

No. 10.

Mr. F. J. Moss to His Excellency the GOVERNOR.

MY LORD,—

Rarotonga, 22nd July, 1891.

I have the honour to inform your Excellency that the Parliament which was sitting when I last wrote, on the 9th June, continued steadily at work, and closed the following evening, the 10th June.

Only two Bills were passed in addition to those reported by me on the 9th June, and I enclose copies herewith: (1) Supreme Court Bill; (2) Empowering Bill. The first gave little trouble beyond that connected with the appointment of the Judge. This was settled by its being referred to the Government to take such action as they might think suitable. The Empowering Bill enables the Government to create the machinery to carry out the laws and to do other things which the Parliament will in future, but could not then, undertake—the appropriation of the revenue, for example, being one of them.

I abstained from bringing before this young Parliament any work that could be possibly avoided. The members thoroughly understood that which they had before them, and showed great interest in the work.

Your Excellency will observe that all moneys due to the Government at any time take precedence in case of difficulty, and are a first charge on any property held by a debtor in the country.

I have, &c.,

FREDERICK J. MOSS, British Resident.

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

Enclosures.

No. 4.—A LAW TO ESTABLISH A SUPREME COURT. (10th June, 1891).

It is hereby enacted by the British Resident and the Parliament of the Cook Islands,—

1. That there shall be a Supreme Court for the Cook Islands.
2. That the Court shall for the present consist of a Chief Judge, who shall be appointed by the Government, with the approval of the British Resident; and the Government may also appoint, with the approval of the British Resident, not more than two Associate Judges if it be found at any time advisable to do so.
3. That a Judge of the Supreme Court shall only be removed from office by a special law made for that purpose by the Parliament, and approved by the British Resident.
4. That the Government may suspend from office any Judge charged with misconduct as Judge, and may appoint some other person to act in his place till the meeting of Parliament next ensuing, but the salary of a Judge shall continue to be paid during his suspension.
5. The Supreme Court only shall take cognizance of all offences against laws made by Parliament or of charges of murder against either Maoris or foreigners. When cases arise between foreigners in any of the Cook Islands such cases may, on the demand of either party, be transferred from the local to the Supreme Court for trial.
6. The Court shall sit at Avarua on the third days of January, April, July, and October in each year, and when either of these days fall on Sunday the next day shall be substituted.
7. The Court may hold special sittings with the consent of the Government, due notice of the said sitting being given.
8. Any person disobeying a lawful order of the Court shall be adjudged guilty of contempt, and liable to such fine or substitute in labour, with or without imprisonment, as the Court may direct, subject to the powers of remission vested in the Government of the Islands.
9. Every Judge in taking office shall take an oath to act impartially and righteously in his office. The form of oath and the administration thereof to be settled by the Government.

Approved, to go into operation forthwith.

10th June, 1891.

FREDERICK J. MOSS, British Resident.

No. 5.—PROVISIONAL POWERS. (10th June, 1891.)

It is hereby enacted by the British Resident and the Parliament of the Cook Islands that until the 30th day of June, 1893, or until each or any of the subjects herein dealt with shall be provided for by separate law, if so provided for prior to the said 30th day of June, 1893, the Government of the Cook Islands is empowered (subject in all cases to the formal approval of their action by the British Resident) to make such provision in regard to the said subjects as may be found necessary.

1. *Bankers and Audit.*—To appoint any person or persons to act as bankers for the Government, for the safe custody of public money, and for the regular and proper disbursement of the same, as well as for the audit of all accounts connected with the public service.

2. *Appropriation.*—To appropriate the revenue to such public purposes as they may consider most desirable, but to lay a full account of all receipts and expenditure on the table at the opening of the Parliament in each year.

3. *Public Money a First Charge.*—To make all public moneys held by any person or persons a first charge on any property or goods owned by such person or persons within the Cook Islands.

4. *Prevention of Disease.*—To take such measures as may be necessary at any time to prevent the introduction of contagious or infectious diseases, or the spreading of the same if introduced, and to make regulations imposing penalties upon persons violating or disobeying such regulations under penalties not exceeding \$2,500.

5. *Schools.*—To establish a school or schools for the teaching of English to the Maori people, and for their progress in knowledge generally, and to make regulations, with penalties not exceeding \$20.