

DEAR SIR,—

31st January, 1893.

As I have been imprisoned here for the past two months, I hereby wish you to let the British Government know that there is contagious diseases—it is a form of leprosy. They have a leper island here, but they have no control over it. The healthy people is going over to them nearly every day, and stopping with them all day. There are two children at present in the village amongst the healthy which has got it very badly, and they will not any steps [“take” apparently omitted—F.J.M.] of sending them away, although there has complaints been made to them. Last year H.M. ship “Garnet” was at the island, and the captain would not let the doctor land on the island to see them. At that time they had a law made that anybody who was found to land on the leper island should stop there for good. These children which has it is getting into a bad state, and their parents is on the leper island already. There is also a seaman got it at the North-east Settlement and living amongst the healthy. As Mr. Murdoch is going to Rarotonga by the “Agnes Martin” he may be able to confirm this complaint.

I remain, &c.,

J. H. Garnier, Esq., Health Officer, Rarotonga.

THOMAS HARRIES,

Master, schooner “Norval.”

Enclosure No. 11.

STATEMENT OF JOHN MURDOCH, TRADER AT PENRHYN, BUT NOW ON A VISIT TO RAROTONGA, HAVING ARRIVED AT RAROTONGA BY THE “AGNES MARTIN” ON THE 18TH INSTANT.

21st February, 1893.

WHEN I left Penrhyn, on the 1st February, in the “Agnes Martin,” to come to Rarotonga, by way of Manihiki and Aitutaki, Mr. Harries was still detained by the natives. He was not in confinement, and never had been. He was allowed to go where he liked, so long as he did not leave the island. He lived chiefly on board the “Norval,” sometimes sleeping ashore. Lately he has always slept on board, as he said he was afraid of catching the disease supposed to be leprosy, which has been for some time among the natives. I live on the island myself, and am not afraid of catching it, and, in fact, it is doubtful, and has always been doubtful, whether it is leprosy. The disease is among the natives. It shows itself by great swelling of the head and body, and dark blotches over the body. The disease is a great drawback, though it does not kill the natives. They move about, but are unfit for work. Between ten and twenty cases are isolated on a separate island, but they are visited by a boat, the crew of which go ashore sometimes to see them, when they take supplies for their use. In Omoka, Penrhyn, there are two children whose cases are doubtful, but their father and mother are both isolated in the quarantine island.

Mr. Harries, being afraid of this disease, lives entirely now on board the “Norval.” His wife is with him, and his crew are under his control, and live on board the vessel, but go ashore as they like. The natives prohibit them from bringing written papers from Mr. Harries to the Government ashore. This was because Harries wrote to them warning them that they would be charged \$400 (£60 sterling) per month so long as the vessel was detained. They objected to any more letters being sent to them from that time. They told Mr. Harries if he had anything to say to them to come and say it, but they did not want any writing.

The natives took nothing out of the ship, but left all on board—cargo or provisions—to be dealt with as Mr. Harries might desire. For the first two or three weeks they sent him coconuts occasionally. Latterly they allow him also one live pig per week. The crew feed sometimes on board and sometimes with the natives ashore. The crew are natives of Aitutaki. The cook never comes ashore. He is a West Indian.

The vessel is moored with two anchors in the lagoon, and safe. The “Omoka” (the native schooner, formerly the “Te Uira”) is moored just on the shore-side of her. The master of the “Omoka” is a Scotchman, late mate of the schooner “Goldfinch.” His crew are all Penrhyn natives. The “Omoka” is waiting for the hurricane season to pass before leaving the lagoon. The “Norval” has been covered with a roof of coconut leaves to protect her from the sun. She has also been painted, and is kept in first-class order. I do not know by whom this has been done.

Mr. Harries does not consider himself in any personal danger, nor do I consider him so in any way. But he naturally is anxious to get away, and sees no hope of doing so unless some steps are taken to have his case looked into by some one outside of the Penrhyn Native Government.

I do not know of any application sent by Mr. Harries to any British authority for relief. I should have been certain to know it had he done so. I know only of the papers to which my name was attached as witness, and of a copy of them being sent to Rarotonga, but to whom I do not know.

Witness—H. NICHOLAS.

JOHN MURDOCH.

Enclosure No. 12.

LETTER FROM LLOYD'S AGENT, RAROTONGA, REPORTING SEIZURE OF THE BRITISH SCHOONER “NORVAL” ON THE HIGH SEAS (NEAR PENRHYN), AND ASKING THAT STEPS BE TAKEN FOR HER IMMEDIATE RELEASE; WITH COPY OF REPLY THERETO.

(Received 24th February, 1893.)

SIR,—

Rarotonga, 24th February, 1893.

I have the honour to inform you that the British schooner “Norval,” of 56 tons, official No. 75127, registered and built at Auckland, New Zealand, in 1877, and now owned by