

claimed. The people in England, at the instigation, I think, of Mr. Travers in Wellington, succeeded in making me bankrupt there. Here is a letter which will assist the Committee: "Wellington, New Zealand, 12th December, 1894.—The receiver in the estate of the bankrupt Joshua Jones, No. 995 of 1894.—Sir,—It would be of advantage to the creditors in this estate that an inquiry should be made into the transactions of the bankrupt with his mortgagees in this country, Messrs. Plimmer and Johnston. The former has received nearly £8,000 and the latter £1,600 from the sale of Mr. Jones's property at Mokau, and I am inclined to think that a sum of between £3,000 and £4,000 may be recovered from them, the amount for which the mortgages were given being, to that extent at least, in excess of the amounts actually advanced to Mr. Jones. I am myself his creditor to the extent of about £400, and I should be very glad if a suit for account were instituted against the mortgagees. I am fully conversant with Mr. Jones's affairs, and should be willing to give every assistance in obtaining a proper investigation into his transactions with them. I send this through my agents, Messrs. Flower, Nussey, and Fellowes, for whom I am now acting in relation to the property purchased from the mortgagees.—I am, &c., WILLIAM THOMAS LOCKE TRAVERS." This is the official document with the stamp on the top of it. [Exhibit RR.] In February, 1911, the representative for Taranaki (Mr. Okey) wrote a letter to Sir Joseph Ward urging his attention to this matter, in the interests of the public as well as mine, to try and get a settlement of it. Mr. Grocott, private secretary to Sir Joseph Ward, writes a letter dated 6th March, 1911, in the name of the Prime Minister, three days after Sir Joseph Ward and Dr. Findlay left and were on the water going Home, stating that the matter had been left to the Acting Prime Minister to deal with. Now, according to the date the member for Taranaki should have received that letter on the 7th March, but he did not get it until the 17th. Why? The reason I assigned was this: The Order in Council was not signed until the 15th, and it was perfectly safe to post it to Mr. Okey on the 16th, and he did not get it until the 17th, although he ought to have got it on the 7th. It appears to me that there was an object in keeping that letter back. Having got the signature of the Governor it was perfectly safe—he would not withdraw his signature after giving it. Numbers of times Mr. Okey, in season and out of season, urged the Government to assist me as well as to get a large block of land adjoining his district settled, but any representation he made was not a bit of good—they would not pay any attention to it. I shall have to go back a little. This is a letter, dated at Wellington, 11th November, 1908, which I addressed to Sir Joseph Ward: "Sir,—Mokau lands petition: The Premier is aware of the cause of my appeal to Parliament during last session—namely, that the Law Court of Appeal had given a decision in the case of *Herrman Lewis v. Jones* herein hostile to the defendant, and had refused him leave to appeal to the Privy Council or to enter an action for restitution and accounts. Upon the matter being brought before both Houses of the Dominion Parliament, the Premier in the Lower Chamber and the Attorney-General in the Council, while deprecating any approach under the circumstances to the higher Court of Parliament, replied to honourable members, 'Let Mr. Jones come by petition and have his case inquired into and reported upon by the representatives of the people.' I obeyed this behest, and petitioned both Houses. The Council Committee inquired into the matter, hearing both sides, and brought up a report which was unanimously adopted by the Council—i.e., that the Government appoint a Royal Commission to inquire, and in the meantime take steps to prevent any further dealings with the land. This, I submit, should be clear to the Premier that, notwithstanding the decision of the law-court, the Committee were of opinion that a great wrong had been done to the petitioner. I have reason to believe that the House of Representatives would have come to a similar conclusion, but I understood it was not considered necessary to hold two inquiries. Upon the report being referred to the Government I naturally concluded that steps of relief would follow; but my solicitor, Mr. Treadwell, informed me when Parliament separated that he had seen the Attorney-General, who stated that the Government did not intend to carry out the report of the Committee—they would neither appoint a Royal Commission nor protect the property from further dealings—but some proposals about dealing with the property under the Native Land Board and by arbitrators were stipulated and considered, and the firm of Findlay and Dalziel, solicitors, on behalf of a client named Herrman Lewis, the alleged purchaser of the property, also acting in connection with Travers and Campbell, solicitors for Flower's executors, put forward certain terms that ended in an impossibility to comply with. These terms were, briefly, that I should, as a condition prior to any assistance being given by the Government, consent to the payment to Herrman Lewis from the proceeds of the sale of the land the sum of £11,000, with further probable concession to his benefit of the surplus sale-proceeds of the surface of 50,000 acres land, and also consent to pay the sum of £14,000 to Flower's executors—in all £25,000. I was to receive a 'promise' (only) of certain small freeholds—about one-tenth of the entire estate, and the freehold of all the minerals—quantity unknown. I did endeavour to meet a portion of the terms to some extent, but failure followed owing to further exorbitant demands being made on the 31st October last by Findlay and Dalziel's clients. I would inform the Premier that the Committee intended the inquiry by Royal Commission should be level-handed, untrammelled by conditions for or against either of the parties. It never contemplated the enforced undertaking by me to pay £11,000 and £14,000 respectively. I would further inform the Premier that the alleged purchase by Herrman Lewis was a 'dummy' purchase. He has not paid one penny upon it. He bought it for £14,000, and mortgaged it back the same day for £14,000; therefore the proposed payment to him by me of £11,000 was absolute extortion, and the payment of £14,000 by me to the executors would be more than balanced by counterclaims. I understand the Hon. J. Rigg, M.L.C., has written to the Prime Minister on this subject. The Government should be well aware that it was this interference of Ministers and officials with my negotiations that commenced all my troubles from 1876 to 1892. The fact was proven and admitted before a Royal Commission in 1888. I need not have gone to England