Front Cover
Samoa at Geneva Misleading. The League of Nations
A Commentary on the proceedings of the Permanent Mandates Commission at its Thirteenth Session held at Geneva in June, 1928. O. F. Nelson
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Foreword

This commentary was prepared by the writer in London in September last on receipt from Geneva of the "Extract from the Minutes of the Permanent Mandates Commission." It was then published in instalments in the "Samoa Guardian", the first of which appeared on November 8th, 1928.

The conditions prevailing in Samoa are such that the subject is of deep public interest in New Zealand and the writer has been urged to give these criticisms wider publication than afforded by the publication of them in the Samoan Press.

Since the contents appeared in Apia, a General Election in New Zealand has brought about a complete change of Government in the Dominion, but the subject matter of the commentary is reprinted in its original form as written in London before the elections. The references to the "Government of New Zealand" indicate, of course, the former Reform Administration which is now, happily, a thing of the past.

O.F.N.
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20th December, 1928

Samoa at Geneva

When the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations met at Geneva last June there were, in respect to New Zealand's mandate over Western Samoa, several petitions for the Commission to consider, in addition to the Report of the New Zealand Royal Commission on Samoa, and reports from the New Zealand Government as Mandatory.

By a properly-signed Power of Attorney I was the accredited representative of the Samoan people to represent them in Geneva and elsewhere in respect to a Petition to the League signed by 7982 male adult Samoans (taxpayers) out of a gross total of about 8500, and had myself petitioned the League against the action of the Administrator in deporting me for five years from a country where I was born and lived practically all my life.

I proceeded to Geneva in time for the June Session and prepared a commentary on the Report of Sir James Parr, the New Zealand representative to the Commission at its previous Session in October-November, 1927. Copies of this were handed by me to every member of the Mandates Commission, and in it I pointed out certain misstatements of the New Zealand representative, giving them as my reasons for pleading for a hearing, so that the Commission could, at last, hear both sides.

Following what I am led to understand is a ruling of the Council of the League that the Mandates Commission may not grant audience to other than the representatives of the mandatory powers, I was not only refused a hearing, but was not allowed entry to the proceedings, which, not only the accredited representative of the New Zealand Government, Sir James Parr, attended, but he was assisted by the ex-Administrator, Sir George Richardson, against whose actions in Samoa the petitions protested, and in which petitions he was charged with having brought about the present unrest.

Both Sir James Parr and Sir George Richardson were allowed to make further reports and give further evidence in respect to the points at issue. For these conditions, perhaps, no one can be blamed personally, except that it must now be apparent to all fair-minded people that the constitution of the Mandates Commission creates a serious anomaly, insomuch that the people of mandated territories are deprived of the right of a hearing before that tribunal, appointed by the League of Nations, which has assumed the authority to grant what is equivalent to sovereign power to mandatories over those territories and peoples.

Annexation's Advantages Over Mandates.

Direct annexation, though an assumption of power by the greater over the smaller, at least gives the people

of an annexed territory the rights of citizenship, with whatever privileges may accrue from the same, with or without certain limitations, under the laws of the annexing power. But the mandatory system, by the experience so far gained, places the mandated peoples in a very anomalous position, and does not tend to establish that confidence most essential to good government of the mandated peoples in the mandatory system, or in the creator of it—the League of Nations.

Before the June Session of the Mandates Commission closed, the Press published extracts of its report on the Samoan question and, although I was the accredited representative of over ninety per cent. of the Samoan people, and personally an interested party, it was not politic for me to accept these Press reports, or even comment on them. The Mandatory,—the New Zealand Government,—however, took all the advantage it could of these Press reports, and the Samoan petitioners were asked to accept them as officially correct. I applied through my solicitors for a certified copy from the Secretary to the Permanent Mandates Commission, and was told that a copy would be furnished me after the Council of the League of Nations had considered the matter in September, but that the report would be given to the Press some time in August.

A copy was sent direct to me by the Secretary to the Mandates Commission, and this duly arrived on the 22nd September. I am at last free to discuss it. In the Secretary's covering letter, dated Geneva, 20th September, he confirms the conclusions of the Mandates Commission:—

"The Commission considers that none of the charges of any importance in this petition against the Administration have been substantiated, and that the petition contains no evidence of policy or action contrary to the Mandate."

In the reprint of the Minutes of the Thirteenth Session (June, 1928) of the Permanent Mandates Commission, which the Secretary sent me, it will be found that the conclusions arrived at in respect to the petition from the 7982 male adult Samoans are exactly the same as above. This is also true of the conclusions arrived at on other petitions re Samoa, one of which was from the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society.

Evasive Answers and Reckless Allegations.

A perusal of the Minutes of the June Session of the Mandates Commission in its discussion of the present situation in Samoa would be most interesting to anyone versed with the causes of the unrest. One of the most striking features is the evasiveness of the answers of both the New Zealand representatives; another is the large number of reckless allegations and charges again made, which neither of these representatives would have the least hope of substantiating if they were cross-examined by a representative of the Samoan people. The few examples of these which I now take the liberty to give herein, could be extended throughout practically the whole of their evidence if space permitted.

The prohibition of the consumption of alcoholic liquor by Samoans was made law about forty years ago. This was when Samoa was a Kingdom and her autonomy recognised and guaranteed by Three Great Powers—America, Great Britain and Germany. Neither the Samoans nor the Europeans in Samoa have ever at any time applied for a reconsideration of this law.

"Prohibition," as it affects the Europeans, came in force on the inauguration of what was called "civil" rule, or "Mandate," in May, 1920, nearly five years after the New Zealand military occupation, but three years before the advent of General Richardson. Yet the New Zealand authorities have proclaimed to the world at large that "Prohibition" and the "Copra trade" are the fundamental causes of the present Samoan unrest.

Sir James Parr informed the Mandates Commission: "I should like to point out that the Order of Reference of the Royal Commission was very wide; it covers all complaints. ..." He then quotes a finding of the Royal Commission that "it appears clear that the legislation has proved effective to prevent, so far as could reasonably be expected, the consumption of intoxicating liquor by Samoans," but he carefully omitted earlier passages of the Royal Commission's findings on "Prohibition" wherein the following appears:—"The consideration of this matter is not within the scope of the inquiry which we were directed to hold, and we are not entitled to express an opinion upon it." Perhaps Sir James was not willing to disclose to the Mandates Commission the limitations of the scope of the Royal Commission inquiry, or one of the inconsistencies in the findings of that Commission.

On being questioned by the Chairman of the Mandates Commission "if Prohibition was a fundamental cause, why was it a matter which had not constantly arisen? How had it come about that in the reports for the previous years no trace of the dissatisfaction caused by prohibition was to be found?" the Minutes state:

"Sir James Parr thought that perhaps he was hardly at one with the. Commission. Did the Commission desire him to deal with the dissatisfaction of the Natives or of the white man? He was trying, step by step, to show the reasons and causes of the discontent felt by the different parts of the population."

Officials and Prohibition.

The Chairman's question was undoubtedly prompted by the fact that Sir James Parr was then speaking on the subject of Prohibition and the resentment of the Europeans to it. His reply is one of the evasive aswers I have referred to. If Prohibition has been a cause of dissatisfaction with the Europeans for some years, as stated by Sir James Parr, why was it not mentioned in the Annual Reports? My answer to this is: "For the same reason that the disaffection of the Samoans arising from the unwarranted banishments, deprivation of chiefly titles, and general degradation of leading Samoans was withheld from the Mandates Commission in all previous reports." It was much more satisfactory for the mandatory to report only the good progress it claimed to be making in other matters.

"M. van Rees asked whether the complaints against Prohibition had come only from private persons, or had the officials associated themselves with those complaints? Sir George Richardson replied that the officials had not complained."

When the Hon. G. E. L. Westbrook discussed Prohibition as it affected the Whites in a meeting of the Legislative Council some time ago, Sir George Richardson said that if Mr. Westbrook would present to him a sound scheme where Europeans can have their liquor without the Natives getting it, he would be prepared to consider it. Neither Mr. Westbrook nor his elected colleagues took the matter up, but General Richardson's leading officials promptly came together and formulated a scheme. See Royal Commission, page 31:

Robert Joseph Carter sworn and examined.

Mr. Slipper: What is your occupation?—Commissioner of Labour.

Some time ago you and others took some interest in this matter of Prohibition, did you not?—Yes.

What was done?—A meeting was held by the heads of the Administration departments.

And what was done when that meeting was held?—A scheme was formulated and put before the Administrator.

The Chairman (Sir Charles Skerrett): Is that scheme in writing?—It is, sir, but at the present time I consider that, as we have had no reply, it is more or less a State document.

There is more of this evidence, which space will not permit here, but this "State" document and the covering letter from the official heads of the administrative departments will be found in Exhibit IX., pp. 419-420, of the Royal Commission's Report. No evidence whatever was tendered by the Administration in support of Prohibition; on the contrary, at his own suggestion, General Richardson's leading officials had worked up this scheme for a regulated issue of liquor. Yet the General tells the Mandates Commission that his officials had not complained about Prohibition!

Mr. R. J. Carter, besides being the Commissioner of Labour, has filled many important leading posts in the Administration and has on more than one occasion acted as A.D.C. to the Administrator.

On page 15 of the Minutes of the Mandates Commission's proceedings the following paragraph appears:—

"The Chairman, intervening, said that he must ask Sir James Parr not to tire himself by going through all the points in the report. All the members of the Commission had read the report; they had studied it thoroughly and were well acquainted with everything in it. . . ."

The Chairman was referring herein to the report of the Royal Commission. Yet not one of the members of the Mandates Commission questioned Sir George Richardson further on this particular point.

As Prohibition has nothing whatever to do with the Native unrest, I am very reluctant to discuss this subject in connection with the Samoan trouble, but the importance placed on the subject by the representatives of the Mandatory makes it essential for me to show that even in this matter the representations made to the Mandates Commission by the New Zealand delegates are utterly unreliable and misleading.

The Copra Question.

I further contend and can prove that the entrance of the Administration into the native copra trade has nothing whatever to do with the causes which brought about the present unrest. Whatever scheme Sir George Richardson might have had in mind in regard to the purchase or handling of native copra by the Administration, I challenge him to say that he ever, at any time, in or out of office, prior to October 1926, discussed with me a scheme whereby a better price might be obtained, or better quality of native copra secured.

It was only during the sittings of the Royal Commission that I learnt of a letter he had written to the Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, a New Zealand solicitor, Mr. Baxter, suggesting that some efforts be made to secure a higher grade of Samoan native copra. Sir George Richardson has no grounds whatever, moral or otherwise, for the statement he made to the Mandates Commission: "It was well known, therefore, before the trouble started, that the Government was going to help the Natives with their copra. The business community were all aware of the proposed policy." Not one of the copra merchants would admit to me that Sir George Richardson had discussed the copra business with him in a manner which could justify or warrant the above statement. If the Administrator did discuss the matter with other copra merchants, then it is evident that he did

not treat me with the confidence he placed in others.

It would be wrong to assume that no efforts were made to attain a high quality for Samoan native copra before the advent of General Richardson. The control by the Government of the production of native copra was established by law long before the New Zealand occupation. Modifications and alterations to the copra law were made before and after the Great War, but the law was there. When one system would be found inefficient, or proper supervision lacking, the law would be tightened up. If a marked improvement of quality was experienced—and I do not know of any—between 1923 and 1926, it would be because the control had deplorably slackened in 1923.

Before Sir George Richardson came to Samoa I had instructed my London agents to try and establish a special standard for "Samoan" copra, as superior to that of ordinary "South Sea" copra from places where there was no Government control over production. For some time past "Samoan" has commanded a small premium of two shilings and sixpence (2s. 6d.) to five shillings (5s.) per ton over "South Sea." "Hot-air dried" or "plantation" in every case secures a premium of anything up to 10s. per ton (occasionally a little more, but invariably less) over "sun-dried." My Company's Samoan sun-dried copra, without the assistance of Sir George Richardson's scheme, has been found good enough to pass as "plantation" in the European markets on more than one occasion. The purpose of the Government was evidently to try and mislead the Samoans and others to the belief that almost double the price would be received by a further improvement of the quality.

Copra not a Cause of the Crisis.

I heartily approve of maintaining the highest quality possible for Samoan copra. It would be inconsistent for anyone interested in the copra trade to do otherwise. High-quality copra sells easier than low quality, and it is absurd to say that the traders in Samoa resent the efforts of the Administration to improve the quality of copra. If the Administration found it impracticable to maintain that high quality without entering into the copra trade, they should have gone into the matter properly and handled all the native copra. The traders would have resented this, but trading conditions would ultimately have adjusted themselves. As it is, the Administration admits handling only 400 tons in 18 months, although the average annual output is about 12,000 tons!

In none of the complaints, or representations, of the Citizens' Committee, or the Mau, has the handling of copra by the Administration been raised. The merchants at Apia made a complaint in 1927 against interference of the Government in the copra trade, but it was done while I was absent from Samoa. Although the Royal Commission knew that "copra" was "not within the scope of our inquiry," it readily accepted evidence on it. Most of those who gave evidence against the Government copra scheme have never been members of the Samoan Citizens' Committee, and their evidence was given in the week between the opening of the Royal Commission in Samoa and my arrival there from New Zealand via Sydney. I can prove every word of this to the hilt.

The Mau has not hampered the production of copra in Samoa as much as the foolish policy of the Government. While the Administration was handling native copra, and paying as much as £4 per ton more for it in three or four points inaccessible to the majority of the Samoan producers, the latter have held their copra for months in the hope that the Government would open receiving depots, or that the traders would raise their price. Neither of these events happened, and much of the copra became over-matured and was lost.

It will be seen that if the traders had left the copra trade to the Government it would have been, by now, irretrievably lost and the whole Territory would have suffered. To say that "copra" was one of the causes of the Samoan unrest is all "bunkum." In putting forth the copra trade as an excuse for the high-handed militaristic system which alone was responsible for the unrest in Samoa, the Government has not refrained from denouncing the merchants and traders in Samoa, and particularly myself, as exploiters of the Natives and ambitious agitators.

Many of these unfounded charges dare not be made by other than privileged persons in privileged places. A speech made at a Rotary Club dinner in New Zealand in March, 1927, to the effect that "before the New Zealand occupation, the traders made the natives drunk, bought their copra for £8 per ton, and sold it for £20 per ton, and the Samoans at that time died off like flies" will ever be remembered by the residents of Samoa as an unwarranted attack on them and on the former administration of the Islands.

Before passing on I wish to repeat that, instead of "Copra" having been one of the causes of the unrest, the Government experiment was deliberately launched as a reprisal against the traders for daring openly to ventilate their grievances, and on account of the sympathy shown by them to the Samoans in their bold but justified demands for relief from the oppressive conditions imposed on them by the Administrator.

Inefficiency and Extravagange.

The third cause for the trouble, as put to the Mandates Commission by the New Zealand representatives, was the charges of extravagance in the expenditure of the public revenues of the Territory. Much capital is made of the fact that the members of the Citizens' Committee who prepared the Report on Finance were not able to stand up against the cross-examination of the counsel for the Administration. The witnesses for the Citizens' Committee before the Royal Commission were treated in a different way altogether from the attitude adopted to the New Zealand representatives by the Mandates Commission.

The fact remains that, when New Zealand took over Western Samoa, there was a surplus in the Treasury and no National Debt, although most, if not all, of the principal Government buildings, bridges and roads now standing were then erected. In 1926 there was a national debt of about £150,000, and further borrowings were proposed. This in spite of an annual subsidy from New Zealand of about £20,000, and a revenue which had increased by over 100 per cent, as compared with 1913.

The Royal Commission, in its report, gave full publicity to the failure of the Citizens' Committee to substantiate some of their figures, but covered itself by the following remark: "Certainly, we should not have had the time or felt ourselves competent to embark on a critical examination of the working of the Administration to ascertain whether it was over-staffed or its officers overpaid."

On page 9 of the Minutes of the June Session of the Mandates Commission, the following appears:—

"M. Rappard wished to summarise the information received up to the present. Of the three reasons for discontent on the part of the Whites which had so far been discussed one, Prohibition, had existed since 1920, and could hardly therefore have produced violent effects suddenly in 1926. The second, extravagance, had been found to be without foundation, and therefore was not a real cause of discontent on the part of the Whites; it might have been a cause of complaint on their part, but it was not a real cause of discontent. There remained, therefore, the question of copra, and it seemed to M. Rappard that, judging from the information given to the Commission, it was the Government intention in the copra field which had been the real, determining cause of discontent on the part of the white population."

"Sir George Richardson considered that the original cause of discontent amongst three Europeans had been their desire for more power—the power to govern the country: the power to have something to say on Native matters. The complaint about Prohibition, or the discontent with regard to it, had always existed among a small number of the Whites. He had asked many Europeans for their views on the liquor question. They had all replied: 'We do not want the old days back again; we would vote against the sale of liquor or licences in this country, but we would like to get more liquor for ourselves when we want it.'

"The copra complaint was a very real one on the part of two or three, or several, merchants—a very real one, indeed; but he would not like to say that it was the sole cause of unrest. The small traders, who did not deal in copra, said that it was of great benefit to the territory, that it brought more money into circulation. The quantity dealt with by the Administration had been very small. The output of copra in Samoa per year was about 12,000 tons, but to date the Administration had only handled about 400 tons, so that the anxiety felt had not been with regard to the present, but with regard to what might happen in the future. Just before leaving Samoa, Sir George Richardson had asked the Resident Commissioner in Savai'i what was the feeling among the traders in the district where the Administration was receiving copra for shipment. He had replied that those traders had approved of it because the Natives had more money and, therefore, spent more in their stores."

"Sir James Parr ventured to re-state the question to which M. Rappard wished to have a reply: was the question of copra—at any rate, in the minds of the predominant Europeans—a very strong cause of their determination to oppose the Administration ?"

"Sir George Richardson replied that it was one of the biggest and principal causes, but it was not the only one. The other two causes were those that had led up to this one—namely, the desire for power to control the Natives themselves, and resentment that the Faipules, under the system of self-government, should have so much power as regards Native matters. He was aboslutely certain on that point."

Native Representation.

Readers will note:—"Sir George Richardson considered that the original cause of discontent among three Europeans had been their desire for more power—the power to govern the country, to have something to say on Native matters." Why was this "original" cause introduced as an afterthought? The three Europeans there referred to can only have been the three elected members of the Legislative Council. As a matter of fact, no Native legislation can become law before it had passed the Legislative Council, so the elected members already had a say in Native matters. But the elected members had consistently introduced in the Legislative Council the matter of Native representation in that council, so that they—the Native representatives—would have the opportunity to give the Council the advantage of the Native viewpoint in matters affecting them. As the Samoans comprise about 95 per cent, of the total population and contribute the bulk of the Government

revenue, practically all legislation affects them, and they should be represented in the Legislative Council by members of their own race and choosing, such as is done in Fiji and Tonga.

In the discussion of this matter by the Mandates Commission (page 18), Sir George Richardson informed the Commission:

"He had proposed to them [Fono of Faipules, or Native Council] that two of them should sit on what he had called the Mixed Council. He himself had been in favour of this. To his surprise, the Natives had not readily responded; they seemed to be suspicious of something, and he had then asked them to think it over and let him know their answer at the next half-yearly Fono. He had not known at that time that the chiefs were very jealous of each other. . . .

"When the Faipules assembled again and gave their answer it was in the negative."

This is absolutely untrue. In "O le Savali" (Government Gazette, published in the Samoan language) of July, 1923, the resolutions of the Fono of Faipule of June, 1923, appeared. This would be the first Faipule Fono after General Richardson's arrival in Samoa, and he naturally presided over it. I think it is Resolution 18 which states that the Fono of Faipules agreed to two Native representatives being appointed to the Legislative Council, and the appointment was left to His Excellency the Administrator.

In cross-examining the Administrator before the Royal Commission at Apia in October, 1927, counsel for the Samoans put a question to Sir George Richardson (page 378, Royal Commission) :

Mr. Baxter: Did not the Fono of Faipule pass a resolution in the June 1923 Fono requesting you to place two Natives on the Council?

Sir George Richardson: I do not think so. I do not remember that. June, 1923, would be my first Fono. I remember very little about it. I had just arrived here, and held those views, but they were not what I said in 1925. I am sure they will not apply. I think those views were just what I had put into their heads. They were my idea. . . ."

Root Causes of the Unrest.

This is a vague answer to the question, but it discloses the mentality of the man whose administration in Samoa produced the greatest political upheaval in the history of those islands for many years. In this answer will be found the root causes of the present unrest. "I think those views were just what I had put into their heads," he says.

Despite all that has been said to the contrary, the Faipules who sit at the Fono, and who are wrongly termed the representatives of the Samoans in the so-called "Native Parliament," are by law appointed by the Administrator, and not by the Samoans.

The Fono of Faipules is not vested with authority to pass laws—not even for the Samoans—but they have assumed the right, with the Administrator's approval, to pass "resolutons" which, the Natives contend, have been enforced as laws, although the Administrator and the Faipules informed the Royal Commission that these "resolutions" were not enforced as laws. Yet on page 378 the following appears:—

Mr. Baxter: It was not, then, as some people consider, that, being passed by the Fono of Faipules, it was sufficient?

Sir George Richardson: So far as the Natives are concerned, practically yes; because if the Faipules pass it and agree to it, and it is in the interests of the whole Native race, it is my duty, as Administrator, to see that it is pushed through.

Mr. Baxter: Then they pass only resolutions, not regulations?

Sir George Richardson: No. Those resolutions are then handed in to me. I give them to the Chief Judge..."

Mr. Baxter: A number have come out by Order-in-Council?

Sir George Richardson: Yes, I think so.

Mr. Baxter: My reason for asking this is that in the Mandatory Report for 1926, page 9, under the heading of "Native Legislation," it is stated: "The Faipules assembled on two occasions during the year and passed Native regulations."

Sir George Richardson: That is a phraseology which the outside world would understand. If I went into details, such as I have just given you, the outside world would not understand.

Mr. Baxter: On page 19, under the heading "Administration of Justice," it refers to divorce as the result of legislation passed by the Fono of Faipules. It refers to faa-Samoa marriages?

Sir George Richardson: That is phraseology for the outside world.

Puppets of the Administrator.

When the Samoans appealed to the New Zealand Minister in charge of Samoan Affairs for permission to make representations against certain actions of the Administrator and the Faipules, they were told that he would

not consider anything unless it had previously been approved by the Faipules.

The Faipules, appointed by the Administrator, are among the very few who are now called loyalists to the Administration. They are the highest-paid Samoan officials. The Faipules, into whose heads the Administrator admits putting ideas, passed the "resolutions" above referred to. They are formed into boards to decide the banishment of other chiefs, whom the Administrator himself states they are jealous of. Is it any wonder that the Samoans have contended the Faipules are puppets of the Administrator and are equally responsible with him for the conditions which have brought about the present trouble?

The Faipules passed the "resolution" suppressing the exchange of fine mats, a time-honoured custom among the Samoans, by which they pay tribute to their dead, and without which the ceremonies associated with marriage, birth, etc., are not complete. Yet not one Faipule can hold his hand up to-day and say that he has not in some way or other committed a breach of that law or resolution.

The Faipules agreed to the "idea" that Samoa communal lands be individualised, and passed a "resolution" to that effect, but, although the enforcement of that resolution was attempted, it created such a disturbance that it broke down. Although the Samoans have asked for a statement of the Government finances being published in the vernacular, such as is done in all the neighbouring islands, the Faipules have not considered it. The idea has not been put into their heads from the proper quarter.

Sir George Richardson has given in evidence that he has a special phraseology for "the outside world" when reporting the conditions in Samoa. In "the outside world" he no doubt included the League of Nations, as is evidenced by the phraseology he used in his replies to questions put to him by the Mandates Commission. The now famous catechism describing the League of Nations as a body which had practically no control over mandates other than to receive an annual report from the mandatory, which was published among the Samoans in the Samoan language, with the same type and style in-paper and circulation as numerous other official bulletins then issued by the Administration, has now been described to the Mandates Commission as the work of a schoolmaster, with his (Sir George Richardson's) assistance. Sir James Parr, on the other hand, stated: "With regard to the catechism, he hoped too much would not be made of this paper, drawn up by the schoolmaster. It was obviously the work, in thought and language, of an unskilled hand: of a rather ill-informed person."

This is not a very complimentary description of Sir George Richardson, who, as Sir James Parr's colleague at the Session of the Mandates Commission, had admitted responsibility by the statement: "It was true that the catechism had been made by the schoolmaster, with his help...." There are several schoolmasters in Samoa, but Sir George carefully omits to mention the name of the schoolmaster who is responsible. Will he or the New Zealand Government now publish a correction of this "paper" published by "the unskilled hand of a rather ill-informed person"?

Sir George Richardson told the Mandates Commission that: "At the time of the Mau, there had only been seven current cases of Natives who had been temporarily moved under that Ordinance, and that they would probably have been pardoned or sent back within a very short time. Further on, the Minutes state: "Sir George Richardson could not say whether they were all chiefs. He would suggest they were half-and-half. He could not tell from the names."

Misleading the Commission.

He did not tell the Commission that before the Mau started he had banished over fifty Samoans of high rank, some of whom were among the highest chiefs in the land. Neither did he tell the Commission that in addition to banishing them from their home villages to other villages, as far as sixty miles away, he had in most cases deprived them of the right to be called by their chiefly titles, which no administrator, governor, or ruler had ever before attempted to do.

He did not give the Mandates Commission such minor details as that these banishment orders were for anything from "three months" to "during my pleasure." He told the Commission that local banishment was an old Samoan custom, but he failed to add that it was only imposed by the village chiefs in council on one who oppressed the people, or whose presence was intolerable, when there were no other forms of punishment, and before the Samoans had to conform to a European code of laws.

The form of Order used by Sir George Richardson in banishing a chief would, perhaps, be interesting. The following is copied from an original:

Order of Local Banishment under the Samoan Offenders' Ordinance, 1922.

To Lelafu, A Samoan male of the village of Falefa.

I, George Spafford Richardson. Administrator of Western Samoa, being satisfied that the presence of you, Lelafu, within the district/village hereinafter mentioned is likely to be a source of danger to the peace, order and good government thereof Do Hereby in pursuance of the powers conferred on me by the above-mentioned Ordinance Order that within seven days from the date hereof you leave the district/village of Falefa in the island of Upolu in Western Samoa and reside and remain outside all villages of Western Samoa save and except the Village of Faleasi'U in the island of Upolu in Western Samoa during my pleasure And Furthermore that you cease from using the title Lefafu and in future be known by your original name of Tololi.

Witness my hand at Apia this 18th day of February, 1927.

(Signed) Geo. S. Richardson,
Administrator.

The above was issued against a Samoan chief who was one of the organisers of the Mau, then developing into a national movement to protest against the fifty-odd similar orders of banishment and degradation issued on leading Samoans prior to October, 1926, and other oppressive acts of the Administrator imposed on the Samoan people with the assistance of his Faipules, as enumerated above.

The Treatment of Tamasese.

When Tamasese (grandson of the late King Tamasese) was banished and deprived of his chiefly title by General Richardson, in 1924, there was great resentment felt among the Samoans, but wiser counsel prevailed against what might then have developed into serious trouble. Although the Samoans are indeed a peace-loving and law-abiding people, they have been rightly described as a proud and dignified race. Sir George Richardson himself, in an article on Samoa in the London "Times," referred to the Samoans as "the aristocrats of the Pacific." It would be absurd to think that such a proud, dignified race as the Samoans could have accepted the degradation of a chief of Tamasese's rank by a foreign ruler, or anyone else, with equanimity.

Tamasese himself was largely responsible for the preservation of peace at the time. He preferred to suffer martyrdom rather than see his people involved in trouble with a foreign power. They had had enough of that in the past. But keen resentment was felt, and that sentiment grew stronger and stronger as banishment increased and became the order of the day. This system produced disaffection of the Samoans, which sooner or later was bound to assert itself. Those who knew the Samoan mind saw trouble on the horizon. Clouds were gathering, trouble was brewing, but the Administrator refused to see it. He, no doubt, believed in his "firm" policy, so long as he could keep the Faipules witn him, and rely on an expeditionary force or warships from New Zealand to quell any serious disturbance which might arise. This has since been borne out by subsequent events, but he deplored the dilatoriness of the New Zealand Government in granting him the power or the forces which he sought when the cloud did burst. That the trouble did not assume more serious proportions from the beginning is only due to the timely intervention of the Citizens' Committee and the hope held out to the Samoans that a Minister from New Zealand was due to arrive in Samoa to investigate the whole position if the Samoans would make what representations they had to bring forward along constitutional lines.

Warnings Ignored.

I had long forseen the trouble. It was with that knowledge that warned the Administrator in 1925 against his banishment policy. That I only interviewed him in regard to the banishment of some Safune chiefs was because I had visited my own people in Safune and had gained firsthand knowledge of the circumstances. The Administrator, who had, like his predecessors, always been pleased to consult me on Native matters, and appreciated my willing assistance whenever called upon, showed no inclination to discuss with me his policy of banishment, deprivation of titles, and other matters which he must have known I would strongly advise him against.

I feared the consequence of these policies, but there was no opening for me to intervene until I had acquainted myself with the facts. This came after my visit to Safune, when I made bold to approach the Administrator on the question. The Faipule at Safune is a near relative of mine, and most probably advised the banishment of the Safune chiefs, but I told the Administrator I thought it was wrong. Sir George Richardson told the Mandates Commission that there was great jealousy among the Samoan chiefs, yet he set up a board of his own Faipules to advise on the banishment of their rival chiefs. At that interview I informed Sir George Richardson that the banishment system as at present constituted enabled the Faipules of to-day to advise the banishment of their rivals, and thus pay off old scores; but such a system can only result in the creation of new feuds, which would be more bitter than ever. Should the descendants of the banished chiefs of to-day become the Faipules of to-morrow, it is only natural that they would square matters with their rivals with increased

vengeance.

I called on the Prime Minister and the Minister of External Affairs in Wellington on the 1st September, 1926, and acquainted them with my fears of the impending trouble. They promised personal investigation by the Hon. W. Nosworthy on the following month (October). He did not arrive until June 2nd, 1927. It was too late: the cloud had burst, but, thanks to the activities of the Citizens' Committee of Samoans and Europeans, the matter was kept well in hand, and the Samoans had agreed to the firm resolution to work along peaceful lines. Had the Minister taken a little notice of the representations of the Citizens' Committee between October, 1926, and his arrival, the more serious aspects of the trouble might still have been averted.

Passive Resistance.

But the Minister had by then ranged himself with the Administrator, who was determined to concede no point whatever. More banishments followed. The Citizens' Committee were hard put to it to hold the peace among the Samoans. Fortunately, some good work had been done in this line, and the Samoans adopted the policy of submission to all punishments, but to preserve the peace.

When the Minister (Mr. Nosworthy) arrived, he ordered the European members to cease their activities with the Samoans, but to undo the harm they had done. They do not admit having done any harm and, even if they did, it was not possible for them to undo anything if they ceased activities. To undo their work would be to break the peace. They therefore withdrew their guidance of the Samoans.

The latter then resolved on a policy of passive resistance. The Mau grew to enormous proportions. It now includes almost every man and woman in the Territory. They are convinced of the justice of their cause, and nothing will shake them. The Mandates Commission have given their decision, but they offer no solution of the trouble. They have vindicated the New Zealand Administration of Samoa, but they have not helped it in bringing about a settlement. It has been said that "you cannot indict a whole nation," but this evidently does not apply to Samoa.

Sir George Richardson, referring to the election of Native representatives to the Legislative Council, stated before the Mandates Commission (page 19):—

"There was told a story in Samoa to-day about that very popular Governor. Dr. Solf. Dr. Solf went to an institution of the Missionary Society and offered a trophy to be given to the best student. There were about 120 students, and he said: 'I will leave it to you to elect the best student; you will carry out your own elections.' The election was held, and when the voting papers were taken out of the box there were 120 names on them."

Sir George is not well informed if he does not know that the balloting system has been used at missionary meetings in Samoa for many years past when a question of moment is being decided on. I have not heard of any hitch in the working of this system. It is called in the Samoan language "palota," derived from the English word "ballot." Further on, he stated: "The Faipules at the present time did not want representation on the Council." This is probably true, after the "idea" had been taken out of their heads. But the New Zealand Parliament made provision for this in 1923, and the Samoans, including the Faipules, have asked for it.

The Minutes (page 7) state:

"Sir George Richardson said that there had been absolutely no open dissatisfaction in Samoa, either on the part of the white population or of the Natives, up to the time of the holding of the combined meeting of Europeans and Natives in October, 1926. . . ."

Official Dummies.

The first election, early in 1924, of three Europeans to the Legislative Council made the white population feel their interests would be cared for. Although I was elected to the Legislative Council by the Europeans, it was generally felt in official and non-official circles, among the Whites and Natives, that the three elected members would not overlook the Native interests in the Council. Particularly was this expected of me. On more than one occasion did I move that Native representatives be allowed to sit in the Council. My elected colleagues supported me, but the official majority in the Council would not agree. Sir George Richardson, in answer to a question as to whether the official members in the Legislative Council were directed by him how to vote, told the Royal Commission at Apia (page 378) :—

"I do not direct them how to vote. They fully recognise that, as Government members, it is their duty to uphold the Government's policy, and if they cannot uphold it, it is their duty to notify me. . . . . All matters submitted by the Administration are matters of policy."

By the time the second elections were due, in November, 1926, it had become quite apparent to the Europeans and Samoans that the Legislative Council as a medium for the ventilation of the people's views and the redress of grievances was futile. The news of the coming visit of the Minister of External Affairs raised the

hopes of the people that an impartial investigation by the Minister would produce favourable results, and the crisis then impending would be averted.

The public meeting convened by the three elected members, held on the 15th October, 1926, to consider matters for presentation to the Minister was, therefore, hailed with great favour by the whole community. Although the meeting was not advertised in Samoan, the Native chiefs who attended handed in properly-prepared lists of their complaints. These formed the basis of the Native complaints, which were embodied in the Committee's Report to the Minister. They were repeated in the Samoan Petition to the New Zealand Parliament of March, 1927, and were again enumerated in the Petition to the League of Nations by the 7,982 Samoan Native taxpayers.

Opposition Members Re-Elected.

Feeling confident that the Minister's visit would result in making representation of the people in the Legislative Council more effective, great interest was taken by the European community in the elections of November 30th, 1926. When it was known that the Administration was putting up three candidates to oppose the sitting members, the people organised, and the retiring three were re-elected by a two-to-one majority, despite the fact that a large percentage of the electors were Government officials.

This matter was discussed at the last meeting of the Mandates Commission, and appears on page 10:—

"Sir George Richardson said that an overwhelming majority of the white population had notified the New Zealand Government that they were not in sympathy with the Mau and had full confidence in the Administration.

"Sir James Parr said that this was proved by written representations to the New Zealand Government. The great proportion of the 400 whites were in business and naturally, for business reasons, had asked that the names given in their communication to the Government as to their attitude should not be divulged.

"M. Rappard asked when and by what constituency Nelson was last elected to the Legislative Council?

"Sir James Parr thought that Nelson was elected in December, 1926, that was to say, just at the commencement of the trouble, and by the white population.

"At that time there had been no particularly strong feeling, judging from what General Richardson had told him.

"M. Rappard asked whether the accredited representative had the impression that if Mr. Nelson were to stand for re-election now, he would not be re-elected?

"Sir James Parr replied that General Richardson had assured him—and that was his only means of knowing—that the feeling among the white had completely changed to-day, as was witnessed by the document in the possession of the New Zealand Government which had been received from the white population.

"Sir George Richardson said that the document in question had been signed by very nearly the same number of persons as was to be found on the electoral roll. The great majority of the 400 whites now supported the Administration."

The document referred to herein has not been made public, perhaps for very good reasons. A large number of the signatories would be found not to be on the electoral roll, and I know of several cases where people were pressed to sign. One British planter came to tell me that he was in rather a quandary as to what to do. He held a lease from the Government and was under certain other obligations to them. He was now asked to sign a document expressing confidence in the Administration. He had no confidence in the Administration, but what was he to do under the circumstances? Knowing the conditions which he might be subjected to if he did not sign, I advised him to "sign." In spite of all that has happened, I should be quite willing to challenge Sir George Richardson's remarks by accepting nomination at the next elections, due in November, 1929, if circumstances permit.

Reverting to the public meetings of October and November, 1926, I say again that they did not cause the agitation. On the contrary, they averted a disaster. The Government have until lately given out that these meetings were attended by a very few, and there were no leaders of the Samoan people present. Now Sir James Parr, speaking to the Mandates Commission on the public meetings (page 21) stated:—

"Let us come, then, to that date. What took place then to upset their faith? Well, an unheard-of thing took place. Nelson challenged the Administrator, and won, before the whole Native population."

Inconsistent and Contradictory Statements.

The outstanding feature in the defence of the New Zealand Government is the inconsistency of the reports of its representatives and the contradictory statements they have made right through the controversy. The Government, in supporting Sir George Richardson's policies in Samoa, must have arrived at that decision without a proper investigation into the facts. They are now pledged to the full support of them, and have to

accept responsibility for them. Perhaps they have no alternative. But, by so doing, they have weakened their case, if ever they had one.

Sir James Parr told the Mandates Commission that the Samoans "are very simple and very changeable. They are easy prey for the agitator, and they are anxious to follow any new movements." He referred to a statement made by the Resident Commissioner of Savai'i, Captain Bell, to the Royal Commission: "Yes, if I started a Salvation Army movement here, there would not be a mission native left in the place." "This is because of the novelty of the thing and because of the big drum?" "Yes."

The Mau movement is now over two years old. The Government has not yet found a remedy to disperse it. Where has Captain Bell been? Why does he not start something in the nature of a Salvation Army? Why not promote him to the post of "General" commanding such an army? His name would go down to posterity as the man who rose to the occasion and saved the New Zealand Government from a dilemma.

Sir James also stated before the Mandates Commission (see page 27) :

"General Richardson can tell you an interesting story of the various methods of intimidation that were used to frighten these people and bring them in. What were some of the stories that were told to them? They are multitudinous, but let me take one or two. They were discouraged from paying taxes. That is always a popular line. They were asked: 'Why pay a tax to the Government? What is the Government doing for you? Pay 5s. and join the Mau, which will obtain for you great benefits for the future.

Trust the Mau.' And, again: 'When the Governor goes round the village on the malaga visit and wants to talk to you, get away into the bush; don't talk to him. He may sway you.' It was stated before the Royal Commission that this was deliberately done in order to prevent the Governor telling the Natives the truth. The fear of certain people was that the Natives' ideas about the Administration would immediately be corrected and put straight by the Governor. They were told that Mr. Nelson was going to the New Zealand Parliament, to get a 'victory for Samoa,' and that 'Samoa was going to be reborn as a nation.'"

Espionage and Wholesale Banishments.

The Mau had no means and no power to intimidate the Natives, even if it wanted to. The Administrator, however, used every means in his power to intimidate them. He issued banishment orders wholesale, and in his many official communiques issued to the Samoans he usually wound up by an order to his Native officials to send him a list of the names of all those who were adherents of the Mau, or who attended meetings, or made contributions to it. One batch of banishment orders, shortly after the Minister left, was issued in one day to about 90 Samoans.

At the first public meeting in October, 1926, I learnt that some of the districts had decided not to pay the Medical Tax then due, and that their chiefs had openly notified the Administrator of this intention. Those districts were miles away from medical attention, and they contended they did not get the value for their money. I urged the Samoans present at that meeting to pay the medical tax and all other taxes due to the Government. A breach of the law was directly opposed to the objects of the Citizens' Committee. I begged the Samoan members of the Committee to support me in this. From then on, the Samoans were clearly told that the Citizens' Committee advised them to "obey all the laws and pay all Government dues."

My fears of an impending crisis were proved to be warranted by the well-founded complaints put in at that first public meeting by the Samoans. and the revelations of the decisions already arrived at by the Samoans to precipitate the crisis by refusing to pay the Medical Tax. New hope dawned on them as the result of the first public meeting, and the tax was paid. When the European members of the Citizens' Committee withdrew by the order of the Minister in June, 1927, the Mau then resorted to passive resistance, and revived their former resolutions not to pay the Government taxes.

The proposed trip to New Zealand to meet the Minister in January, 1927, required funds, so voluntary contributions were asked for. Six Samoans and three Europeans were appointed to make that trip. They were prevented from making the trip by the refusal of passports to the Native members. The petition to the New Zealand Parliament, the telegrams exchanged with the Minister, and legal representation in New Zealand and before the Royal Commission more than absorbed the £1800 collected up to the time I was deported from Samoa. The Samoans passed a resolution that every Matai (head of family) should contribute ten shillings (10s.) and every Taule'ale'a (male adult who had not assumed a family name five shillings (5s.), to meet expenses. I am informed that £3000 has since been collected and there is more to come, if required. I should not be surprised if many active adherents to the Mau have not yet paid anything to the fund. This is the sort of thing which happens in other places, besides Samoa. The Mau has no power and no inclination to force people to pay.

The statement that the Mau has ordered its people to get away into the bush, rather than meet the Governor, for fear he might sway them, only tends to show how misinformed and misguided the Administrator has been by his Faipules.

Faith in British Justice.

When the Native leaders joined the Mau meetings for the first time they invariably addressed the assembly in these words: "We have not been asked to come. We have been moved by the Holy Spirit. It is the hand of God. The many oppressive measures imposed on our people by the Administration were moving us to the point of revolution. We now see a way to have our grievances considered without resorting to force. We are told of British Justice and constitutional means of obtaining redress. We pray to God these are true."

Sir George Richardson told the Mandates Commission (page 23):—

"Further, they stated they were told that they would be free from observing the various laws of the Administration, such as collecting the rhinocerous or coconut beetle, which involves half a day's work per week. They were also told they need not clean their villages or clean their plantations, or do other work which was regulated for their own good."

These laws were in force long before the advent of General Richardson. The Samoans fully recognise their utility. The coconut beetle was introduced by the white man, like many, if not most of the other maladies which the Natives now suffer under and succumb to. The Samoans are naturally a cleanly race, so the cleaning of villages and plantations was a village law with the Samoans long before Captain Cook or even Bougainville visited the islands.

When Sir George Richardson's administration was unable to function, the Mau promptly took up the search for beetles, cleaning of the villages and plantations, and other necessary duties. They did them even better than when General Richardson's officials used to supervise and direct the work.

Some of the questions and answers in the examination of Henry Charles Connor, a white Government Inspector of the Agricultural Department, before the Royal Commission (pages 328 and 329) bear this out:—

"What was the position after the commencement of the Mau ?—For a while after the commencement of the Mau there was practically no trouble—that is to say, after the King's Birthday was the time they refused to obey the instructions that were issued to them."

Mau Orders to Natives.

The Minister's visit coincided with the King's Birthday referred to:—

"Have you any experience of the method in which they attended the Governor's malaga after the King's Birthday?—I was in Aleipata when the Governor arrived there."

"Did the Mau people put in an appearance?—The orator that made the speech was a Mau man. There were a few Mau people who turned up and made a speech of welcome, but they disappeared afterwards. It was not like the usual turnout. When they were asked to turn up, by the Governor, in the afternoon for a fono they did not put in an appearance; there were only the Pulenuus and the Faipules present."

"Have you any doubt that there is a fairly wide-spread agreement to reject the authority of the Administrator?—There is no doubt about that."

"What is your experience as to the necessity of constant inspection, and the manner in which they keep their plantations and catch beetles; can they be trusted to do it without the necessity of supervision and inspection?

—No. I can give you an illustration of that. The orders of the Mau committee were to hunt for beetles and keep their plantations clean. When Faumuina was sent over to Lotofaga he found, when he got there, that they were not hunting for beetles and keeping their plantations clean. He took the matter in hand and made them keep their plantations clean. This shows that they are not obeying the orders given to them by the Mau."

Mr. Connor is a Government official, who is the inspector of plantations in a very large portion of Upolu, the most important island in the Samoan group. He must have been well aware of the fact that the policy of the Government was to prove to the Royal Commission that the Mau was responsible for all the evils prevalent in Samoa at the time. He did his best, so far as his conscience permitted.

Faumuina is the chief of Lepea, near Apia, and resides there. He was elected by the Samoans, one of the six Samoans in the Citizens' Committee at the public meeting in October, 1926, and has always been considered one of the founders of the Mau and a leader of the same. He was banished by Sir George Richardson to Lotofaga, over thirty miles away, where he also has great authority, being the leading chief of that district. That gives the Administrator the excuse for saying that he only sent him back "home." If some of the English-born New Zealanders were deported to England, it could perhaps rightly be said that they were only ordered back "home." But my purpose here is to show that Sir George Richardson did not tell the Mandates Commission the truth when he said the Mau ordered the Samoans not to search for beetles and not to clean their plantations. The Royal Commission evidently was not impressed by Mr. Connor's evidence, but he still remains the Agricultural Inspector in the same district, rather an important position among the Natives.

It must be seen that there is no difficulty whatever to prove that the statements made by the New Zealand representatives at the last Session of the Permanent Mandates Commission are deliberately misleading, to say the least of them; but to endeavour to refute every one of them would make this paper rather cumbersome, and there are but few who take sufficient interest in the Samoan question to trouble reading, and fewer still who would care to study a long statement by one on whom the Mandates Commission has passed severe censure, when they recorded the following resolution:—

"The Commission cannot too strongly condemn the action of Mr. Nelson and those associated with him who seem to have been inspired less by a desire for the public welfare than by personal ambition and interests. By unworthy means they have worked upon the minds of an impressionable people, who, prior to their propaganda, showed no disquieting signs of discontent. ..."

Is Force the only Solution?

The Samoan unrest, however, continues. The question is, in which way have the Mandates Commission helped to solve the problem? They have practically approved of "force" being the only solution.

Sir James Parr said the Administrator has not had the chance to tell the Samoans the truth. Why was the truth withheld from the Samoans until the dying hours of General Richardson's administration? Why did he not tell them the truth before? Sir James Parr spoke of endless propaganda by Nelson's committee and the endless funds at their command. Where were the funds to come from? How could anyone issue streams of propaganda against the administration in a place under the administration of such as General Richardson?

The Press has lately published what is undoubtedly an inspired statement that the Mau has already contributed £15,000 to the expenses of Mr. Nelson's trip, to Geneva and £5000 more has been asked for by cable from London. What pettiness, to make such a silly statement! It is perhaps not far wide of the mark to say that the Government have spent more than this in their propaganda to try and cover the deplorable outcome of their militaristic methods in Samoa.

Sir George Richardson very lamely tries to deny that in his excessive enthusiasm to win the confidence of the Samoans he himself originated the slogan: "Samoa for the Samoans." Why should not the Samoans aspire to make "Samoa for the Samoans," anyway?

Samoa's National Aspirations.

Samoa will never be a white man's country, like New Zealand has been converted to be. The white man's object in Samoa is only to trade and to govern. Wherein are the white traders in Samoa any more selfish than the white Government officials? There is nothing in the aspirations of the Samoans for a say in the government of their own country which can be repugnant to the motives of a mandatory which was really concientious and sympathetic.

But the system of "self-government" of the Samoans which Sir George Richardson proclaims to the world he tried to institute smacks of tyranny, which the Samoans will never tolerate. In effect, he says to them: "I know best what is for your good." "I will appoint over you chiefs whom I know will carry out my good ideas." "I will banish and degrade such chiefs as are not obedient to my good laws and the "resolutions" of my Faipules." "I will substitute your social system with something which is better." "I will put good ' ideas ' into the heads of my Faipules, so they can bring them forward in the Fonos as your views." "Do not worry about the finances of your country, as I can well take care of them." "I am a loving, sympathetic and able governor, and you may praise God that you have me to teach you how to govern yourselves." "The white trader is an evil-minded man, whose sole object is to exploit you." "Do not listen to him, but obey my white officials. They are good, like myself."

Unfortunately for Sir George Richardson, the Samoans have had other administrators and governors before him. They have had the three Consuls and a Chief Justice appointed by the three Powers. His tactics are easily detected by them, and taken at their proper value. They ask him to produce the goods, and he is found wanting. He presents himself before the League of Nations, and they hear him. They are impressed with his eloquence. Minor considerations, more especially where they concern a small, insignificant people, must give way to "higher politics." He wins in the argument, but the fight goes on. The position of his successor is made a most unenviable one by his manipulations.

It now rests with the New Zealand Government to find a settlement of the trouble, with or without the League of Nations. The General Elections in New Zealand will be held in November. The Prime Minister and his Government will be hard put to it to explain to the electors why, with the thorough whitewashing they have received at the hands of the League of Nations, they are unable to find a solution of the Samoan muddle. With the "big interests" in New Zealand behind them, they might even overcome this and the many other hurdles

confronting them at the next elections. They have, however, to face the problem. The evasions and untruths they practised at Geneva will not satisfy the Samoan people, whose confidence they have forfeited for all time by their own perfidy and deception. This is not to say anything of their oppressiveness and military methods, which were the outcome of their maladministration.

Samoa's Former Independence.

A lot has been said of the "backwardness" of the Samoan people, and that it was a "sacred trust" of humanity imposed on New Zealand to govern Samoa under a Mandate. Samoa was said to be inhabited by a people who are not yet able to stand by themselves, etc., etc.

After two years' deliberating on Samoan Affairs, the Three Great Powers—Britain, America and Germany—signed, on the 14th day of June, 1889, what was called the "Final Act of the Berlin Conference on Samoan Affairs." This was forty years ago, but it will be interesting to note the following extracts from it:—

Article I.—"It is declared that the islands of Samoa are neutral territory in which the citizens and subjects of the three Signatory Powers have equal rights of residence, trade, and personal protection. The Three Powers recognise the independence of the Samoan Government, and the free right of the Natives to elect their Chief or King, and choose their form of government according to their laws and customs. ..."

Article II.—"Considering, further, that the consent of the Samoan Government is requisite to the validity of the stipulations hereinafter contained, the Three Powers mutually agree to request the assent of the Samoan Government to the same, which, when given, shall be certified in writing to each of the three Governments through the medium of their respective Consuls in Samoa."

The final paragraph reads as follows:—

"The assent of Samoa to this General Act shall be attested by a certificate thereof, signed by the King, and executed in triplicate, of which one copy shall be delivered to the Consul of each of the Signatory Powers at Apia for immediate transmission to his Government."

Autonomy Recognised.

It will here be seen that three Great Powers forty years ago, while making provision for the protection and equal trading rights for their nationals in Samoa, recognised the autonomy and independence of Samoa. Ten years later, Britain withdrew, leaving Germany to assume a Protectorate over the islands of Savai'i and Upolu, America taking over Tutuila and Manu'a. There was no conquest, so Samoa cannot properly be called a conquered country. The Chiefs of Tutuila and Manu'a shortly after signed a Deed of Cession to the United States, which was not accepted at the time, but, after over a quarter of a century, it is said the Deed is still valid and will now be ratified by the United States.

The German Protectorate over Western Samoa was relieved by a New Zealand Mandate. The Samoans, after having given New Zealand every opportunity to justify her Mandate by asking her to grant to them what is universally admitted to be the right of all free peoples "to live their lives according to their own customs and laws," have now appealed to the world for relief from the incompetency and oppression of the present New Zealand Government, but the League of Nations have given a verdict against them.

Will New Zealand give this verdict the diplomatic interpretation underlying it, which is that the question is again referred to her to settle in a satisfactory way, or will she take the literary interpretation and impose sterner measures, thus killing the last vestige of a settlement?

It is only fair here to say that, although the Government hold a majority in the present Parliament, their policies in Samoa have never been endorsed by the New Zealand people. Had means been given them to learn the truth of the whole situation, I feel confident the New Zealand people themselves would have brought about the reforms which alone could have retained the confidence of the Samoan people. The Leader of the Opposition in the New Zealand Parliament has openly advocated in the House and on the public platform drastic changes in the system of government in Samoa. He deplores the measures imposed on the Samoan people by the New Zealand Government and sympathises with their complaints. He and his party represent a very large number of the New Zealand people, who are every whit as patriotic to New Zealand and conscious of their national duties as those who are represented by the present Government. While he is fully prepared and anxious to carry out the trust imposed on New Zealand in its mandate over Samoa, should his party get into power, he has expressed the view that it is contrary to British methods and British traditions to inflict on the Samoan people a rule which is repugnant to all that they hold dear. He has even gone so far as to ask the Government to bring about such conditions in Samoa, which will restore the confidence of the people, or admit their inability to govern the Territory and hand the Mandate back to the League of Nations.

The Struggle Will Continue.

In his pamphlet, "The Revolt of the Samoans," Mr. H. E. Holland, Leader of the Opposition in the New Zealand Parliament, states: "I personally disagree with very many of Mr. Nelson's viewpoints, but that fact imposes on me no obligation to remain silent when the New Zealand Government clothes General Richardson (an official bird of passage) with power to drive such a citizen from his native land, without any charge being laid against him, and without the least semblance of the ordinary right of trial which, it is the boast of Britishers, is guaranteed to every individual citizen." Mr. Holland is the leader of the Labour Party, and I am merchant, importer and exporter, so it is perhaps natural that he does not hold with me in the policy of individual trading and other matters appertaining to same, but he fully agrees with me in the sympathies I have shown and the support I have given to the Samoans in their struggle against the despotic and militaristic measures in Samoa. This struggle will continue, despite the decision of the Mandates Commission, until New Zealand passes Samoa to more experienced hands, or the power of the Administrator to interfere in the revered social customs of the Samoans has been removed by statute and the wrongs suffered by the Samoans under these conditions fully redressed.

I learn that Sir Joseph Ward has now been called upon to take up the leadership of the new United Liberal Party in the New Zealand Parliament at the coming General Elections. Sir Joseph is a veteran statesman, known far beyond the borders of New Zealand, and is recognised universally for his genius as a statesman and financier. He comes from a long line of eminent leaders on the Liberal side of politics in New Zealand, and has ably kept up the prestige of his eminent predecessors—Seddor:, Ballance, and Grey. The Liberal Party in New Zealand are responsible for much of the progressive institutions which the people of New Zealand now enjoy.

The methods of administration imposed by the present Government in Samoa cannot possibly reconcile with the policies of Liberalism in New Zealand. So a possible change of Government as a result of the coming General Elections in New Zealand may produce favourable changes in the relations between New Zealand and the mandated territory. It is hoped that the harm done by the present Government will not have caused an irreparable breach.

With the utmost faith in the justice of the cause of the Samoan people in this long struggle for liberty, I look to the near future with hope and confidence. London, October 1st, 1928.

Protest to League of Nations

To the Secretary-General, League of Nations, Geneva, Switzerland. London, 2nd October, 1928.

Sir,—In reference to my recent petition to the League of Nations and to the Report of the Mandates Commission, as confirmed by the Council of the League, I desire to place on record my grave disappointment at the Findings of the Commission.

It was a matter of deep regret to me that, although present at Geneva during the sittings of the Commission, my request for an opportunity to appear before the Mandates Commission to defend my honour and personal character, and to support the petition presented by me, was refused. I feel certain that if such an opportunity had been given me, I should have been able to substantiate the points raised in my petition and to refute the statements made at the hearing by the representatives of the Mandatory; neither would the strong pronouncement against me by the Mandates Commission have been made.

I therefore ask you to kindly note my earnest protest against the Findings of the Commission, relying upon time to vindicate my character and actions in respect to the troubles in Samoa. Although an exile from Samoa, I am sending a copy of this letter to the Mandatory—the New Zealand Government.

Yours respectfully,

O. F. Nelson.