

held in the council-house, an oblong building, in the native style; the alleged crime was assault with intention of rape. The judges were seated on mats, having Paofai, their chief, a little in front of the rest; and the audience sat or stood around. The culprit was a petty chief, called Ta-ma-hau, a man of huge size, and apparently somewhat of a bully; he stood during the trial leaning against one end of the house, with an air of cool indifference. His accuser was a damsel not remarkable for personal beauty; she sat near the door among a number of other women. The witnesses were patiently heard, and the matter argued, after which the six judges severally gave their opinions and made remarks on the evidence, to which Paofai listened in an attentive and dignified manner, expressing, as occasion demanded, his assent or dissent. He then pronounced the verdict of the court, by which the prisoner was acquitted, but did not dismiss him without a brief and merited admonition. It appeared, that although not guilty of the crime alleged, he had while intoxicated addressed indecent language to his accuser.

Cultivation has undergone a great change within a few years, from the introduction of the guava, which has overrun the lower plain; the pasturage has not only suffered, but to its destructive effects are attributed many evils. Ten years prior to our visit, about which time the guava was introduced by the missionaries, the plain, from the sea to the base of the hills, was covered with verdure; and now it is overrun with an almost impenetrable thicket, before which all other vegetation disappears. I am inclined to think, that although this tree is now looked upon by the natives as a great curse, it will in time be beneficial to them, and cause them to become industrious, when they are obliged to get rid of it to make room for their sugar-cane, cotton, and indigo plantations; which products succeed remarkably well, can be raised at small cost, and will before many years be in great demand.

The cocoa-nut trees were also reported to have been decreasing, but our inquiries did not confirm this statement.

The manner of ascending the trees by the natives, has been frequently described, but can scarcely be imagined until witnessed; the feat is performed by leaping without any cessation, even in climbing the highest tree; the body of the tree being rough or composed of rings, affords some hold for the thong which spans the tree between the feet; at every jump, the body is thrown entirely free from the tree.

The bread-fruit tree is also said to have decreased, and this is no doubt the case; the seeds are said to be often abortive at Tahiti, for which reason the cultivation in this way has been neglected of late, and the plants raised in other modes have become less productive in conse-