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LETTER

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FROM

QUEEN POMARE

Queen of Tahiti

TO

Louis Philippe,

KING OF THE FRENCH.

Honolulu, Oahu:
PRINTED FOR THE HON. L. HOPE.



Letter from Queen Pomare to H. H. M. Kamehameha III.

O, KING OF THE SANDWICH ISLANDS,—May you be saved by the true God!

This is my word to you. In a certain newspaper, printed and circulated at Honolulu, called the Polynesian, there are made known to all men some false statements, spoken by Frenchmen and those who agree with them.

I write this little word to you to tell you to undo the wrong and injury done to me, your sister, Queen of the Islands of the South, and tell the editor and printer, to print in the Polynesian this word, the copy of a letter that I have written to the King of the French, and which makes known the truth and the truth only.

Beware of the Roman Catholics and the friends of Roman Catholics.

(Signed) POMARE.

Encampment of Vaioau, Island of Raiatea, this twenty-fifth of September, 1844.

The foregoing is a true translation, and I am witness of Queen Pomare's signature.

(Signed) GEO. PLATT.

[TRANSLATION.]

O, great King of the French, may you be saved by the true God!

This is my word to you, O King. I make known to you the truth respecting what has occurred at my Islands from the beginning to the end, between me and some of my people and your Naval officers.

When you have heard me, then decide, and tell me if Du Petit Thouars has acted justly towards me, by exacting first \$2,000, afterwards compelling me by threats to agree

to the Protectorate treaty, and then seizing my government.

That you may know then, O King, in the first place, the only Frenchmen who resided upon my Islands, before the year 1842, were nine, and nine only, and these are they:—

1st. Joseph Lefevre, alias tattooed Joe. He came here in the year 1832 in the English ship “Harriet” from the Marquesas, where he had resided among cannibals, who had tattooed him all over his face and body. He was a boasting and a passionate man, and was always quarrelling with and threatening my people.

2d. Nicolas. He came here in an American ship in the year 1839. He was a man of bad conduct; he sold spirits and kept a bad house. He was fined for breaking the laws of the land.

3d. Victor. He came here in the year 1840, as cook of an American ship. His character and behaviour were just like those of Nicholas, and he was also fined for breaking my laws.

4th. Bremond. He came here in the year 1834, as carpenter of an American vessel. His conduct was rather better than that of the others, but he also sold spirits and wine and broke my laws, and he was also fined.

But neither Bremond, Victor, Nicolas nor Lefevre had any reason for saying they were

ill-used. Every one knows that they were justly fined.

5th. Louis. He came here in the year 1830; he belonged to a Chilian schooner.— His conduct was good, he is not an angry man, and he has not been convicted of any thing.

6th. Lucas. He sailed a vessel in which he traded about these Islands, in the year 1838; afterwards he brought his family and has resided amongst us ever since. He is an upright man in his dealings, he has not been complained of and has not complained; he is a good man.

7th. French William. He came here in the year 1838. He has not been complained of, neither has he complained. He is a mild man, and is beloved by my people; he still dwells amongst them.

8th. Bernard. He was master of a ship. He touched here a few times as he sailed between Valparaiso and Sydney, and in the year 1841, he lived here one year. He was once arrested for striking a constable in the performance of his duty; as my people were carrying him to prison on their shoulders. Before he reached there, he was liberated at the desire of the American Consul. He was a respectable man and now lives at the Sandwich Islands. He was glad that he got out so well from that difficulty.

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9th. Maurac. He was captain of a French brig. He came to these islands in the year 1828, and now dwells as Huahine. One day his dog attacked mine, and my people wished to separate them, and as they were separating them, one of the constables named Moia, of my family, pushed Maurac.—Maurac gave him a falling blow, and he fell down. From that circumstance, a Dutchman named Morenhaut, whose trading affairs went only badly, and who by falsehoods and underhand dealings, gained from Du Petit Thouars, the office of French Consul, insisted that Moia should be judged and banished, but as I thought this punishment too enormous for the offence, I commuted a part, and had I not a right to do so?

This Morenhaut who was accustomed to sell brandy by the bottle to my people, and who still lives with another man's wife, in defiance of my laws and without shame, has said frequently that the French were better treated than all other foreigners. He ought to know the truth, for when his office of American Consul was taken away, he was appointed, as I have before said, French Consul.

Behold then, O King, the false and unfounded statements of Du Petit Thouars, that the French had been ill-treated, their houses broken, their property seized, and other statements of that kind!

This is another word about two French Missionaries, who came here in the year 1836:—

They landed clandestinely, without permission. It was not agreeable to me that I should permit them to reside on shore; not because I thought evil of them as men, nor because I was angry with their faith; but because I knew they came to teach a different doctrine from that which I and my people had learned,—and because that alone would have caused divisions, unhappiness and contentions amongst us.

They did not regard my commands, and broke the harbor regulations, which prohibit all passengers coming on shore until permission has been obtained.

If my laws or harbor regulations had been bad or unjust, they would have complained to their Government; but it was not right to break my laws and regulations: on that account they were sent back on board their vessel. It is false that they were roughly treated or ill-used. What then is my crime towards these men? They were to blame, but Du Petit Thouars was more to blame; because he was a French Admiral, and ought to have known the right and the wrong.

In the year 1838, Du Petit Thouars first arrived in a large ship, called the Venus, off the harbor. Morenhaut went on board that ship and said to him, “these islands

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would be good lands for France, and if you will hear what I say, we can obtain these lands some day." Then Du Petit Thouars entered the harbor and anchored. I was residing on the little island of Motuuta, close to where the Venus anchored, and opposite the town of Papeete.

Du Petit Thouars immediately sent one of his lieutenants to me with a letter, and said that the King of the French was greatly angry for the ill-treatment I had done to the people of France, and on account of my evil doings to those Frenchmen who came to Tahiti, but especially to the two priests Laval and Caset. He said also that his business on which he came was to exact a recompense due to that great and valiant nation—and that I must give him 2,000 dollars. The lieutenant who brought the letter was very angry, and frequently put his hand on his sword, and asked me how I dared provoke so great a nation as France. My people thought that that lieutenant of France would cut me with his sword, and they said to me, flee!

He said to me there were sixty ships, as large as Du Petit Thouars' ship. I was greatly afraid, having been delivered of a child only a week previously.

My friends besides me, some missionaries, good men, and who had taught me the Lord's Prayer, and who have always been kind to me, and given me good counsel,

said they would seek the money for me; and then I said I would pay it. The lieutenant then became civil, and went back to his ship. I immediately got upon a canoe, and rowed quickly to Poofi. I did not go in a boat, lest Du Petit Thouars should know me and detain me. I had scarcely left Motuuta, when Du Petit Thouars sent soldiers thither, and I was informed to detain me there, until the money was all given to him; but I was not caught by them.

I went to the mountains, a little way from Papeete, and my people collected about me to protect me. This is the true account of those things; and can you, O King of a great nation, approve such conduct of one of your officers, towards a weak and defenceless woman?

This is another thing I would say unto you — In the year 1839 another French ship called the *Artemise*, came here. She struck on a rock when off the coast of Teaharooa, but she did not sink, on account of the knowledge and activity of an Englishman, named Ebrill, who acted as pilot, and through the help of hundreds of my people, who worked at the pumps, day and night, by which she was brought to land. This ship was two months repairing. We cut down and gave some of our best trees to the captain, La Place, and many other things we gave him to repair his ship. When finished, and his ship was quite ready to put

to sea, La Place suddenly called an assembly of the chiefs, and with his guns shotted, he commanded us to do away with one of our laws which made the protestant religion the religion of this land, and that we should give portions of land to erect houses of prayer upon, for Roman catholics. La Place cannot conceal this truth, although he is, by his own account, an unbeliever. Can you, O King, approve of his conduct? Can you be surprised that my people are offended with the French?

In the meantime, Du Petit Thouars had gone to Europe, and recollecting all the words that Morenhaut had told him, he came here again in the year 1842. He then wrote a declaration, which I did not see,—but I was told there were in it many false accusations against me. He said he would fire upon the town, if I did not give 10,000 dollars to him,—and he knew I had not the money.

By intrigue and intimidation, and through some of my chiefs, that Morenhaut, by threats and promises had gained to agree to his plans, I signed, against my will, the Protectorate Treaty, and submitted quietly, and commanded my people to do the same; because there was no remedy. And because Reine and Carpegna, who belonged to the Council of Government, were good men, and not passionate and threatening, we dwelt quietly. — I hope you will reward

them. But Moernhaut, who had greater power than they, and who was named Commissioner Royal, evil entreated me. He shook his fist in my face, foamed at the mouth, and said many hard words against me, in the presence of many strangers, and some British officers. O King, fetch away this man; I and my people cannot endure his evil-doings. He is a shameless man.

Du Petit Thouars returned to Valparaiso, and wrote to his government a very false account of these doings; and not content with so doing, he came back again hither in the year 1843. He threatened me again, and said I had done wrong whilst he was at a distance; and that I had committed a great crime, in continuing friendly with the missionaries and with Englishmen, my old friends, who have constantly supported me. The Protectorate Treaty did not say that I should cast off these men who had turned my fathers to christianity, and who had taught me the word of life, and been our guides to good works. Was it a crime for me to love and honor these men? Was it a crime for me to consult them in my troubles? That which was said, that they advised me to oppose the French, is very untrue: It is altogether false. They helped in restraining my people, and keeping them quiet; but they wept in my weeping, on account of the bad conduct of Du Petit Thouars and Morenhaut to me. They and

I also wept every day, in seeing the growing bad conduct amongst my people, through the evil customs and the immoral conduct of the French soldiers, whom they brought to my land, in breaking the Sabbath, and in setting many evils before my people. And the evil conduct of some of the officers, is worse than the soldiers.

Du Petit Thouars insisted that I should not hoist my flag, pretending that it was a British flag. But it was not, indeed; he knew it, and his officers also knew, that it was not a British flag. But because I would not pull down my flag, he seized my house, my land, and my government. I fled for refuge to the British Consul, my tried and staunch friend, and when there was no longer a refuge to be obtained there, I and my children fled on board the good little ship Basilisk for refuge. There I remained four months. Though the ship was so near the shore that a bread fruit thrown would have reached it, I durst not land. The French Governor desired to obtain me and my children, but I could not believe him. Captain Hunt was insulted, because he protected me and was kind to me. The British Consul, Mr. Pritchard, was seized because he supported me, and was thrown into a bad, and damp prison, and one man, whose name was D'Aubigne, boasted, in a proclamation, that Mr. Pritchard's head should be the recompense for all the French blood shed by

my people; will you, O King! justify this conduct?

After taking away my all, what has Bruat done?

I will make known to you. He divided my land into four parts, and gave them to the chiefs whom Morenhaut had obtained, viz. to Hitote, Tati, to Utami, and to Paraita, each a part.

Great was the anger of my people at that, because they did not like to see rebellious chiefs rewarded, and they who were faithful and without deceit, deprived of their own lands.

Afterwards war commenced at Tairaibu, and this was the cause on account of which it commenced. Some men from the French ship seized some women from the shore, their husbands not agreeing to it. War commenced there. Bruat then entrapped four of my chiefs, and confined them in irons on board the "Uranie," because he had been informed that they did not regard his proclamation, and he tried to seize hold of some others. My people were exceedingly enraged at these things, and they assembled together in one place. But they did not go to Papeite to fight, and burn the houses, and kill the French, because I and the missionaries restrained them, therefore they did not. But Bruat was not content with this, but listened to the words of the timid man, Morenhaut, and he led his army to Mahaena, and fought

there a horrid battle. Ninety of my people were killed—the French gave no quarter.— They say fifty of theirs were killed, but it is well known that there were many more killed.

They did not pursue my people beyond the reach of the great guns of the ship; they knew what the end would be if they had so done. They were glad to return to Papeite. Afterwards they fought again, and attacked my people at Haapape, and Faaa. Their success was less in these place than in their battle at Mahaena. Their steamer was their safety.

Bruat has written much about these fights, as if they had been great victories, but they disheartened the hearts of the French soldiers, and they encouraged my people. This is the truth. Ask any of the foreigners, if not, ask the French officers who saw the fights, and who will tell the truth. They will also make known to you what I now say to you, that my people do not desire the customs and conduct of the French soldiers, and that we do not accord with the Roman Catholic missionaries. We have been taught to think and believe a different doctrine from this.— Not one of my people has yet received their doctrine, nor left what he believed at the first; I know not of one, not even the chiefs, that have been enticed with money. And now why are these men obstinately thrown upon us? But, O King! you are a just and wise man. Do you act accordingly.

It is a grievous thing, and I say with sorrow what I now say; I do not desire to conceal the least thing.

Shortly after the fight at Haapape and Faaa, and about four months since, Joseph Lefevre the man I mentioned before, was killed by some of my people, from the camp at Bunaavia. He was a spy, and he guided the bad man Major Fergus, a Pole, that Bruat sent to seize one of my chiefs; and many were the things that he did to betray my people while he lived amongst them.

Nicolas was also killed, and another Frenchman, whom I do not know, about the same time.

I do not justify these murders, it is a grief to me, though they were killed in a time of war, and in a time when the French soldiers gave no quarter to my people.

The death of these three men was not agreeable to me, and if it be agreeable to the law that they should be punished, let them be punished.

We have just heard that the conduct of Du Petit Thouars and Morenhaut is not pleasing to you, O King! and that you have commanded that my government be restored to me.

I am extremely gratified that you have done so, and it is the word that my friends said to me would be done by the great and just King of the French.

But Bruat has not restored my house and

my land, nor hoisted my flag, but obstinately continues to build forts and erect houses. He is giving \$1,000 a year, each, to the governors Tati, Hitoti, and Paraite. Utami will not receive his hire, and now he has none. Bruat hires some of the people to be judges, and to hold other offices under him, and they, alone, are the common people that accord with, or pretend to accord with the French.

Be not deceived by Bruat, if he says that many of the chiefs and people accord with the French. It is no such thing, although one part may desire French money.

Hitoti, who is a depraved man, made a feast for some of my people. Bruat was also invited to that feast, and he furnished the wine, and many got drunk.

Hitoti and some others made speeches to please the Governor Bruat, but one part spoke the truth to him, saying, that they accorded with his wine, but they did not accord with him and the French, but they accorded with Queen Pomare.

Bruat has no right to interfere with the government of my people now, because he knows that the Government of France, and the King of the French, and a part of his counsellors, are not pleased with Du Petit Thouars, and have commanded him to return to me my government.

I shall throw upon Bruat all the evils that grow out of his not regarding the desire of

the wise counsellors of France, and the commands of his own king.

Bruat has sent his steamer to fetch me, and that he might get me into his hands, but I fled to the mountains, where I now dwell in a bad hut.

I did not receive his message, because I cannot trust his word, because he does not hoist my flag and does not restore to me my house and my land. He also says that I am guilty, because I will not desert my old and true friends, men of Britain. I will never cast them off, nor will I ever cast off my faith, neither will my people do so, on account of whatever my happen.

I am now residing upon the island of Raiatea; it is not my land now, it never was my land from of old to the present time.

Tahaa and Raiatea and Huahine and Maia-viti and Borabora and Maurua, are different governments, and they have different kings; but they are all my friends, and will not leave me, they will protect me. I will consult them, and I will, also, consult the British in my troubles.

I am now waiting to hear the last word from France, and from my friend and great and good sister, Queen Victoria, and I trust in the justice and good faith of the King, Louis Philippe. I know you have good and wise counsellors and statesmen, that think well of us and speak well for me, and I and my people will love them, and be grateful to

them. And now, O King! do unto me as you would be done unto, and think of me as a woman, and near giving birth to another child. I hear that the Queen of France is a good woman, and that she, also, is a mother. She will know how to compassionate me. I now pray her to support me.

This is all I have to say, and it is truth. If it be not the truth cast me off. I should not then deserve to be well-treated—but I say now, it is all truth.

And now may you be well protected by the true God.

POMARE.

Encampment of Vaiaau, in the Island of Raiatea, this twenty-fifth day of September, in the year 1844.

The foregoing is a true translation, and I am a witness to the signature of Queen Pomare.

GEORGE PLATT.

The following letters will show the fallacy of some assertions, made by AUTHORITY, concerning the conduct of the natives of Tahiti who are accused of having commenced aggressions.

[TRANSLATION.]

Health to you all. I make known to you that our ship of war is about to leave, it has been sent for by the Admiral, to return to Oahu. There is here a small ship of war to watch over us; another is coming. Do not listen to the men who will pain you by reporting that we shall not be assisted. Britain will not cast us off. Let our conduct be good, and wait till the despatches arrive. This is my word to you; do not on any account cause evil to grow; by no means ill treat the Frenchmen; have great patience; take me for a pattern, and follow me, and let all of us pray to God that he may deliver us from our trial as he formerly delivered Hezekiah.

Peace be with you all, (Signed) POMARE.

[TRANSLATION.]

TO ARII FAAITE,—May you be saved in the Lord Jesus, the Messiah, in the great trial and the patience you are exercising.

We all compassionate you; but be strong, our Queen, be diligent. It is on account of your patience and forbearance that we seek after and obey your word, that the word of our Queen may have a good effect, and that the two requests you made us, viz:—*to be diligent respecting the French, and not to treat them ill, may do good. This is our reason for being patient and forbearing.*

And, also, that the word concerning our being still on the side of the British, may do good. Let not our blood be spilled carelessly, lest when those who assist us shall arrive they will find us acting wrong, and have a bad opinion of us.

This is our little word to you; if you should think that we are Frenchmen, we are not Frenchmen, we are only waiting your commands, that our wives and children may remain in safety on the land, until the day when your voice shall be given to us, until the day when those who assist us shall arrive. May you be saved in the Lord.

(Signed by the Chiefs.)

[TRANSLATION.]

POMARE,—Peace be with you from Jehovah, the true Lord, and Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

Pomare, this is our word to you; your canoe is in a bad condition; the outrigger, the bow, and the stern, all parts are broken; but how shall we act? this is our word to you; ask Mr. Pritchard if we shall be blameable in acting as we have agreed among ourselves. If Mr. Pritchard should say we shall be doing wrong, then you two consider what plan we shall adopt. If he should say that we shall not be doing wrong, make it known to us by letter, that we may be acquainted with it.

Pomare, if a disturbance should take place, will it be well with you on board the vessel? will you not be cast off by those who are our protectors. If you should say that will not be the case, then that is well; should it be said that you will be cast off, make it known to us; do not think that we, the whole of Tahiti, are divided among ourselves; we are like a nest of hen's eggs under you. If you die, all we Tahitians will die with you. That is all we have to say.

Peace be with you for ever and ever, amen.

[TRANSLATION.]

To Arii faaite vahine, (POMARE,) May you be saved by the true God in your forbearance in this great trial.

This is the word of the Governors on Tahiti, the district inland, and the district on the sea shore, belonging to this Ono. This is our word—the ship has arrived, it is at Motuovine. Have you any thing to say concerning this ship? What are we to do when they become angry with us? the word is with you. If you have any thing to say, let it be said plainly, that we may know. If it is agreeable to you, let us know; if it is not agreeable, write a letter to us. This is the word of the Governors on this Ono, the district inland and the district on the shore. Will those who assist us take care of us? If they will, write a letter and let us perfectly understand. When the letter is finished, give it to Taiohe.

From the last two letters, it would certainly appear that the natives were ready to attack the French vessel, but were restrained by those to whom, in the absence of their rightful sovereign, they were naturally disposed to apply for counsel; viz. the commander of the British man of war in harbor, and Mr. Pritchard, the two individuals who have been so much reviled by the French, as the cause of their difficulties at Tahiti. See manifesto for the cause of the attack at Taarabu.

whom