

that is the Tereora School, which is subsidized by the Cook Islands Government. I submit that English should be taught in all the schools. All that is necessary is that the Natives should be taught to read and write and also simple arithmetic; to this should be added a knowledge of trades, such as carpentering, plumbing, and blacksmith work. The nuns of the Roman Catholic Convent have done remarkably good work in teaching the Native children English, and they also teach the girls sewing.

If a system of education is established it should, in my opinion, be not only paid for by the New Zealand Government—for the limited revenue of the Cook Islands could not stand the strain—but the education itself should be left entirely in the hands of the Cook Islands Administration.

The London Missionary Society, I understand, desire that all the properties held by them for educational purposes should be purchased by the New Zealand or the Cook Islands Government. I respectfully submit that if it should be decided to establish a system of education such as I have indicated, the ownership of the properties now in the possession of the London Missionary Society should be determined by the Land Titles Court, when I think it would be found that such properties belong to the Natives.

#### *Bush-beer.*

I think it expedient to make the following remarks upon this subject:—

The Natives have long been in the habit of manufacturing and drinking a beverage called bush-beer. There are three kinds—orange, banana, and pineapple—all of which are intoxicating. Orange-beer is manufactured by taking fallen ripe oranges, squeezing them into a tub, adding other ingredients, and leaving it for some days to ferment. The process is practically the same in the other two beers. On Sundays, principally, the brewer of the tub invites his friends into the mountain to partake of the brew, and the results will be frequently seen on Sunday evenings in some of the villages. Although endeavours have been made by my predecessors and myself to stop this practice it is very difficult to do so.

As you know, the Cook Islands law does not permit (and rightly) a Native to import, purchase, or receive any European liquor; the only means whereby he could procure it would be through the Collector of Customs, who is solely responsible for the administration of this Act, by permit from the doctors for medical purposes, or by permit from the Resident Commissioner. I may here state that during my three years' administration I have never issued one permit, nor have I assisted any one to procure one. I have seen it stated in newspapers that I personally granted permits.

I would draw your attention to the fact that the London Missionary Society has been working on these Islands for eighty years, and although they possessed during that period very great influence over the Natives, they failed absolutely in suppressing bush-beer drinking. The Island of Rarotonga alone possesses 2,600 Natives, and I submit that without large expenditure to maintain an efficient body of European police, which the Cook Islands Administration cannot afford, this evil will never be totally suppressed. It is not generally known that the only force the Resident Commissioner has to support him is one European constable and eight Native constables, and it must be evident that with this force the evil cannot be altogether abolished. By inflicting substantial penalties, in the shape of imprisonment or fines, which have been paid or carried out, I have endeavoured to suppress it, and I am glad to be able to point to the figures in this and my previous two annual reports showing that the penalties inflicted have not been without a beneficial effect. In 1909–10 there were seventy-two cases, involving 258 defendants; in 1910–11 there were eighty-nine cases, involving 233 defendants; in 1911–12 there were fifty-six cases, involving 113 defendants. These figures show that the drinking of bush-beer is decreasing.

There is no doubt that the bush-beer drinking was directly the cause of the only two serious crimes committed during the past two years, both of which occurred on a Sunday. It may seem strange to place in writing the fact that after eighty years' Christian teaching by the London Missionary Society 90 per cent. of the crime is committed on Sunday, and the sworn evidence in the Noo-ongo case will show that 80 per cent. of the witnesses left church for the bush-beer tub.

I may conclude by saying that the drinking of bush-beer in my three years' administration has been less than it ever was before. This can be substantiated by Court facts and by the testimony of old and highly respected inhabitants of the Cook Islands, both European and Native.

#### *Labour.*

In my last annual report I mentioned that the question of labour for shipping and plantation purposes was causing some anxiety owing to the prosperous condition of the Natives, they finding under the improved conditions their own plantation-work more payable than hitherto.

I am glad to be able to inform you now that the labour question, as far as the Polynesian is concerned, has been practically settled by the introduction of picture-shows, no less than four being established on the Island of Rarotonga, and as much as £150 a month is being paid by the proprietors of the picture-shows for the use of the films. The Native now chooses to amuse himself by attending every night, and additional money being therefore required by him to supply his desire, he is more anxious to seek employment in the shipping and other directions, in addition to which he gives attention to his own plantation.

I stated previously that I was totally opposed to the introduction of Asiatic labour in any form. I am more convinced than ever that the strictest supervision should be exercised by the authorities now that it is within measureable distance of the opening of the Panama Canal. Since my last report Chinese and Japanese have been flocking in to the French Islands which are in a direct line to Panama, and only two days' steam from the Cook Islands. Fortunately the Resident Commissioner has the power to exclude Chinese and other Asiatics from the British possessions in the Cook Islands, and just so long as I remain Resident Commissioner it is my intention to strictly enforce the law of exclusion.