki who first led its ancestors to Rarotonga. Mataiapos (or great chiefs), Rangatiras, Komonos, and, lastly, the Ungas, constituted the tribe. Each of these will be referred to hereafter.

The heathen Church and State were practically one. Sometimes the Ariki himself would be the priest, and the awful power of *tapu* was acknowledged and felt by all. The *tapu* itself often did good service in the absence of positive public law, and was the most formidable weapon which Church and State could wield.

In a community so organized, and with property so limited, the rule of the father of the family sufficed for all ordinary needs. Public laws scarcely existed, and the few relating to land and its incidents were well understood. There were no Judges and no police. Councils of greater or less importance and scope were convened in accordance with the subject to be considered. The person calling the Council would be expected to provide a suitable feast. No one presided at the meeting. No records were attempted; and the opposition of any powerful chief would prevent a decision, which would only be, in that case, impracticable, and lead to trouble.

Contracts were unknown. If land were given, or any other event of importance occurred, a feast gave the stamp and due publicity. The installation of an Ariki was marked with great ceremony, and certain families officiated, by hereditary right, on such occasions. In the case of a Mataiapo (or great noble) the funeral feast was followed by another in which the head of the best and largest pig was set aside for the successor. If taken without dispute the succession was thereby publicly made known. As a rule, disputes, if any, were arranged beforehand. This practice is still observed, and in nothing is more scrupulous care shown than in the distribution of food among the guests in due order of rank and precedence. The pig's head goes invariably to the person of highest rank among them.

In 1827 or 1828 the Rev. Mr. Pitman became Resident Missionary in Rarotonga, and was visited by the Rev. John Williams from Raiatea. They formed a code of laws, but did not attempt to embody in them any of the Maori usages with reference to land or inheritance. The new code related to persons, and chiefly to moral offences or breaches of the Church law. A Judge was appointed for each division of the island, and trial by jury decreed, but, so far as I can learn, never carried out. The Judges were assisted by a numerous body of police appointed by the Ariki, enrolled in the records of the Church, and consisting only of Church members. This police, irresponsible and under no direct control, incessantly spied upon and harassed the people. The fines that they could extract from delinquents formed their sole pay, and were divided at stated intervals between the Ariki, the Judge, and the police. As an episode of that time, Mana-Rangi, one of the most respected and staunch supporters of the Church throughout his life, assured me that the revolt of the people of which we read—the repeated burnings of the house of Tupe, the Judge, and the determined attempts to revert to heathenism—were only caused by the brutality with which the new laws were enforced by the Judge and the police. The most severe public floggings and confinement in wells dug in the ground were common punishments for offences which the new law had created, but which public sentiment had long regarded as no offences at all. Mana-Rangi afterwoods took office as Judge, at the request of a new Ariki, for the express purpose of putting an end to this state of things, and held that office, with the love and respect of his own people, and of the foreign residents, till age compelled him to retire. I have referred to this at some length, because it seems to me that this terrible police, with its constant espionage, has done much, both in Rarotonga and in all the islands, to counteract the good which the missionaries themselves achieved; they kept the place in perpetual hot water and childish strife. In many obvious ways they lowered the tone and demoralised the people. In Avarua there were six sections, and some of these sections numbered as many as fifty police each, while the whole population of the district, men women and children, could not at any time during the last seventy years have exceeded 2,000. It is now probably about 750 or 800, and the police, failing fines, have happily fallen to three for the whole district.

The circumstances of the island induced the Mission to establish three separate stations—one with each Ariki. This was probably unavoidable, but it crystallized the old divisions, and they exist still in all their pristine vigour.

The sovereignty of an Ariki was not and is not territorial. It is claimed over all his or her people, whether in the district or beyond. Thus, only last year a crowd of 250 Mangaians came on a visit from their island (120 miles distant) to the people of Rarotonga. While here, the Mangaian Judge, who was one of the visitors, held court, and fined Mangaians long resident in Rarotonga for offences of drinking, concubinage, &c., and took the fines with him for division among the police and Judges of Mangaia.

The population of Rarotonga in 1827 must have been at the least 6,000. John Williams speaks then of a congregation of 4,000, and of schools with 3,000 on the rolls. To-day the population of the whole island is probably under 2,000. Why they should hold their own under war and cannibalism, and fade away under the blessings of peace and civilisation, has never been made clear. Some of the reasons alleged would apply equally to the negro races of the world, who yet increase and flourish. But that some undiscovered cause has sapped the vitality of the Polynesian race is too evident. Rum, in their case, and especially in Rarotonga, most assuredly is not the cause, whatever other there may be.

Turning now to the present time,—

(1.) The constitutional unit is still the family (the *kopu tangata*), which flourishes in all its vigour, though causes incidental to extended production and trade are quietly sapping its influence, and must lead to its decay. It gives a refuge to all, and under it there cannot be pauperism, which is an inestimable gain. But this family communism kills energy and enterprise in a people naturally clever and adventurous, and while it lasts no adequate material progress can be expected.

Within the family—with often two or three generations living closely together or under the