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NEW ZEALAND.

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# FEDERATION OF FIJI WITH NEW ZEALAND.

(EXTRACT FROM THE *FIJI TIMES*, DATED 21st JULY, 1900.)

*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by leave.*

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EXTRACT FROM THE *FIJI TIMES*, DATED 21st JULY, 1900.

A PUBLIC meeting was held in the Oddfellows' Hall, Levuka, on the evening of 14th June, to discuss the question of the federation of Fiji with New Zealand.

It should be mentioned that previous to the public meeting a caucus was held in Mr. W. I. Thomas's offices, called by the Warden, to meet Messrs. Riemenschneider and Humphry Berkeley, who, in response to the Warden's invitation, had come to Levuka for the purpose of attending the meeting.

The chair was taken by the Warden, D. J. Solomon, Esq. On rising he said: Gentlemen,—At the request of the ratepayers of Levuka, I have called this meeting to discuss the question of federation, but, before proceeding further, it will be advisable to appoint a secretary, for which post I would suggest Mr. Carr.

On the motion of Mr. W. I. Thomas, seconded by Captain Robbie, Mr. Carr was duly appointed.

*The Chairman* (continuing): Gentlemen,—I may state I am proud to preside at a meeting to initiate the federation movement, which I trust will be productive of definite results. We had Mr. Seddon here a short time back, and he made a few remarks on the subject of federation with New Zealand, among which he stated that he believed that, if the residents wanted it, there was a reasonable hope of their getting federation. On my part I believe in federation, I do not say with New Zealand particularly, as long as it is federation with a British, and not a foreign power. Now, gentlemen, the question is whether we federate with Australia or New Zealand? In discussing this, we must remember that with this country the great question will be the native population and the Indians. Now, Australian Governments have not shown that they can look after blacks and aborigines. I remember seeing King Billy hanging about Sydney hotels for drinks, and not too sober at that. On the other hand the New Zealand Government have shown themselves capable of looking after native races. Mr. Seddon informs me that the Maori race is on the increase, and he says there is no reason why there should be no increase among the Fijians. There is no doubt that the object of this meeting is federation with New Zealand. Such federation means markets for our products, and will allow their products in this country. At the present, this is a Crown colony under a "one-man government," and we must all recognise that federation with any colony possessing representative government is better than we are now. Of course, we should have delegates to the Federal Parliament, while internal affairs would be managed by a Council of local nominees and representatives. We should, at least, have some voice in our own government. At present the Legislative Council consists of official and non-official members appointed by the Governor, arranged in such a way that the supposed people's representatives, the non-official members, are always outvoted. Gentlemen, federation is the only thing that can bring this country along. Where are the many planters that it once possessed? There are, comparatively speaking, none now. With federation an increase of capital would pour into the colony, the country taken up, with the establishment and growth of industries. There is no reason why coffee, cocoa, tobacco, tea, and spices should not form staple products of this country. Therefore I say, gentlemen, every one in Fiji is, or should be, interested in the subject. It is no question of rivalry