

they and their ancestors have held in undisputed possession for generations back, and that it has insisted upon the recognition of this right in various cases heard before the Lands Court and Court of Appeal. This fact has been set forth as the explanation why some of the white residents have been unsuccessful in establishing their claims to certain lands. I am therefore surprised to learn that certain native landowners and others are in a state of alarm and irritation over some report that the Government purposes taking possession of a large block of land, with a view to lease the same to some Melbourne company. Personally I know nothing of the matter, save that the report is fully believed by the natives, has come to my ears from various sources, is having a very injurious effect upon the minds of the natives, for it is shaking their confidence in the honesty of the British Government, and therefore, unless speedily contradicted, is sure to do considerable harm to the Government itself.

The rumour is that a valuable block of land, including the planting lands of the *taukies*, has been leased to a company for the sum of £10 per annum; that surveyors have been despatched to survey the block; that the native owners have never been consulted on the matter, and therefore have not consented to the transaction; that they are indignant and alarmed, and have resolved to hold a meeting and protest at once against this high-handed proceeding. Whether there are any grounds for this rumour I do not know; but it is very clear the native owners believe there are, and their confidence in the integrity of the Government is shaken. Other natives are looking on with the deepest concern, and are wondering whether the Government really intends to take this land from the owners, and I very much fear that, unless some action is taken to calm the fears of the natives, serious trouble will be the result. This being my conviction, I make no apology for calling the attention of the Government and of the public (for we are all concerned therein) to this unpleasant rumour. I say no more at present, but shall await the issue of this appeal to the powers that be.

I am, &c.

ERE (=“FEAR”).

[Extract *Fiji Times*, 6 October, 1882.]

REASONS for not Agitating among the Natives of the Colony for Annexation to one of the Australian Colonies or to Federated Australia.

HEREIN it will be claimed by the official opponents to the agitation, that the native is not in accord with the European, since it has been the official fashion to represent the Fijian as being supremely happy and positively “shut up in measureless content.” This, it is known in Fiji, is the very reverse of the truth. The people are not happy and contented, but on the contrary they are sullen and seriously discontented. It was the knowledge of this fact which decided those having charge of the present agitation not to venture on addressing the native Chiefs, lest such a disturbing element should be introduced among them as would seriously embarrass the Government.

#### No. 4.

The PREMIER of NEW ZEALAND to the FIJIAN DELEGATES.

GENTLEMEN,—

Sydney, N.S.W. December 15, 1883.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of a memorial signed by the “Delegates No. 1. appointed by the white inhabitants of Fiji, in public meeting assembled, to represent them at the Colonial Conference, and negotiate for annexation to one of the Australasian Colonies,” which states that “the incomplete and partial federation accomplished by the Convention does not immediately affect Fiji in the manner or to the extent wished for;” and adds, that the delegates “now designate New Zealand as the Colony with which they wish to be incorporated, in accordance with the second prayer” of a petition recently transmitted to Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen.

I am sure the Delegates recognize that there are many difficulties connected with the subject of the memorial, and that, therefore, I am unable at present to say more than that, on my return to New Zealand, I will lay the document before my colleagues.

I have, &c.

Hon. R. B. Leefe and the other Delegates.

H. A. ATKINSON.

#### No. 5.

The PREMIER of NEW ZEALAND to the FIJIAN DELEGATES.

GENTLEMEN,—

Government Offices, Wellington, June 7, 1884.

Referring to my letter, dated Sydney, December 15, I have now the honour to state that the memorial which, as “Delegates appointed by the white inhabitants of Fiji, in public meeting assembled,” you forwarded to me, has been considered by the Government of New Zealand.

2. The memorial states that, because “the incomplete and partial federation accomplished by the Convention” recently held in Sydney “does not immediately affect Fiji in the manner or to the extent wished for,” the Delegates designate New Zealand as the Colony with which they wish to be incorporated, in accordance with the second prayer of a petition to the Queen; and asks that this Government will, by supporting that petition, and otherwise, endeavour to secure the complete union of the two groups of islands.

3. You will be aware that a Bill passed by the Assembly of New Zealand during its last session, purports to give to this Government power to enter into arrangements with the Chiefs or other authorities of islands in the Pacific, for which annexation to New Zealand may be sought; but that that Bill was reserved for the expression of Her Most Gracious Majesty’s pleasure, and has not yet been assented to.