control of the liquor traffic ought to be far more stringent than it is, as far as the people of the island are concerned. The authorities, by seeking in this way to make money out of the system—money of which no account is rendered, and which does not go to the revenue of the island (as far as I can learn), have proved themselves unfit to deal with this matter. In support of this contention I would urge that the Rev. John Chalmers, whose approval of the permissive liquor law was accepted by many at the time the law was made as a strong argument in its favour, came to the conclusion, after further thought, that a mistake had been made, and that nothing but total prohibition for the Natives would do in Rarotonga. But whether the law be amended or not it ought to be administered as it was passed, and no one ought to be allowed to add or take from it.

I would also call your attention to the fact that in Aitutaki, where there has always been a total prohibition law, there has been established a bond in which liquor is kept, and out of which it is sold to the people of that island.

There ought also, in my opinion, to be some means of placing a check on the liquor that is exported from Rarotonga to Humphrey's Islands and to Penrhyn Island.

I am &c.,

W. N. LAWRENCE,
Resident Missionary.

Frederick J. Moss, Esq., British Resident, Cook Group, South Pacific.

Enclosure No. 2.

REVEREND SIR,— British Residency, Rarotonga, 3rd February, 1893.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 31st January, in which you make "a formal complaint and protest concerning the conduct of Tepou-o-te-Rangi, District Judge of Avarua, and Judge of the Supreme Court," for his action in connection with divorce, and also call my attention to the conduct of the Native authorities concerning the liquor law of the Island of Rarotonga, and other matters. It will be more convenient to deal with each of these matters separately, and I therefore confine myself in this letter to your complaints respecting divorce, which I will take seriatim. They are:—

1. That Tepou took it upon himself, either acting in his capacity as District Judge of Avarua or as Judge of the Supreme Court, to grant divorce to a large number of people, some of whom are natives of Rarotonga; others are natives of Mangaia and of Aitutaki, and two are foreigners resident in Avarua, a white man and a Chinaman. That these divorces were granted before the present divorce law was passed by the Rarotonga Council, and that, according to the custom of this island and of the other islands of the group, it was not in the province of the District Judge to grant divorce; therefore that the conduct of Judge Tepou was altogether illegal and arbitrary.

I have communicated with Judge Tepou, who tells me that in no case has he acted as Judge, but always as the servant of Queen Makea, with her special knowledge and at her special request. I find, further, that there has never been divorce, in the ordinary sense of the term, in these islands. No Court was ever held, and no record has ever been kept. The original practice was simply for the missionary or the Native teacher to remarry persons at his own discretion, sometimes consulting the Ariki and sometimes not. The only recorded law upon the subject was that "when a man ran away from his wife, and was absent five years, the wife might be divorced and marry again." This law, from its rigidity and unsuitableness to the circumstances and character of the people, fell quickly into desuetude, and has long been a dead letter. As Tepou puts it: "The law was only made on paper. People asked to be married again to some one else. If leave was granted, there was an end of it." You will pardon my remark that under these circumstances the terms "illegal" and "arbitrary," used in your letter, seem to me quite inapplicable to anything done under such a system.

2. That when the Native teachers in connection with the London Missionary Society refused to marry people so divorced, on the ground that their divorces were illegal, Tepou-o-te-Rangi arbitrarily and illegally married people so divorced by himself. To this Tepou replies simply that he has never married any one in his life.

3. That in your opinion this conduct of the District and Supreme Court Judge has struck a blow at the sacred institution of marriage in this island, the effects of which will be lasting for evil unless something be done at once. Judge Tepou's replies to the two previous complaints (Nos. 1 and 2) seem to me to render any reply to this unnecessary.

4. You particularly call my attention "to the fact that divorce was granted to people from Aitutaki and Mangaia, even after those islands had declared emphatically, by the vote of their representatives in the Federal Parliament, that they did not wish for a divorce law." You add that few of these cases were of such a nature as would have obtained divorce in England, Scotland, or any of the colonies, and finally quote, as "an example of a case of this kind," that of Joe, an Aitutaki man, married to an Aitutaki woman, with whom he had lived for a number of years. You further say that his wife was a woman of most exemplary character, and that the only ground on which the man (Joe) "could obtain a decree of divorce" would be "his own infidelity and that he was tired of his wife."

Judge Tepou replies to this, and the statement of his having granted divorce to a "large number of people, some of whom are natives of Mangaia and of Aitutaki" (contained in paragraph No. 1), that the case of Joe, cited by you as an example, is the only one in which an Aitutakian has been dealt with, and that Kaena, a Mangaian, is the only one in which a man from Mangaia has been dealt with. He further informs me that Joe had been living in Rarotonga for two or three years, and that when Joe was remarried by the Native teacher in Rarotonga, on his (Tepou's) authority (acting for Makea), the first wife of the said Joe was cohabiting, and had been for some time cohabiting, in Aitutaki with a native of Tahiti. Also, that the members of the Federal