

England was not the only nation whose ships of war were brought to aid in overawing the natives. A Frenchman, who claimed the title of consul, although not recognised as such by the king, persuaded the captain of a French frigate to insist upon his being acknowledged as a government agent. Thus, while this half-civilized community was struggling to make advances in morals and religion, French and English men-of-war, alternately, and occasionally in concert, did all in their power to break down the laws and regulations by which alone the union of the native barbarism with the worst vices of civilization could be prevented.

In this state of things it became evident to the king and chiefs that they were in want of information in relation to international law, and they in consequence desired to obtain a competent person to give them advice on that subject. For this purpose they endeavoured to procure a suitable counsellor from the United States. Failing in this attempt, they requested the Rev. Mr. Richards, one of the missionaries, to undertake this duty.

The missionaries, as a body, seem to have thought it a duty to abstain from meddling with any temporal matters, but Mr. Richards was prevailed upon to serve. As respects the internal policy of the islands, no better guide than this gentleman could possibly have been chosen. But like the other missionaries, he was but little versed and had no experience in the affairs of government. He was unused to the petty squabbling of the foreign officials, and his mind was far above the ignoble task of disputing with the revilers of all law and religion.

I had the pleasure of becoming intimately acquainted with Mr. Richards, in his private capacity, and enjoyed an opportunity of judging as to the manner in which he performed his public functions; and I cannot but felicitate the government and people of Hawaii upon their fortune in obtaining the services of one who has made such exertions in their behalf, and who is so well qualified for the responsible situation he holds.

Mr. Richards had, as missionary, been for years a resident of these islands, and was thus in close connexion with the king and chiefs in their spiritual concerns. That they should have desired his counsel in their temporal affairs, is a strong proof of the affection and esteem with which they regarded him, and is alike creditable to his character and the soundness of their judgment. It was not, however, to be received as an evidence of any undue influence of the missionaries in political questions; and from a close examination I am satisfied that no such influence exists. Mr. Richards, since his appointment has no voice in council, and is merely an adviser on such questions as the