

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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the Commandant, in the belief that, in the interests of his country and of his family, he could have no more efficacious protection than that of France. On the 29th June, 1880, in the presence of all the Chiefs of Tahiti and Moorea, the Commissioner of the Republic announced the King's abdication, and his acknowledgment of the sovereignty of France, the conditions of which had already been concerted with the King and the principal Chiefs. Pomaré V. solemnly approved this public act, and, the Chiefs having first affixed their signatures to the Declaration, the King signed it, as well as the representatives of France. Thereupon, the Commandant published his acceptance of the sovereignty, in the following terms:—

"We, the Commandant and Commissioner of the Republic in the French establishments of Oceania, in exercise of the powers confided to us, declare that we accept, in the name of the Government of the French Republic, the rights and powers now conferred upon us by Pomaré V. with whom all the Chiefs of Tahiti and Moorea have associated themselves; and we declare, subject to ratification by the French Government, that the Society Islands and their dependencies are united to France."

The Chamber of Deputies and the Senate having ratified the cession, the President of the Republic promulgated, on the 30th September, 1880, the following law:—

"Article 1.—The President of the Republic is authorized to notify, and cause to be executed, the declarations signed on the 29th July, 1880, by King Pomaré V. and the Commissioner of the French Republic at the Society Islands, by which the sovereignty of the territories dependent on the Crown of Tahiti are ceded to France.

"Article 2.—The Island of Tahiti, and the archipelagos depending upon it, are declared to be French Colonies.

"Article 3.—French nationality is conferred in full upon all the former subjects of the King of Tahiti."

Then followed an article relating to the formalities to be fulfilled by strangers born in the "States of the Protectorate" who desired to acquire French nationality. The Commandant of Tahiti published this law on the 24th March, 1881, in the *Journal Officiel* of the Colony, in the presence of the French and Tahitian authorities, and of the Consuls of the foreign Powers.

The following is a description of the French establishments. They comprise:—The Marquesas Islands, which have belonged to France since the 1st of May, 1842; the Island of Tahiti, which is the seat of Government; the Island of Moorea; the archipelago of the Low Islands, or Tuamotu; Rapa Island; the islands of Tubuai and Raiavavae [Vivitao on the English maps], which have been annexed to France by virtue of the convention with King Pomaré V. and of the law of the 30th December, 1880.

(i.) The Marquesas group, situated between the parallels of 8° and 10° south latitude and 143° and 141° west longitude, comprise eleven islands or islets, forming two groups. The north-west group comprises:—(1) The island of Eiao (inhabited); (2) Motuiti (inhabited); (3) Hatutu (inhabited); (4) Nukahiva, with a population of 2,700; (5) Hapu, population, 1,220; and (6) Hanka, population, 450. The south-east group comprises five islands, namely:—(1) Tanata, population, 630; (2) Hivava, population, 6,000; (3) Patuhuka (inhabited); (4) Motane (inhabited); and (5) Patuhiva, population, 1,000.

(ii.) *Tahiti and Moorea*.—The Island of Tahiti, the centre of the French establishments in the Eastern Pacific, is situated between 17° 29' 30" and 17° 47' south latitude, and between 150° 29' 23" and 151° 56' west longitude. It is subdivided into Tahiti Island and the Peninsula of Taiarapu, united by an isthmus about 14 metres above the sea-level, at the site of the fort of Taravao.

(iii.) *Tuamotu, or Low Archipelago*.—This archipelago comprises eighty-one islands or islets, extending over more than 300 leagues of longitude and 200 leagues of latitude. The islands are only wooded reefs. They are situated between 14° and 23° south latitude and 137° and 151° west longitude. The principal island, which is also the residence of the delegate of the French Government, is Anaa, situated in 17° 27' and 147° 50'.

(iv.) *Tubuai Archipelago*.—There are four islands, of which only two are under the French protectorate, viz. Tubuai and Raiavavae [Vivitao]. Rimātara and Rurutu are independent.

(v.) *Rapa Island*.—This island is situated in 27° 38' south latitude and 146° 30' west longitude. It had formed part of the States of the Protectorate ever since 1844, and followed the destiny of those States when they were annexed to France in 1880. The island is not of much importance in a commercial point of view. Its population is 153 souls.

(vi.) *The Leeward Islands*.—Adjacent to the Society group are the large islands Huahine, Raiatea, and Borabora, with a few smaller islets. Huahine is governed by a Chief, who is independent of the Chiefs of Raiatea and Borabora. Raiatea comprises two islands surrounded by the same reef, viz. Raiatea and Tahaa. This island, with 1,200 inhabitants, is governed by a king, and has the greatest trade of any of the Leeward Islands. Borabora has 600 inhabitants, and adjacent to it are Motuiti, Maupiti, Mapetia, and Tupemanu islets. The French flag has been flying on the island of Raiatea since 1880.

The total population of the French establishments in Oceania is 25,247 souls, divided as follows:—

Tahiti and Moorea	...	...	...	...	...	10,808
Low Archipelago	...	...	...	...	...	7,270
Marquesas Archipelago	...	...	...	...	...	5,776
Tubuai Archipelago	...	...	...	...	...	693
Gambier Islets	...	...	...	...	...	547
Rapa Island	...	...	...	...	...	153

In the islands of Tahiti and Moorea, there are 974 French and descendants of French, 591 foreigners, and 449 Asiatics. In the Marquesas, there are 71 French and 60 foreigners.

The port of Papeete is the *entrepôt* of the Society group, the Low Archipelago, Tubuai, and the Cook Islands; and is the point of concentration of all commercial operations in the various groups. In 1880, the arrivals at Tahiti were three French ships from France (1,500 tons), 14 French ships from other countries (1,600 tons), and 87 foreign ships (7,500 tons). The following vessels sailed from Tahiti in the same year:—One French ship bound for France (410 tons), 14 French ships bound to foreign ports (3,600 tons), and 88 foreign ships (10,900 tons).

The outward postal service is from Havre to New York and San Francisco, a monthly service bringing the mails from San Francisco to Tahiti. The mean time of the postal transit from France is 55 days. At present, a subsidized service between San Francisco and Tahiti is kept up by a small sailing vessel; but it will soon be done by steam. The Post Office at Tahiti has branches in the Marquesas, Low Archipelago, Tubuai, and Gambier's.

II. WESTERN PACIFIC.

New Caledonia, Isle of Pines, and Loyalty Isles.—In 1843, a missionaries' establishment was formed in New Caledonia, but abandoned in 1847, on being attacked by the natives. In 1851, the frigate "Alcmene," Count d'Harcourt commander, having anchored at Balade, the natives massacred a boat's crew, when immediate reprisals took place. This event, together with the reports of Count d'Harcourt, and also the desire to possess a distant colony which could, if necessary, receive convicts, decided the French Government to take formal possession of the group. Accordingly, on the 14th June, 1853, Rear-Admiral Febvrier-Despointes arrived at Balade, and, without opposition on the part of the natives, took possession of New Caledonia and its dependencies, in the name of France. From Balade he went to the Isle of Pines, where (some weeks before) an English corvette had come to hoist the English flag. The native Chiefs, however, refused to accept the English proposal, and made their submission to France, under the guns of the English man-of-war, on the 29th September. Captain Tardy de Montravel afterwards completed the act of taking possession, and, after negotiations with the principal Chiefs, obtained their recognition of the French sovereignty. Noumea, on the south-west coast, was chosen as the site of the principal town and convict settlement.

In 1864, military possession was taken of the Loyalty Islands, where missionaries had established themselves since 1859.

These events did not occur without much resistance on the part of the natives, and even of Europeans; but strong and persistent repressions brought about a general pacification. A revolt broke out in June, 1878, which took about ten months to repress: and since then tranquillity in the colony has been unbroken.

New Caledonia is situated between 20° 10' and 22° 26' of south latitude and 161° 35' and 164° 55' east longitude (from Paris).

The population of New Caledonia is as follows:—

(1.) Civil population	...	...	...	...	...	2,500
(2.) Officers and their families	...	...	...	...	...	1,041
(3.) Freed convicts (<i>libérés</i>)	...	...	...	...	...	2,300
(4.) Convicts	...	...	...	...	...	6,500

There are different estimates of the native population, varying between 20,000 and 40,000.

2. The following account of the French possessions at Tahiti and the adjacent islands, is taken from a report to the Foreign Office, by Mr. Miller, Her Majesty's Consul at Tahiti:—

The Island of Tahiti is the seat of the central Government of the French establishments in the Eastern Pacific, comprising—

1.—Tahiti and its dependencies, which consist of Moorea, Tetiaroa, Meetia, the Low Archipelago, known as the Paumotu or Tuamotu group, Tubuai, Raivavae, and Rapa; numbering in all upwards of eighty islands, and under French protection, represented by the protectorate flag of Tahiti. Population of the whole is from 18,000 to 20,000.

2.—The Gambier group of four small islands, also under French protection, but denoted by the national colours of France. Population, about 1,000.

3.—The Marquesas Islands, eleven in number, under the sovereignty and national flag of France. Population of the group, about 5,000. The French Government is represented at Tahiti by an officer with the title of "Commandant of the French establishments in Oceania, Commissioner of the Republic at the Society Islands and Dependencies." He resides at Papeete, the chief town and port of Tahiti, and administers the general government of the establishments above enumerated, with the assistance of a Council composed of official members chiefly, with a small proportion of unofficial ones nominated by himself. Residents, under his orders, occupy the under-mentioned outstations, with authority to exercise French jurisdiction over the districts respectively assigned to them, viz.:—A Resident at the Island of Fakarava, for the Paumotu group; another at Tubuai, for that and the island of Raivavae; another at Mangareva, for the Gambier Islands; and a fourth at Nukahiva, for the Marquesas group. The ports regularly open to foreign trade and shipping are: Papeete, Taunua, and Papeuriri, at Tahiti; Papetoai, at the neighbouring island of Moorea; the port of the island of Fakarava, in the Paumotu group; that of the island of Tubuai; that of the island of Mangareva, in the Gambier group; and Taiohae, at the island of Nukahiva, in the Marquesas group. The duties on goods at all the above-mentioned ports are the same as at the chief port of Papeete, where in fact nearly all the foreign trade of Tahiti and its dependencies is as yet carried on or officially reported. The direct foreign trade of the Gambier and Marquesas Islands is comparatively inconsiderable.

Leeward Islands.—This group, comprising three independent States, named after their respective chief islands, Huahine, Raiatea, and Borabora, and each with a distinct national flag, continues to draw the most of its foreign supplies from the market of Tahiti, which takes from the Leeward Islands in return, cotton, copra, and other native products. These islands possess very good harbours. The entire population of the group amounts to from 4,500 to 5,000.

The following tables are appended to Consul Miller's report:—

British Shipping.—The subjoined table gives the total amount of British shipping that arrived in each of the last five years at the port of Papeete:—

Years.					Number of British Vessels entered.	Tons.	Crews.	Invoice Value of Cargoes.
								£
1875	...	...	...	...	27	5,349	253	30,800
1876	...	...	...	...	16	3,941	151	28,055
1877	...	...	...	...	14	2,472	133	26,020
1878	...	...	...	...	15	2,029	124	14,408
1879	...	...	...	...	15	1,941	148	18,850

British and Foreign Shipping and Coasters.—The following is a summary of the shipping of all countries (British shipping included) that came annually to the port of Papeete during the five years from 1875 to 1879:—

Years.		Ships engaged in the Foreign Trade.		Ships employed in the Coasting Trade of Tahiti and its Dependencies.		Total of Merchant Ships of all Nations that entered in each Year.	
		Vessels entered.	Tons.	Vessels entered.	Tons.	Number of Vessels.	Tons.
1875	...	169	24,838	131	6,175	300	31,013
1876	...	182	28,636	139	7,344	321	35,980
1877	...	155	22,931	125	5,467	280	28,398
1878	...	129	23,140	106	4,126	235	27,266
1879	...	144	18,438	94	4,871	238	23,309