

Natives do not live on this island except for short periods when collecting the nuts. The coconut-palms now look well here, but the coconuts have been blown off and washed away, as in the other islands.

At the second meeting with the Natives I told them that I had had a good look round the principal islands, and I thought that—

1. The present settlement is in an unhealthy place, and as some of them had started settlement on the windward side of the island, having an eastern aspect, and on high land instead of the present western one on low land infested with mosquitoes, and as their houses were mostly all now down, I recommended them not to put them up again in the same place, but at the new settlement on the eastern side of the island. Dr. Maclurkin visited the site with me, and he, I think, will report favourably upon it. They all agreed to shift the settlement except Laka, who is a Mataiapo and represents 120 people (the population of Pukapuka is 500), who said that he would like to live on at his end of the present settlement (he has just put up a new coral house), which is on a sandy spit and seems a healthy place. I told him I did not see any objection, but that I did not think the Government would help him in the way of water as I expected the Government were going to do for others.

2. The water at the present settlement is bad, being brackish and got from wells on the beach, into which a good deal of the surface dirt may be washed, and the water is taken from the wells by buckets; some of them may be dirty. I told them that I would submit to you that a shed to form a catchment and two concrete tanks to be built at the new settlement, and then I said I did not think they would ever be short of good drinking-water. I asked about the land for them at the new settlement, and they told me that they could arrange that among themselves. Ura said that he would give a piece of land to the Government to erect the shed and tanks on. I therefore submit that, as this is an urgent matter, this work be taken in hand this year. The material, with a carpenter (or arrangement might be made with Mr. Neilson), might go up in December, or sooner, when the "Huanui" is expected to return to Pukapuka. If the Government put up the shed and tanks at the new settlement, soon the Natives, I am sure, will follow. The Natives have promised to give their labour free to erect the tanks, but I think that the Government should find them in food while at work. The Natives might be allowed to use the shed for any purpose they like. I propose a shed 64 ft. long, 30 ft. wide, and 10 ft. high, the two tanks to be of ferro-concrete of 5,000 gallons each in capacity. I estimate the cost of the shed and tanks at £500. An inch of rainfall on the roof of the shed would give about 1,150 gallons of water. It would take $8\frac{1}{2}$ in. to fill the two tanks.

3. Now, there are about 500 people on this island, more than it can carry properly, among whom there are many strong young men (doing very little and simply eating up the coconuts), who should obtain employment in some of the other islands—say, Malden or Rarotonga. I do not recommend Malden, as by sending labour to Malden it is not advancing the Cook Islands in any way, especially Rarotonga, where labour is much needed. I therefore submit that a piece of land be obtained at Rarotonga for the Pukapuka people, and that forty or fifty young men, with their families, be assisted down by the next trip of the "Huanui" to Rarotonga, where plenty of work is to be had, leaving the older men at Pukapuka to make the copra.

4. The Natives wanted information about a debt of £150 or so they are supposed to owe to a certain Mr. Allen, of Samoa, for goods supplied to them. They say that they had some 10 tons of copra made ready for him, but it all got washed away in the hurricane. I told them to tell Mr. Allen when he came along, if there was any trouble about the debt, to make his claim on them through the Resident Commissioner at Rarotonga.

I advised them to make plenty of hats and mats, as they would find a ready sale for them at Rarotonga. I also told them that I thought that they should keep the proper day as Sunday, as in the old Mission days, as they were now the only people in the Group who kept Saturday.

There seems to be very few fish about Pukapuka. We left Pukapuka for Manihiki on Tuesday, 28th April.

Manihiki.

We arrived at Manihiki on Thursday, the 7th May.

Manihiki seems to have suffered the most of any island in the Group we have visited so far. Luckily no lives were lost.

Many of the houses and coconut-palms are down, and the Settlement of Tauhunu looks a perfect wreck of what it used to be. In building up their houses again the Natives should not build them so close together.

The Natives here have a good deal of copra, and one store is fairly well supplied with provisions, so Government assistance is not required at present, but they may be short of food four or five months hence. Two schooners are expected with food-supplies in a month or so. I told Mr. Williams that if the Natives were really short of food at any time to write to you.

The Government tank at the Courthouse is leaking about half-way up. This can easily be fixed up, and Mr. Williams has promised to have it done.

I borrowed 2 tons of cement from the Native missionary, to be returned when he requires it. The cement will do to fix the tank and raise the wall of the Courthouse (mixed with lime), which requires to be about 3 ft. higher, so as the water will run into the tank.

I landed all the material to cover the Courthouse roof in corrugated iron. I estimate that it will cost about £30 to raise the Courthouse wall and put on the roof. I told Mr. Williams to pay the men for any work done (he has some Government money in hand). I consider this is a far better method than asking the Natives to do the work and the Government feeding them, and perhaps cheaper in the end.