

SESS. II.—1884.
NEW ZEALAND.

CONFEDERATION AND ANNEXATION.

PAPERS RESPECTING
FRENCH POSSESSIONS IN THE PACIFIC.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

From the *Journal Officiel*: extracted from the *Revue Maritime et Coloniale*; reprinted in "Les Colonies Françaises en 1883," 2nd edition, Paris, 1884.)

1. THE following is a *précis** of the statement, published in the *Journal Officiel*, of the French establishments in Oceania:—

I. EASTERN PACIFIC.

The first step in the French occupation took place in May, 1842, when Admiral Dupetit-Thouars took possession of Tahuata and the group to the south-east of that island, with the consent of a Chief named Yoteté, as well as of other Chiefs and a large number of natives. The sovereignty of France had already been recognized in the Island of Hivava. After having left a garrison at Tahuata, the Admiral went to Upou, and then on to Nukahiva; and arrived at Tahiti in August, 1842.

There were already a number of Europeans of all nations resident at Papeete. English missionaries had been established there since 1797, and France had appointed a Consul, under a Convention with Queen Pomaré, in 1838.

Under the pressure of various disturbances, the Queen, together with the principal Chiefs, asked to be placed under the protectorate of France, on the 9th September, 1842. The ratification of this by the King of the French took place in March, 1843, and in the following November the French flag was hoisted over Tahiti. The Queen was declared to have ceased to reign, and Commandant Bruat was installed as Governor, formal possession being taken of the island in the name of France. This act of taking possession, however, was not then ratified, and the French Government ordered that the protectorate should be re-established; but in the meantime the Queen had left the island, and her subjects were in revolt.

In 1844, Commandant Bruat took a decisive step, in attacking the natives at Mahoena, and seizing their possessions. In the absence of the Queen, the protectorate was re-established, and a regency appointed. At length, after a partial resistance at several points, the last of the rebels came in and made their submission, on the 22nd December, 1846; and in May, 1847, Queen Pomaré, having returned from the Leeward Islands, was solemnly reinstated in her authority. The Pomarés, together with the principal Chiefs of Tahiti, had extended their dominion over all the islands of the Society group, the Low Archipelago, and the Tubuai group. A declaration of the 19th June, 1847, made between France and England, declared the independence of the Leeward Islands; but the Low Archipelago, and two of the islands in the Tubuai group, entered into the States of the Protectorate.

In 1852, an insurrection overthrew the Queen, but her authority was re-established by the French Government. Soon afterwards, she abdicated in favour of her son. After that, tranquillity was not disturbed at Tahiti, the whole archipelago with its dependencies being placed under the protectorate of France, with a representative having the title of "Commandant and Commissioner of the French Government in the Society Islands."

Queen Pomaré IV. died in September, 1877, and was succeeded by her son Ariiane, who took the name of Pomaré V. His accession produced no change in the existing order of things; and the new King showed himself full of deference towards the representative of the Government of France, and well disposed to favour the gradual absorption of his country.

It was in these circumstances that grave events occurred relating to the order of succession to the throne. In September, 1879, the King, having been sounded upon the question of passing over into the hands of France the authority which was really exercised by him under French advice, showed himself disposed to acquiesce in that change, which the Chiefs themselves also desired. Pomaré V. soon gave a special mark of confidence to the French Commandant; for, upon making a voyage to one of the neighbouring group of islands, he handed over the administration of Tahiti and its dependencies to the Commissioner of the Republic, M. Chesse, on the 29th May, 1880. Soon afterwards, finding himself attacked by illness, he entered into more frequent communications with

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