

of Representatives. And this is what we wonder about, as to why they should think so, because we have been living here in peace and concord. Now, this is what we think: that we should still continue as we have been. That is our wish with regard to that point. Here is another of our wishes: We are now joined to New Zealand, and we also think that the produce of these islands should be protected by New Zealand, and that we should be assisted by New Zealand to get a profitable return for our produce. Our produce goes in the same ship with the produce from the Society Islands, and the addition of the shipment from the Society Islands to the shipments from here causes the price to go down. It is our wish that you should seek some means of assisting us in this matter. This is another desire we have: that the knowledge of the people in the Cook Islands should grow. We do not see at present any means of establishing schools in all the islands and villages. We think that if children were taught to be teachers that they then could teach the people in all the villages. We wish that a school of that nature should be established for the training of our children as teachers, so that they may go and become teachers in the other islands of the Group and in the villages of this island.

*Mr. Lawrence*: These are the principal things that they would request you to consider at present. He says there are other matters that have already been talked about—such as the establishment of a hotel—but he thinks that that perhaps is finished.

*Hon. Mr. Mills*: I would like him to say what the Arikis and people think about that matter.

*Pa Ariki*: This is our thought and our wish, and, in fact, what we decided when we talked upon the matter before: It is a good thing that a house of accommodation should be established in Rarotonga, where visitors may live, because it is a sad thing when visitors do come to the island, if they are respectable people and wish to live in a respectable place and do not care to live in a Native house, that there should be nowhere else for them to go. For that reason we think it is a good thing that such a house should be established. But there is one kind of food—or drink—that has been a source of trouble to us, but which white people have been accustomed to indulge in more or less—that is, wines, beer, and spirits. I do not want to prevent white people drinking these if they wish to. That is one point, and we have come to the conclusion that we will leave it there that it might be tried. But with regard to the Natives, the law here is that Natives should not drink liquor. We have no fault to find with the white people having what they wish, but with regard to the Natives they should not be allowed to drink that. We wish to impose no bar upon the white people, but the Natives should not be allowed to have intoxicating liquors in that house. But the Maoris say to us, "There are two laws; there is a law for the white and a law for the Maori." Our reply to that is that the Natives cannot drink in moderation, whereas the white man can. But, on account of that objection which the Natives make—that there is a law for the Maori and another for the white—we think there should be something allowed that is suitable for the Natives.

*Colonel Gudgeon*: Not spirits, though.

*Mr. Lawrence*: He has not defined what he thinks suitable.

*Pa Ariki*: We mean wine and beer.

*Colonel Gudgeon* (to the Minister): "Wine" here means claret; that is the only wine imported into the island.

*Mr. Lawrence* (to the Arikis): Have you anything else you wish to ask the Minister?

*Pa Ariki*: That is all we have to ask.

*Hon. Mr. Mills*: I am very pleased to be with you to-day. I recognise that you hold very high positions in these islands, and I also understand that your names are held in the very highest respect not only in Rarotonga, but also in the adjacent islands. Therefore it is very pleasant for me to be able to meet you and hear your views and give you some of mine. I realise that you are the representatives now of those great Arikis who have been called away to the spirit-land of their fathers. I am very sorry that we have arrived too late to see the great chief who has just passed away. The Premier himself would have liked very much to come up with the party, but it was inconvenient for more than one Minister to leave New Zealand at this time. As I have been during the past fifteen months administering all matters in connection with this and the other islands when submitted to the Government by Colonel Gudgeon, it was deemed necessary for me to come. I am sure that you will readily understand how difficult it is to satisfactorily communicate with people unless you see them and know their manners of life and thought. Now, when I go home and see my chief, who is the Premier, and my colleagues, I shall be able to say that I have met and, I hope, made good friends with the great Arikis of Rarotonga; and if you should at any time wish to communicate with the Government through me I shall be the better able to deal with your letters through my having met and spoken to you. I have heard a good deal about these islands for many years past, but it is only when one has actually seen Rarotonga that one can realise what a beautiful picture it presents to visitors. I have seen very many beautiful scenes in New Zealand, very lovely pictures indeed, but they are all different from Rarotonga. This island is one panoramic tropical picture. Everywhere I look I behold beautiful scenes, and I am having some photographs taken of different views, so that I shall be better able to retain them in my memory, and I shall have very much pleasure in sending you, the Arikis of Rarotonga, some copies. The question that my friend Pa Ariki brings up with regard to protection on the produce shipped from this island is a very important one, and I intend to get all the information that I can at the various islands, so as to be able, if possible, to submit to the Premier and my colleagues a consensus of opinion obtained from different sources. You will all understand that it would be premature on my part to give any decision on this question until it has been submitted to the Premier and my colleagues in Cabinet, but I shall certainly do my best to place the matter before them in such a way that they will clearly understand what it means for those who are residing here to compete with other islands which