

[Reply to the above from the British Resident.]
From the BRITISH RESIDENT to the PARLIAMENT.

Federal Court Bill.

SALUTATIONS! I received your letter saying that you will not agree to the Federal Court Bill as amended, in order that the Arikis might be left to say whether it should or should not be made law on 1st January next. So be it. The work will not now rest with you or me, but with the Queen's Government in England, to whom my report will go.

I have worked for seven years to build up a Parliament and a Government which should have the Maori people taught and trained so that they might become fit leaders, teachers, and missionaries for other islands, and their name become great in all the islands of the sea. The foundations for such a Government must be the prompt administration of justice to all men. Your Judges understand Maori troubles, but are quite unable to deal with those of the Europeans, which grow in number and importance every year. I offered to do that work to relieve them until you could afford to pay a Judge for yourselves. Your not agreeing with the Bill will save me much labour and care. On that ground I am content, but grieve that you should pull down the house which you and I have worked so long together to build.

You ask for more time, but you know well that neither you nor your Arikis will be able to judge better for yourselves one year hence than you can now. Therefore I accept your decision as final. There is no occasion to talk more, and no use now in your Arikis meeting, as you proposed, in Rarotonga. It will be for the Government of Her Majesty Queen Victoria to say what is to be done for securing the proper administration of justice to the Europeans as well as Maoris in the Cook Islands.

Your friend,

FREDERICK J. MOSS,
British Resident.

Rarotonga, 2nd September, 1897.

No. 2.

Mr. F. J. Moss to His Excellency the GOVERNOR.

(No. 17/97.)

MY LORD,—

Cook Islands, British Residency, Rarotonga, 17th September, 1897.

I have the honour to enclose,—

- (1.) Letter to myself (7th September) covering copy of a petition (in English only) from the Arikis of Rarotonga asking for "my withdrawal," &c.
- (2.) Letter to me (13th September) covering a petition in English and Maori from the Cook Islands Parliament, also asking for my recall.
- (3.) Counter-petition and letter (16th September) from Makea a Vakatini a Makea.
- (4.) Counter-petition from merchants and others (dated 9th September), but received by me this day.

With reference to the Arikis' petition (No. 1), I wrote to Makea on the 7th asking her to make it clear to me whether I was to send a copy, or they intended to send the original petition themselves. I have not received a reply, but understand that they will send the original by some person to act as a special deputation from themselves, if possible.

I would respectfully point out that if the Arikis depart in this matter from the proper course, or seek to communicate otherwise than through me, any plea of ignorance which they may set up will be without foundation. They are for the time in the hands of people acting with malice *prepense*, and who aim at making themselves as great in the eye of these Arikis and the British Resident as small as possible.

As to the prayer of the petition, I can only say that the yearning after the good and the just might have found appropriate vent in supporting the Federal Court Bill, and that their plea for forbearance on account of their ignorance of foreign customs is merely an echo of what is known here as "missionary talk." The solution of the whole difficulty is simple if Native customs could only be adopted. I ought to kill a pig and send it to the Arikis. They would then kill many pigs, and, with a great feast, welcome back their wandering brother. All would be pleasant—but on the implied understanding that I should never again mention that nasty Federal Court Bill.

With reference to the petition from the Parliament (No. 2), I enclose the letter sent by them to me on 31st August, and my reply, 2nd September, after having patiently reasoned with them many times from the 9th July, when the Bill was brought before them. A gross misrepresentation of this reply, in keeping with the whole proceedings on the part of their advisers, is the ground of the statement of anger on my part, on which the petition is based. The statement of their being elected from the different islands is a fiction which has been so far unavoidable, but a fiction nevertheless. Mr. John Mortimer Salmon, the Chairman, would certainly not stand the least chance of election by either Maoris or others. He is put in solely by his wife, the Ariki Tinemana, and is not an ignorant Maori to claim consideration, but an Englishman born, who has always ostentatiously called himself an American. Mr. Salmon's admiration for the British flag, as displayed in this petition, is new-born and refreshing. If it be half as sincere as his violent opposition to the Federal Court Bill the British flag will have gained a new supporter. In reality he is a mere tool of the small clique of Europeans which has lost no chance of reviling the British Resident and misleading the Arikis in every possible way during the last two years. Mr. Salmon, as Chairman of the Parliament, has so lent himself to that clique as to allow one of its most vituperative members, by prearrangement, to be present in Parliament, to be called on to make a statement, and in that statement to speak of the British Resident as having "told a direct lie," with other abuse of a similar kind, which he then, as Chairman, called upon the Clerk to specially place in the records of the Parliament. Disgust at this led Makea Daniela, the Clerk, to resign, when Mr. F.