Interview with Curtis J. Lyons, assistant on Government survey, Honolulu, Wednesday, April 12, 1893.

Mr. Blount. Mr. Lyons, I ask you to give me what you conceive to be the causes of the revolution—the causes of the dethronement of the Queen and the establishment of the Provisional Government?

Mr. Lyons. The revolution of 1887 was the spontaneous rising of the better elements here against the ultramonarchical government of Kalakaua.

Q. Let me interrupt you here. What do you mean by the better element of the people?
A. By the better element I mean the leading element in society and in business.

Q. And what nationalities would cover that?
A. Americans, English, and Germans.

Q. Please proceed.

A. The influence of the King over the Legislature was one of the grievances, and the meddling of Kalakaua unnecessarily with foreign matters in the Pacific, which would naturally lead us into trouble.

Q. What foreign matters?
A. Samoan matters. Then the taking of a large bribe from the Chinese for an opium license was especially aggravating. To illustrate the meddling of the sovereign in the Legislature. At a previous Legislature I have seen—

Q. Previous Legislature to what?
A. Previous to 1887—I have seen the King in the noon interim for lunch go with a body of legislators to the house of Mr. J. E. Bush, then minister of the interior, to arrange things for the afternoon session. It was the acknowledged object of their meeting there. The feeling in 1887 became very great. A body of volunteer riflemen was drilled.

Q. By whom?
A. By one of the Ashfords.

Q. They were not organized by the Government?
A. They were organized under the volunteer act; that is, volunteer companies were allowed, and under that act this volunteer company was drilled. Clubs for rifle practice were formed. The revolution was accomplished by means of a mass meeting which included the larger part of the foreign population of Honolulu. The rifle company was called out ostensibly to preserve order.

Q. By whom?
A. As I understand it, Antone Rosa, the attorney-general. He was requested to order it out. I do not know the details. At that time I was in charge of the survey office. I did not deem it honorable to join the movement, although my sympathy was with it. The rifle company came over to the Government building ostensibly to protect the life of William M. Gibson. A committee was sent to Kalakaua.

Q. Who was William M. Gibson?
A. He was then premier, minister of foreign affairs. The committee went to the King with demands, the main feature of which was the appointment of a new ministry which should prepare a new constitution. The ministry was appointed and the constitution promulgated in one week. This constitution had three notable features of reform. The first, that no executive officer of the Government should be elected