

laws. This is what I say. I wish you to protect the people from being downtrodden. I expect you, also, Gudgeon, to protect the people. That is why I wished to come to this meeting. Let the laws be real laws, not charge a man from the mouth only or any other means, but only under proper laws. If the people have to die, well, let them die under proper laws. This is all I have to say on that subject. Colonel Gudgeon and Mr. Mills have heard that I wish Colonel Gudgeon to weep for the people.

Hon. Mr. Mills: In reply to what has been said, let me say that the Government always insists upon the law being properly administered, obeyed, and carried out, so that it matters not whether a man is rich or poor, he is in the same position under the law. Colonel Gudgeon has his duty to perform in seeing that the law is properly administered, and I believe there must have been some little misunderstanding, which I hope will be all cleared away, like a dark cloud before the sunlight, and all will be clear and fair again, and the laws will be properly administered.

Tai: There is some feeling over this land trouble. Colonel Gudgeon knows of it. If he does not like to attend to it this day, he may leave it until another time. Colonel Gudgeon, I say, knows of this land trouble dispute between two men. This is the nature of the trouble: I am one of the disputants in this trouble. The trouble is not yet settled. This is what is not good in it. Judge Meringitangi is a bad man.

Colonel Gudgeon: When I heard the case you are talking about there were no Land Courts established, and I heard it only for the sake of peace. Now that a Land Court has been established for all the islands, that Court will come here and deal with the case as if it had never been heard before, and will come to a decision, and will put the person whom they find to be the owner in possession of the land, and survey it, so that his right may never be disputed again.

Meringitangi: Gudgeon, you heard what I said on a certain day on one of the occasions of your coming here, out on the verandah. I told you on that day, the Ariki did not tell you, the Governor did not tell you, no one told you except me. I spoke of the bravery of my ancestors, and you, Gudgeon, told me that a man who was brave and courageous in war was above a king, above a governor, above a judge, or any other similar person. And these were good words.

Colonel Gudgeon (to interpreter): Kindly tell Meringitangi that he altogether misunderstood what I said on that day.

Colonel Gudgeon (to Hon. Mr. Mills): What I said to him on that day was that all Arikis owed their rank in the first place to bravery in war, and that it was war that made them; that in early times all men who had raised themselves above others had done so by their bravery, and that when these men were removed they were removed by braver men. I also told him that these old times had passed, and I thought he knew it.

Meringitangi: On account of these words, I thought it was good when a man like Tai made trouble about land to sit down on him.

Daniela Tangitoru came in at this point and warmly greeted the Minister, saying he wished to make him a presentation of food and mats.

Hon. Mr. Mills: I wish to say that we have had a very pleasant day, and that our meeting must do good. A great deal of what has been said is new to us, and I know my friends have all listened very attentively to those who have spoken. You are not strangers to us. We look on you as part and parcel of our great Empire. The administration of these islands is from New Zealand, and that is the only difference. I have to thank you one and all, on behalf of the Right Hon. the Premier, my colleagues, myself, and the members of both Houses of Parliament, for the careful and considerate way that you have listened to what I have had to say to you. I may add that I hope that before many years are past the relations between the islands will be very much closer, and such as will make for the benefit of us all. We are sorry we have to leave to-night, but we shall carry away with us very pleasant remembrances. *Kia orana katoa.*

At the close of the conference the party were entertained by Daniela in the Courthouse. We then returned on board, and left for the Island of Mauke at 5.30 p.m. Hitherto there has been no Resident Agent on Mangaia, but arrangements have now been completed to transfer Mr. J. T. Large from Aitutaki to Mangaia, and it is anticipated that his advent to the latter will bring about a very necessary improvement in the conduct of affairs in the island. The Native judgships in Mangaia will then be abolished.

MAUKE.

We arrived at Mauke about 7.30 a.m. on Thursday, the 30th April, after a run of 116 miles from Mangaia, and anchored off the western shore of the island. Mauke is low and flat, and a belt of ironwood (*toa*) skirting the island obscured to some extent the cocoanut-palms which are usually one of the most prominent and first-observed features in the landscape of a Pacific island. This ironwood was formerly found in large quantities, and was much sought after by traders. Mauke, like Mangaia, has a fringing reef, which, however, does not lend itself to the process of crossing in canoes that obtains in Mangaia. A landing has to be effected on the edge of the reef itself, and one reaches dry land by wading or being carried through the shallow water covering the depression in the coral between the outer edge and the shore. There is a landing at the northern side of the island also, and the Resident Commissioner has arranged for a road to be constructed to connect this with the western side. When this is completed it will be possible to ship goods at almost any time, as it has been found that when the western landing is inaccessible through bad weather the sea at the northern side remains quite smooth. Mauke also has its *makatea*, or raised coral area, but it merges almost imperceptibly into the volcanic formation of the centre, and the general level of the island all over is about 60 ft. above the sea. The island is small, its area being only about four square miles and a half; but it is remarkably fertile, and, notwithstanding that, in common with the other islands of the Group, it is very imperfectly planted, it exports 100 tons of copra and 3,500 boxes of oranges annually, an output that exceeds that of Atiu, which is six or seven times its size. There is no Resident Agent on Mauke, but the duties of Postmaster are performed by an intelligent young Native named Mana. The population of the island is about 370.