

moral suasion, and punishment have all failed to do more than minimize the practice. Opinions have differed, and I suppose will continue differ, as to whether it is a serious vice. Lieut.-Colonel Gudgeon evidently did not think it was, as he imposed very light fines—5s. in many cases, rarely more than 10s. Money, however, was worth much more to the Natives then. The Rev. J. J. K. Hutchin declared that this was equivalent to giving a license to drink, but Colonel Gudgeon apparently remained unconvinced. Captain Smith inflicted heavier fines—from £1 to £2. When I arrived here I made a point of discussing this question with Rev. Mr. James, then missionary, inviting his co-operation and asking for suggestions. He admitted the difficulties, and could get no further than increased penalties. I decided to try that course, and after a warning from the Bench made it a rule to impose a fine of £2 for a first offence, and the maximum penalty allowed by law—*i.e.*, £5 (section 279, Licensing Act, 1908)—for any second offence within six months. There were three or four cases in which I had to inflict the maximum fine, yet I am doubtful whether it has had any real or lasting effect, though I am assured by other people that it has.

The figures I have given of the convictions for six months are very nearly equal to those for the whole of the previous year, and we have yet to cope with the pineapple season. Except for the temporary appointments I have referred to, the Police Force is the same in number and personnel as in the previous year, and I have no reason to suppose that they did not do their duty then, as I believe them to be doing it now, always with the limitation that the Native policeman, with his infinitesimal pay, is practically a volunteer, and, subject as he is to local and family influences, needs to be a man of considerable energy and force of character to efficiently and impartially carry out his duties, and men possessing such qualities are not easy to obtain. A second European constable, as suggested by you, would, of course, be a great help, but if bush-beer drinking *can* be put down altogether it will, in my opinion, be necessary, in order to effectually attempt it, to make the offence punishable by imprisonment without option of a fine if the Court thinks that advisable, and it will be necessary to have at least four white policemen, one for each main settlement (about five miles apart), and they should be mounted men, as obviously foot men cannot efficiently patrol more than the actual settlements. That is for Rarotonga alone. Bush-beer drinking goes on in the other islands also, notably at Mangaia. Little is heard of it because there are few white residents, and it has not led to any serious crime, but it exists nevertheless. Residents Agents, with their Native police, do their best to suppress it, and in my opinion do wonderfully well under the circumstances.

To return to Rarotonga: Four mounted police would, I suppose, cost somewhere about £800 a year, which expense is not, to my mind, warranted. I would prefer to continue the attempt to keep the evil within bounds. If a second white constable is decided upon would it not be practicable to lend to the Islands a mounted police officer during the orange season—say, from May to August, inclusive? In this way the benefit of an experienced man, otherwise difficult to get, would be had at a minimum of expense during the time when the evil is most prevalent. It is true that liquor is made during the pineapple season—say, from middle of November till February—but I am advised that the amount is comparatively small both because the fruit is scarce and more valuable than oranges, and because the liquor is more troublesome to make.

I have, I fear, been prolix upon this particular subject, but in view of the attention recently directed to it I desired to fully set out the results of my observation and experience. I quote a paragraph from Mr. Moss's report previously referred to (A.-3, 1891, page 20: "Careful inquiry leads me to believe that early sexual excesses, the introduction of new diseases, the absence of healthy mental stimulus, and the too sudden adoption of European dwellings, habits, and clothing are doing far more than intoxicating liquor to destroy the race." That is equally true to-day. I shall have a little to say on the subject of sexual excesses and other matters referred to by Mr. Moss later on in my report.

In conclusion, bush-beer drinking is not greatly noticeable in public. I have seen very little indeed of it personally—an odd case along the road or at the gathering outside the picture-shows is the extent of my own experience. If it had been so greatly prevalent in the villages, as I have seen it asserted, it is strange that I have not noticed it more, seeing that my attention had been so strongly directed to the practice.

WHETHER THERE IS ANY EVIDENCE THAT EUROPEANS ARE FREQUENTLY SEEN DRUNK IN THE STREETS.

I am satisfied that such a thing would be an extremely rare occurrence. I have never seen a drunken European myself, but I have heard of two cases. One I have already referred to; the other was a member of the crew of a vessel, who was put on board and left with his ship. The number of Europeans in Rarotonga who are prone to excess is very limited. They are well known, and I have already shown that care is taken to limit their supply of liquor. They or others may overindulge in the privacy of their homes or plantations, but that there is no law to prevent so long as no annoyance is caused to the public.

SMUGGLING.

I have already quoted the Collector of Customs' opinion. So far as Rarotonga is concerned I do not see how the smuggling of liquor can be carried on to any extent. All baggage is inspected for Customs, hence smuggled liquor would need to be carried on the person. The Native's ordinary attire of shirt and trousers or shirt and *pareu* does not readily lend itself to this, and strict watch is kept on their landing. A surprise search was made by the Collector of Customs last week. Each labourer returning by "Moana" was called upon to submit to personal search for liquor, but nothing was found. I do not feel so confident about some of the outlying islands