

14. That with the present revenues of the colony, and in view of the increase which would follow were its trade and industries fostered and developed by a wise and suitable form of government, your petitioners strongly believe a considerable surplus would remain to be employed in public works, and in opening up and bringing under the immediate notice of the outside world the vast natural resources of this group of islands.

15. That the Judicial Department is presided over by a single Judge, from whose decision in civil matters there is no appeal, except, in certain cases, to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council; while, at the same time, the right of trial by jury in all such cases is practically prohibited.

16. That in criminal cases the jury right is only allowed when Europeans alone are principals, but where men of native race are involved, either as accusers or accused, the Judge sits with Assessors, who may not deliver a verdict, but may merely give an opinion, which opinion the Judge may entirely ignore or give effect to at his pleasure.

17. That while the Europeans are subjected to these disabilities and humiliations, the native-born Fijians are controlled by a special form of government which has most prejudicially affected the prosperity, progress, and general development of the race.

18. That the imposition upon the natives of a tax, to be paid in produce, of £18,000 annual value, most wastefully absorbs their working-power, and binds a heavy burden upon their shoulders; while the extent to which they are subjected to chiefly levies for service and contributions, the restrictions placed upon their personal liberty, and the interference with their right freely to hire their labour in the best market to the highest bidder, and to enjoy in security the fruit thereof, is tending to enslave and demoralise them.

19. That the general effect of the causes above set forth is a state of agricultural stagnation and commercial depression which is now very seriously affecting the prosperity of the colony.

20. That to improve the position of themselves and native-born Fijian fellow-subjects, and to obtain full relief from the surrounding difficulties, your petitioners have long cherished a strong and earnest desire for the incorporation of Fiji with the Colony of New Zealand, a result that they feel persuaded would be attended with solid and substantial advantages in which both colonies would share.

21. That the self-supporting position of Fiji is clearly evident from the facts that while its population and revenue are as above stated, according to last official returns, which show a decrease on those for the former year, its imports still amount to £434,522; exports, £345,343; total foreign trade, £779,866 annually; while its public debt amounts only to £254,025 7s. 11d., of which £150,000 is bearing interest at 4½ per cent., and the remainder is an Imperial grant-in-aid without interest.

22. That advantage to New Zealand would accrue through the extension of her commerce, the opening up of a wider because a more exclusive market for her products and manufactures, and through the strengthening of her natural position as the colony entitled to exercise the dominant influence in the Southern Seas.

23. That, according to recent calculation, the business done by New Zealand with Fiji does not amount to more than £67,500 annually, whereas from her geographical position and closer contiguity the very great proportion of it would thus be secured to her.

24. That in desiring this connection your petitioners are deeply sensible of the benefits it will confer not only upon themselves, but also upon the Fijians, whom they are convinced would warmly join in this request if it were possible to consult them. Nevertheless, the appeal is made upon the joint behalf, and

Your petitioners therefore now most humbly pray :—

1. That your honourable House will take their case into its thoughtful and favourable consideration.
2. That it will be pleased to support and indorse the action here taken, and by its powerful representations to the Imperial Government endeavour to bring about the incorporation of Fiji with New Zealand.
3. That in the event of the hoped-for successful issue, it will be graciously pleased to grant Fiji relief from its present disadvantageous position by conferring upon it a form of government more suited to the wants and conditions of its people.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray, &c.

W. Ledingham, Merchant.

T. H. Prichard, Journalist.

W. I. Thomas, Barrister and Solicitor.

C. W. Drury, Commission Agent.

F. W. Witham, Commission Agent.

D. B. Millar, Storekeeper.

Alfred W. B. Duffy, Photographer.

A. J. L. Coates, Accountant.

F. H. Hedemann, Merchant.

C. Machens, Merchant.

C. F. Small, Contractor.

Houng Lee, Storekeeper.

J. B. Swann, Chemist.

Alfred Stevens, Storekeeper.

John Collins, Grocer.

Patrick S. Ryan, Hotelkeeper.

H. Douglas, Master Mariner.

P. Hoerder, Merchant.

Adolph Ruschpler, Storeman.

John Walker.

George Krafft, Storekeeper.

W. G. Whiteside, Storekeeper.

O. Olive, Storekeeper.

J. P. Gore Martin, Accountant and Landowner.

A. Lindsay Douglas, Accountant.

W. W. Forwood and Co., Commission Agents.

D. Paul, Auctioneer and Commission Agent.

Hugh Munro, Hotelkeeper.

E. J. Faulkner, Hairdresser and Tobacconist.

Wm. West, Ironmonger.

Syd. O. Edwards, Ironmonger.

John St. Julian, Solicitor.