

That would be four in each end. We called at a place just along here and they told us there were nineteen boys in one place?—There may have been four houses there.

When you had the full number of boys employed, what was your biggest number?—Three hundred and twenty.

And how many huts did you have for the 320?—About fourteen houses. They were these big houses built for fifty men.

Can you tell us the recruiting methods that were employed to get these boys in the early days and later—I mean the method by which they were got to come from the islands?—They were recruited by the captain of the ship.

In what way?—People went ashore and asked who would like to go as labourers to Samoa.

And was there a contract signed?—Yes, for three years.

By the boys?—Yes.

How did the boy sign?—By making a mark.

Have you got any copies of the contract?—No. The boys were sent to me when they arrived in Samoa—after a couple of days.

You had nothing to do with the recruiting?—No.

A Solomon-Islander named DOBIFEL was questioned.

Mr. HOLLAND: How long have you been here?—I do not know. I have been a long time.

Mr. HELG: I think he has been about nine years.

Mr. HOLLAND: I should like to know how you came to come here?—Captain Peters brought me.

How were you got on to the ship?—I liked the ship. I liked to come to Samoa.

Have you ever been subjected to punishment?—No.

Have your wages been stopped?—I have been given money all the time.

Are you due to be sent back?—Yes.

Would you like to go back?—Yes.

Mr. HELG: They all like to go back to their places.

Mr. FORBES: Would you like to come back here again?—Very likely. If a ship came, probably I should come back again.

Mr. S. G. SMITH: Are you married?—No.

VISIT TO LANGEN'S PLANTATION.

Mr. LANGEN was questioned.

Sir R. H. RHODES: You say you have 150 acres under cocoa. How many Chinamen have you?—Twenty-three.

Is that sufficient for your requirements?—Not for the 150 acres. It is about half the number I need altogether. I want about ten more for the 150 acres.

Mr. A. HAMILTON: How are you able to get this Chinese labour when others are not able to do so?—I flatter myself that I know the way to handle Chinese. I will always get Chinamen in some way, I think, if any one is getting them. I do not give them a specially easy time, but I follow their ways. They know they are not cheated for half a pound of rice. They work very steadily with me, and I never have any complaint. I do not think there is any complaint in the Court records against myself or my boys. I do not pay higher wages than other employers, but I think I understand them.

Mr. J. R. HAMILTON: Are these Chinese here at liberty to go to any employer they like?—Decidedly.

Mr. HOLLAND: At the present moment?—No; they have to finish up their time first, which is at present two years. We had the half-yearly contract, and the effect of it, in my opinion, was that the whole standard of living of the boys was very much lowered. They have a lot of vegetable-gardens and poultry-farms, and a paddock for a horse. They will not go in for that sort of thing when you give them a half-year's contract.

Does the law permit you to give them a half-year contract?—Before we were forced to, but now two years is stipulated. I think it much for the benefit of both.

Have you a copy of the contract?—I will try to find one. In the Chinese Commissioner's office you will get one. To tell you candidly, I never saw one myself. I never stick on any paragraph of a contract. If a Chinaman has a just complaint it is granted.

But there is a signed contract between you and him?—Yes.

As we came through the quarters there, somebody asked if a certain Chinaman was married, and your reply was, "Sometimes he is married, sometimes he is not. I do not know whether he is married now"?—Exactly.

Would you mind telling us what that means?—The Chinaman is at liberty to do as he likes, just the same as we are. If we want to live with a woman some of us do, and some of us turn her away again and take another. That is just the position of Chinamen with Samoan girls. I think I am supposed by law to put a stop to it, but I do not think I have a legal right to do so.

Mr. POTTER: Have you any of them doing that?—I think I have two.

Out of?—Twenty-three.

Mr. HOLLAND: The custom is for a girl to go and live with a Chinaman, and then if she does not suit him or he does not suit her they part, and he can take up another; is that what you mean?—First of all, you will not get a Samoan girl here for money. You must be a decent fellow to get a Samoan girl. And then, generally, they stick well together. I have an old Chinese boy here. I dare say he is just as well married as I am myself, though he never went to any priest or Registrar.

What is the largest number of men you have had here?—Thirty-six, I think.