

leaseholds, or lands held under other tenures: But the assessment shall not in any instance render the owner liable to pay a less sum than ten shillings in each year.

3. It shall be the duty of the Clerk of Parliament to prepare a roll of the ratepayers of this island, showing the rental value of the property in occupation of each person: Provided always that no Maori inhabitant of the Cook Group shall be liable to be rated under this Act.

4. The assessment roll shall, when completed, be open to the inspection of the public in the Post Office, Avarua, and any objection to the assessment shall be in writing and addressed to the Registrar of the High Court. All objections shall be heard and decided in the High Court.

5. All objections shall be lodged within fourteen days after the roll of assessment has been lodged in the Post Office for inspection, due notice of which fact will be given in the *Cook Islands Gazette*.

6. After the assessment roll shall have been approved by the Chief Judge of the High Court, it shall be the duty of the British Resident to fix a day on or after which the assessment shall be payable to the Federal Treasurer.

7. All money payable under this Act shall be placed to a fund to be called "The Public Works Fund," and shall be expended under the authority of the British Resident, and in the improvement of roads, bridges, and public works only.

8. The payment of rates may be enforced by the High Court by fine or imprisonment.

Passed.

Te ARIKI TAPU RANGI,
Chairman to Cook Islands Parliament.

Approved.

MAKEA, Ariki,
Chief of the Federal Government.

Approved. To come into operation on the 2nd day of August, 1899.—W. E. GUDGEON, British Resident.

The Residency, 1st August, 1899.

No. 10.

Lieut.-Colonel GUDGEON to His Excellency the GOVERNOR.

MY LORD,—

Rarotonga, 6th September, 1899.

I have the honour to forward, for your information, four statutes passed during the last sitting of the Cook Islands Parliament, viz: The Sale of Spirituous Liquor Act, the Marriage and Divorce Act, the Land Act, and the Statute of Mangaia.

Under the circumstances of the case, I thought it advisable to have the first-named statute passed by the Parliament with the proviso that it should only come into force by Proclamation. The Parliament were anxious that the measure should be considered by them; and under the present condition it can only come into force with your Lordship's approval.

The Marriage and Divorce Act will need but little comment from me, since the Act is for the most part the result of suggestions made to me by the ministers of the London Missionary Society.

The Land Act of 1899 is a measure that is absolutely necessary for the welfare of the European settlers within the group. I may say that in the present state of the leases it is very difficult to ascertain whether a man has leased 1 acre or 20. Further, there is no provision in the leases to provide for transfer, therefore the overlord takes the fullest advantage of his rights, and will in many instances not allow a property to pass to an assignee or creditor if it so happens that he is friendly with the lessee. In one case it has been ascertained that in the European part of the lease the right to remove buildings at the end of the term has been reserved to the lessee, whereas in the Maori counterpart the buildings become the property of the lessor. It is for these and other reasons of a similar nature that I have passed the Land Act of 1899.

The Statute of Mangaia codifies and amends the old laws of that island, and has been unanimously adopted by every island of the group as most suitable to their requirements.

It has been very pleasing to me to find that all the Maoris of the Cook Islands, whether in or out of Parliament, are delighted with the legislation of the past session.

I have, &c.,

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

W. E. GUDGEON,
British Resident.

Enclosures.

No. 5, 1899.—SALE OF SPIRITUOUS LIQUOR ACT, 1899.

WHEREAS it is essential to the welfare of the natives of the Cook Islands that the sale of intoxicating liquor should be entirely in the hands of the Federal Government: And whereas it is also in the interests of all foreigners that drunkenness should be prevented, and the evils of the liquor traffic minimised:

Be it enacted by the Parliament of the Cook Islands, with the consent of the British Resident:—

1. The Short Title of this Act shall be "The Sale of Spirituous Liquor Act, 1899."

2. From and after the date on which this Act shall become law, the importation of beer, wine, and spirituous liquor shall, so far as private enterprise is concerned, cease absolutely; but the Collector of Customs may, with the approval of the Chief of the Government, import such wine, beer, or spirits as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act.