

States and the Islands. It was to be divided up in that way. We thought it would be a benefit to the country.

Mr. BLOUNT. In the way of revenue for the purposes to which it was to be appropriated?

Mr. PARKER. Yes; it was in the bill. Out of the \$500,000 there must be so much to this institution and so much to that; so much for a railroad, etc. I do not remember the sums.

Mr. BLOUNT. Who was this franchise voted to?

Mr. PARKER. It was given to four or five men—people living on these Islands. The franchise was in their name. It was reported to us that it would go to the Louisiana Lottery people, but that was not known in the franchise. It was the supposition it was to go to the Louisiana Lottery people, or to some syndicate in the United States.

Mr. BLOUNT. What were the reasons for the opium bill?

Mr. PARKER. The opium bill was for giving a revenue. Now, as there is no license, there is a certain amount of opium being smuggled into the Islands. We do not have force to protect our shores. We have no revenue cutters as you have in California, and we thought that as opium was coming into the country all the time, it would be better for the Government to derive some benefit from it; to have the license put up at public auction and sold to the highest bidder. It would be estimated at from \$100,000 to \$200,000 a year. It was discussed thoroughly by the Legislature and carried by a big majority. The Reform ministry was divided on that—two in favor and two against it. It passed the house by a big majority.

Mr. BLOUNT. Is it your opinion that this movement would have occurred if there had been no effort to proclaim a new constitution?

Mr. PARKER. I think it would.

Mr. BLOUNT. Why do you think so?

Mr. PARKER. A majority of the capitalists of the town had no confidence in our ministry. I think it would have come about any way.

Mr. BLOUNT. Come about soon?

Mr. PARKER. It would have come about, because even when this attempt of promulgation of the new constitution was made, we were told that they would support us for what we had done—for holding out against the Queen in requesting us to sign the new constitution. This was said to us at that time—at the time when the Queen was asking us to sign it. During the day they had a meeting of the citizens. I mean such men as Thurston, Hartwell, and leaders of the Provisional Government. They told us they would back us up. They admired us for our pluck in holding out against the Queen's wish.

Mr. BLOUNT. Would this imply a disposition to take action towards dethronement?

Mr. PARKER. I think it came from the McKinley bill—the first action was on account of the McKinley bill.

Mr. BLOUNT. What do you mean by action?

Mr. PARKER. They said that unless something is done—closer relations with the United States—we are bankrupt. That was long before the Legislature came in session. When I first went into the cabinet.

Mr. BLOUNT. Who do you mean said this?

Mr. PARKER. A majority of the sugar men. Those now at the head of the Provisional Government—capitalists and planters. They said that something must be done to get closer relations with the United States to hold us up; with sugar down to \$45 and \$50 a ton, something ought to be done; a commercial treaty or something ought to be negotiated with the American people.