

which I found the natives quickly adopted. Hence the words "Parliament," "Government," "Member," &c., which your Excellency will observe are used in both the Maori and English Acts.

All important matters are reserved for the approval of the British Resident, whose responsibility is thus unimpaired.

The position of Aitutaki being exceptional, I thought my approval should only be till Her Majesty's pleasure is made known so far as that island is concerned. To have delayed the approval would have imperilled the success of the federation altogether.

It is very difficult to get an interpreter with a sufficient knowledge of both English and Maori to make finished translations, but comparatively easy to find persons able to explain the English to Maori hearers. I therefore adopted the only course, in view of future difficulty in interpreting laws passed by the Parliament, and made the English version the binding one in all such cases. Laws made by this Parliament will chiefly affect foreign residents. Those made by the local Councils will chiefly concern the Maoris, and with them this course will not be practicable.

With reference to Laws Nos. 2 and 3, the first levies an import duty which, being uniform, can be collected without a Customs establishment by some one person. It is estimated to yield about \$4,500 a year; but, as the imports for this coffee season are nearly over, not more than \$3,500 can be relied upon for the current year.

Being desirous of seeing this law in full working order as soon as possible, I brought it into immediate operation. It seemed to me, however, fair that cargoes actually on the way should be exempted. Law No. 3 (Import Duty No. 2) was passed for that purpose. To avoid chances of litigation (such as occurred in a similar case against the Tahitian Government in the Supreme Court at Tahiti), the power to remit has been left to the discretion of the Government, and no attempt made to define strictly the conditions of such remission.

I am glad to say that the European traders—with these concessions—all express themselves satisfied, and no difficulty in collecting the duty need be anticipated.

The Government is declared by the Law No. 1 to consist of all the *ariki* in the islands. To call them together would have incurred damaging delay in the actual formation of the Government. Excepting one *ariki* at Mangaia and three at Aitutaki all were here, and I took it upon myself to request them to act at once as a Government, and leave final arrangements to a future meeting, when all the *ariki* could be assembled. This has accordingly been done.

The Parliament are now considering a Bill to establish a Supreme Court, which will take cognizance of breaches of the laws made by Parliament, of disputes between foreign residents, and similar cases. It will not interfere in the least with the Native local Courts already existing.

I thought of introducing a Bill to suppress the use of dynamite, which is fast destroying all the fish. The Natives use a great deal of this dynamite, often to the loss of a hand or limb, and it must be suppressed. But having no agencies in the other islands capable of enforcing the laws made here, and no prospect of such agencies for some time, any attempt to legislate for all would be premature, and do harm, by bringing the laws of Parliament into disregard and consequent contempt. I shall therefore bring up as few laws as possible, and leave the rest to be dealt with by the local Councils. That of Rarotonga will assemble as soon as the Parliament's work is done.

The only other law it is likely to consider, in addition to that for the establishment of a Supreme Court, will be one giving the necessary powers to Government to regulate harbours, establish a post office and schools, and carry out the laws which it has already made. It was impossible to include details in the Bills, and they will have to be carefully attended to by the Government.

I trust that the various measures taken will meet with your Excellency's approval.

I have, &c.,

FREDERICK J. MOSS, British Resident.

His Excellency the Earl of Onslow, G.C.M.G., Governor of New Zealand.

Enclosure.

No. 1.—A LAW TO PROVIDE FOR THE GOOD GOVERNMENT OF THE COOK ISLANDS.

(June, 1891.)

It is hereby enacted by the British Resident and the Representatives of the several islands of the Cook Group—namely, those islands that are included within the British Protectorate, and the Island of Aitutaki, now in Council assembled:

1. *Local Government.*—That each island shall continue to govern itself as much as possible, subject to the condition that all laws hereafter made by the local Government shall not be valid until formally approved by the British Resident for the time being, who shall also state the day when such law so approved shall come into operation.

2. *Parliament.*—That the Representatives of the several islands, duly elected, and now assembled in Council at Avarua, in the Island of Rarotonga, hereby constitute the first General Council of the Cook Islands, which shall hereafter be styled "the Parliament" of the Cook Islands.

3. That the Parliament shall be responsible for the peace, order, and good government of the Cook Islands, and by it shall be undertaken all good works which cannot be done by the people of any island separately.

4. That all laws made by the Parliament shall be expressed as made by the British Resident and the Parliament of the Cook Islands, and shall not be valid till formally approved by the British Resident, who shall also state the day when each of the said laws shall come into operation.

5. That, unless and until otherwise provided by Parliament, the number of Representative Districts and the number of members assigned to each shall continue as at present—namely, Rarotonga three members, Mangaia three members, Atiu, Mauke, and Mitiaro three members, and Aitutaki three members.