

the British Resident so used the editorial columns of the said newspaper without indicating that the writing was not that of the editorial staff; and that undue influence and intimidation were used by the representatives of Messrs. Donald and Edenborough here to secure signatures to the aforesaid petition.

6. That at a meeting of the Parliament of the Cook Islands in the year 1894 a resolution was passed that the Government bond, Customhouse, and post-office should be removed from the premises of Messrs. Donald and Edenborough, and placed in a more central situation, and entirely away from any mercantile house. That this resolution was not approved by the British Resident, and thus could not become law.

7. That the above question was brought up at three separate and consecutive sessions of Parliament, but was vetoed on every occasion by the British Resident, although the necessary funds for the purpose were guaranteed by the Parliament.

8. That Messrs. Donald and Edenborough have undue advantage over all other merchants, inasmuch as they are the Government bankers, and have full control over all British coin received by the Government.

9. That a private door connects the Government bond with the premises of Messrs. Donald and Edenborough.

10. That British coin has been declared the only legal tender, whereas other moneys are the current coin in circulation, and whereas English coin is not obtainable; and, further, that Messrs. Donald and Edenborough have, as Government bankers, thus greater facilities than other traders in paying their duties.

11. That the Government Auditor is also the local manager for Messrs. Donald and Edenborough, the Government bankers, and that all Government cheques on the said bankers require to be countersigned by the said Auditor before being payable.

12. That the said manager for Messrs. Donald and Edenborough assists the Postmaster in the sorting of letters, and also assists the Licensing Officer and Collector of Customs in his clerical work, and by so doing is, in his capacity as Auditor, auditing his own accounts.

13. That the said manager for Messrs. Donald and Edenborough is also Government Registrar, and during the temporary absence of the Postmaster and Collector acts in his place. At one time he acted for two months during the Collector's absence in New Zealand.

14. That one-eighth part of the public revenue for the year 1896-97 has been expended on the British Residency, and that this money was not voted in the Appropriation Act for such purpose, but was taken from other votes.

15. That since the creation of the Federation of the Cook Islands many laws have been promulgated and approved by the British Resident, and that several of these laws have not been carried into effect.

16. That on the 1st October, 1895, a hospital was inaugurated, against the wish of the Parliament and, for that purpose a building was purchased from Messrs. Donald and Edenborough, and 1 per cent. duties were levied, which realised only the sum of £180 per annum, and this was the only amount obtainable for the salaries of doctor and nurse, medicines, food, and all appliances for a hospital, and to give free treatment to a population of some six thousand inhabitants.

17. That harbour dues are collected, whereas no safe moorings are laid down, nor have been advised to be laid down, for the safety of vessels in the harbours.

18. That vessels sailing under the Protectorate flag of the Cook Islands are permitted to cruise without certificated masters, thus rendering life and property insecure.

19. That very unsatisfactory laws are in existence at the neighbouring islands of the Cook Group, much to the detraction of British trade, and that the British Resident makes no effort to modify such laws.

20. That a road-tax has been levied, whereas the roads and bridges have not been properly attended to, and that, in consequence, the Arikis have taken the matter into their own hands, making the roads themselves in preference to paying the tax.

21. That public schools have been established and taxes made for the same, whereas no certificated teachers have been appointed, no inspections made, and with a very small attendance, the public schools have been a failure.

22. That the liquor laws framed by the British Resident are very unsatisfactory.

And your petitioners will ever pray, &c.

C. KOHN, Managing Agent for the Cook Islands  
Trading Company (Limited).

EMIL PILTZ.  
GEORGE CRAIG.  
WM. B. CRAIG.  
OSCAR OWEN.

Sir James Prendergast, Chief Justice of New Zealand, &c.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOUR,—

Rarotonga, 27th December, 1897.

In the course of the proceedings in your Court on Friday last I made, on behalf of myself and the other signatories to the petition then under consideration, the statement that the provisions of the Passengers Act were habitually neglected to be carried out. As this implied a charge against the Collector, you instructed me to put the charge in writing if I wished it to be considered. I therefore beg to state that the Collector has habitually allowed vessels to carry from the Port of Rarotonga an illegal and dangerous excess of passengers; that the schooner "Titia-tonga," of about 20 tons register, took from Rarotonga on her last trip to Aitutaki upwards of fifty passengers; and that the above is one case out of many that can be quoted.

His Honour Sir James Prendergast, Rarotonga.

I have, &c.,

C. KOHN.

#### PETITION.

WE, the undersigned, merchants and others residing in Rarotonga, hereby beg to lay before your Parliament the following petition, and we pray that you will give it your earnest and favourable consideration:—

1. We petition you to have removed from its present position the business of the post-office, Customhouse, and bond, and that the same be conducted in a more central situation, and entirely away from any mercantile or other house.

2. That the Government be their own bankers, and that the moneys received by the respective departments be under the control of the official employed therein.

3. Should your Parliament grant this, our prayer, and as more revenue would no doubt be required to carry it into operation, we respectfully beg to suggest that the present import duty of 5 per cent. be increased to 10 per cent., and that we are willing to meet such increased duty should your Parliament consider such an increase necessary.

4. That such increased duty should also be applied in providing assistance to the officer at present employed in the departments mentioned.

And your petitioners will ever pray.

[Here follow the signatures on original document.]

Her Majesty Queen Makea and the members of the Cook Islands Parliament.

#### (3.)

HEADINGS OF GRIEVANCES BETWEEN FEDERAL PARLIAMENT AND F. J. MOSS, ESQ., BRITISH RESIDENT.

1. Federal Court Bill, 1897, and 1894.
2. Making of laws.
3. Removal of bank, post-office, bond, and Customs from Messrs. Donald and Edenborough's premises.
4. Hospital, and appointment of unqualified man who has by his ignorance caused death.
5. Not advising the Chief of the Government.
6. Strain on the revenue, Federal Court, 1894.