

ment communicated to Mr. Nelson that thousands of coconut-trees were being cut down was a grotesque exaggeration, and referred to the few coconut-trees which it was necessary to cut down in order to provide open spaces and space for the houses in reconstructed villages. With regard to the letter from Mr. Nelson's employee, it is clear from the letter itself that a mistake was made, and the matter had been corrected before the letter was transmitted to Mr. Nelson. The letter says,—

The Native Department issued orders that all Samoans living in the villages near Apia and to which they do not belong must return to their own villages unless they have permanent employment. We supplied the said Department with information to this effect for all our labour thus notified, but they must have overlooked that, as two or three of my best and permanent workers did not turn up one morning, and I learnt they were in gaol. After about a week of free Government keep we were able to get them out again, and they are now back at work. Leagi and Lia were both here in Captain Kruse's time, and as they were very steady workers I was anxious not to lose them.

During his absence from Samoa Mr. Nelson wrote and received friendly private letters to and from the Administrator. The letters from the Administrator to Mr. Nelson were produced by Mr. Nelson's counsel before the Joint Committee of Parliament which sat at Wellington, and copies of Mr. Nelson's letters to the Administrator were produced before us. These letters will be found in Exhibit No. 53. These letters contain no trace of any disagreement between the Administrator and Mr. Nelson, and render it highly improbable that there had been any disagreement between them before he left for Sydney as to any important matter of administration. Mr. Nelson, however, says that there was hardly a point which he raised in Wellington that he had not previously spoken to the Administrator about. This is denied in the evidence of the Administrator, who says that there was prior to Mr. Nelson's departure from Samoa no disagreement between them on any important matter of administration. Three cases of so-called banishments included in one Order were mentioned by Mr. Nelson to the Administrator. He was probably interested in these Natives, as they came from a village near Mr. Nelson's former home in Savai'i. The discussion with respect to these cases involved no general principle relating to banishments.

On the 1st September, 1926, Mr. Nelson had an interview at Wellington with the Prime Minister of New Zealand and the Minister of External Affairs, the Hon. Mr. Nosworthy, and at this meeting it was arranged that Mr. Nosworthy should pay an official visit to Samoa before the next session of the New Zealand Parliament. Upon Mr. Nelson's arrival in Samoa on the 24th September, 1926, he did not inform the Administrator of his interview with the Prime Minister, nor of the complaints made by him at that interview relating to Sir George's administration. On the 26th September, 1926, a public reception was given to Mr. Nelson at Apia at which the Administrator was present. At that meeting, in welcoming him, the Administrator made a speech highly eulogistic of Mr. Nelson. A short extract will indicate the nature of the speech: "Mr. Nelson as a colleague has my whole-hearted sympathy and friendship, and I hope that I shall always be able to retain that friendship long after I have left Samoa."

Mr. Nelson in reply made a speech from which this is a short extract: "The spirit in which you have come here to-night with your worthy consort to honour a private citizen and a Native of Samoa shows your sense of fair play and good British sport. Your kindly letters to me while away from my home, your very thoughtful telegram of welcome on the day before my arrival, and your wonderful speech to-night all go to prove your tactfulness and kindness of heart. One cannot help feeling more confident than ever that a representative of the people may represent public opinion before you and the community without inciting personal animosity. I thank you again, and ask you to accept my sincerest goodwill and respect in your social and official life in Samoa. For Lady Richardson I pray that God may grant her health and strength to long remain here to comfort and encourage you in your official duties, as well as take the lead in our social life."

The following is the evidence of Mr. Nelson relating to his action with respect to the calling of the two meetings which will be presently referred to:—

Had you told the Administrator at that time that you had laid charges against the Administration before the Prime Minister and the Minister of External Affairs?—No.

And the charges that you made before them were that the Administration had been unfair in their treatment of the Samoans, were they not?—Yes, that is right.