

pay a subsidy to a mail line which was so materially contributing to our welfare because of the Imperial loan, they should allow £1,000 to be taken from our assets for the patriotic fund? Gentlemen, Her Majesty owns no more loyal dependency than the Colony of Fiji. We are proud of the deeds of her soldiers and our soldiers, for they are the soldiers of the Empire, and we have shown our sympathy with and devotion to the Mother-country by contributing according to our means sums of money which had already been forwarded to the Lord Mayor of London before His Excellency ever passed his vote in the Legislative Council: a Council composed of members selected by the Governor of Fiji himself. Gentlemen, charity commences at home. We had contributed the various amounts that we considered we could afford. If His Excellency was so desirous of associating his name with a contribution of £1,000 to the fund it is perhaps somewhat to be regretted that he did not first make himself acquainted with the fact that there was already a patriotic fund in existence in the colony. Now this is only one illustration of the arbitrary manner in which the affairs of a colony which has no representation are conducted. Gentlemen, federation will cure all this. By federation we will at once have representation, and there is no doubt in my mind that those who are chosen to represent you will take very good care that your wishes are attended to. Now, we must remember that, although we are in the main unanimous, there are always the ill-disposed and timid ones who will suggest difficulties, and you will find that one of the strongest cards that these people will play will be the question of black labour. You will find it stated that the Indian Government will not allow their natives to come to Fiji if we federate. It was only the other day that one man, who up to that time I had regarded as a practical man, remarked to me, "If you have federation the Colonial Sugar Refining Company will have to close; they will not be able to continue without Indian labour." And, in continuing, he said: "Look at the labour laws in New South Wales and Queensland; the Indians cannot go there." Gentlemen, the reason the Indians are not admitted into Queensland and New South Wales is not because the Indian Government will not let them go to those colonies, but because those colonies will not have native labour at any price. I admit at once that it must be a condition precedent to federation that our Indian immigration be safeguarded. Without that labour we shall suffer far more than we can possibly hope to gain by federation. Let us, therefore, understand from the commencement that it shall be a *sine qua non* in the dealings with New Zealand, that we shall have the same laws approximately as at present with regard to native labour. But it may be suggested, how is this to be obtained? Once federated the Parliament may pass laws prohibiting the introduction and continuance of coolie labour. That argument is easily met. Federation is merely a partnership; it is a term used where large communities join together for their common benefit; but for the purpose of illustrating my argument we will resort to the better known term, partnership. We all here understand what a partnership means. It is "the result of a contract whereby two or more persons agree to combine property or labour, or both, for the purpose of a common undertaking and the acquisition of a common profit." Now you know that in every partnership deed there are such clauses inserted as each party deems to be advantageous to him, and both partners are bound by the deed; now, in the larger partnership of communities, or federation, the rights of each community are equally safeguarded. With regard to Indian immigrants, the matter will simply resolve itself into this: Fiji will insist that a clause shall be inserted in the Federal Bill to the effect that no legislation shall be made by the Federal Parliament inimical to the retaining of the coolie. Every legislative body must have certain fundamental rules to govern its action in the same way that every Court of law must rely on the powers which are conferred on it by the Act constituting its jurisdiction. Another great point in favour of federation, to my mind, is the facility that it will afford us in the hearing of appeals. This is a legal ground, and, as a lawyer, I assure you that the difficulties at present attached to an appeal from the Supreme Court are in most cases insuperable. To commence with, before the right to appeal accrues the subject-matter in dispute must be of the value of £500. Now, the majority of cases heard in the Supreme Court are under this amount. Again, the costs of an appeal are exceedingly heavy, and they have to be provided for by the party desirous of appealing. Any one who wishes to appeal against the decision of the Supreme Court must be in a position, at the very least, to find £1,000. This practically renders an appeal unpracticable to most. Now, if we are to federate with New Zealand, it will be no more difficult for a dissatisfied suitor to obtain redress than if he were resident in New Zealand, for the distance between Suva and Auckland is no greater than the distance between Auckland and Dunedin. Federation would therefore cheapen litigation, and I feel certain that the people of Fiji would, in the main, be as content with the decision of the Federal Court of Appeal as they are at present with the decisions of the Privy Council. Besides the ultimate right of appeal from the Federal Council to the Privy Council would always be open to still dissatisfied suitors. Now, gentlemen, let us look at federation from another point of view: that of the benefits the colony will reap from having markets opened up for the disposal of our products. Tea, coffee, cocoa, arrowroot, tobacco—these all thrive, as we know, in this colony. Now we only grow them in small quantities. Why is this, you ask? The answer is that there is no means to dispose of these articles if we produce them. Tea cannot compete in New Zealand with the cheaply grown coolie labour which obtains in Ceylon; but once let the duty of sixpence a pound which is at present imposed on that product be taken off, and we will certainly be able to compete on a favoured ground with far distant Ceylon. The same remarks apply to all the minor articles I have enumerated. Once let us be federated with New Zealand, however, and we will have ready-made markets at our doors. Why is Honolulu in such a prosperous condition to-day? It is because she has been for years the petted child of the United States, and has always had a market ready to receive her staple product, sugar. Now, sugar is our staple also. Federated with New Zealand the statesmen of the federated colony would quickly, by means of reciprocal arrangements with Canada, find a market which we at present lack. There are many other reasons which I could give you were the time at my disposal; but I feel I have already been trespassing somewhat on your consideration. I can only say, in conclusion, that I think federation with New Zealand will be the saving and making of Fiji.