

The plan of the leaders of the new movement seems to have been to reconstruct the Government, and then to turn it over to the United States. A secret committee of thirteen was appointed to carry out their designs. Their first object was to bring about the removal of two of the ministers, viz: Messrs. Armstrong and Judd. The unsuccessful attempt to make political capital out of the smallpox epidemic of 1853 was disgraceful to all engaged in it. At the same time an active agitation was commenced in favor of annexation, and the two obnoxious ministers were accused of being an obstacle in the way of it.

Threats were freely used to intimidate the King and chiefs into dismissing them.

In August a memorial in favor of annexation was presented to the King, which was signed by seventeen respectable residents, who were supporters of the cabinet. This called out a card, published September 10, signed by Revs. E. W. Clark and P. J. Gulick, declaring that "the Protestant missionaries at the islands have never engaged in any scheme of annexation. It has been their cherished wish that the Government may remain independent under the present constitution and rulers. Whatever may have been done by merchants, planters, and others, the Protestant clergymen at the islands have neither advised nor signed any memorial to the King touching annexation." In a letter published in August, 1864, Mr. Clark stated that at the annual convocation in May, 1853, he had frequent conversations with other missionaries on this engrossing subject. "Not one of them expressed an opinion in its favor, but on the contrary, they did express doubts as to its expediency, and grave apprehensions of disaster to the natives from the influx of lawless and unprincipled foreigners." With this agreed the known views of the French Catholic priests.

The memorial created no little excitement among the British and French residents. The representatives of Great Britain and France solicited an audience with the King and privy council, which was granted September 1, when they presented a joint address to the King, protesting against any attempt to annex the islands to any foreign power as in contravention of existing treaties, as well as unconstitutional. This was replied to in an able dispatch addressed to the minister of foreign affairs by the United States commissioner, September 3.

A few days later the whole Cabinet resigned, but were all reappointed, with the exception of Dr. Judd, who was succeeded by Hon. E. H. Allen, whose appointment gave general satisfaction, and caused no change in the policy of the cabinet. The result was a virtual defeat of the schemes of the "thirteen."

GROWTH OF ANNEXATION SENTIMENT, 1854.

Hon. L. Severance, the United States commissioner, returned to the United States in December, 1853, and was succeeded by Hon. D. L. Gregg, of Illinois, who arrived in Honolulu January 6, 1854.

Meanwhile the sentiment in favor of annexation seems to have been growing in strength. There were strong commercial reasons in its favor. Three-fourths of the business was in the hands of Americans, and the chief market of the islands was then, as now, the Pacific coast of the United States. The hope of it stimulated speculation, and led to new enterprises, some of which were afterwards abandoned.

The fearful decrease of the native population (several thousands of whom had been carried off by the fatal epidemic of 1853), the rapid extinction of the order of chiefs, who were the natural leaders of their race, the relapse of the King into habits of gross intemperance, and the perils from without overhanging the feeble Government disheartened many true friends of the nation and led them to favor the preliminary steps then taken towards annexation. The objections of the missionaries to that measure have already been stated. They feared that the rights of the natives might be trampled upon and their interests sacrificed. A new and liberal constitution had just been adopted (in 1852) and they fondly hoped that the natives would soon learn how to use their newly-granted lands and political rights.

The ministry, as a whole, favored annexation, but Mr. Wyllie acquiesced in it unwillingly and only as a last resort in the case of an emergency. During the two following reigns he developed a decided antipathy to American influence and American ideas.

The King, however, strongly favored annexation. He had long been harassed by the threats of foreign powers; he had once been dethroned by a British naval force; he had repeatedly been compelled to make humiliating concessions at the cannon's mouth; he had recently seen his fort dismantled and his beautiful yacht carried off, and his difficulties with France still remained unsettled. At the same time he was kept in a state of alarm by rumors of filibusters from abroad and threats of conspirators at home to overturn his Government. He was deeply grateful for the constant and generous friendship of the United States and for the benefits which his people had received from American citizens. Besides, he had reason to expect for himself and his chiefs a sum equal to the revenue of his Kingdom and for his people all the rights of a free State in the Union. As far as is known, most of the high chiefs agreed with him.