

SESS. II.—1891.
NEW ZEALAND.

FEDERATION AND ANNEXATION: PACIFIC ISLANDS.

(PROCEEDINGS OF THE BRITISH RESIDENT AT RAROTONGA, COOK GROUP.)

[In continuation of A.-3, Sess. II., 1891.]

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

No. 1.

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

MY LORD,—

Rarotonga, 29th April, 1891.

I have the honour to acknowledge your Excellency's despatch of the 14th April, which I received yesterday by H.M.S. "Goldfinch." Her arrival is very opportune. I proceed round the islands in her to-day, and hope not to be absent more than a week or, at the furthest, ten days. At Mauke the natives are quarrelling over their land; their chief Ngamaru fears that they will come to fighting. But for the arrival of the "Goldfinch" I should have been unable to proceed there.

A.-1, 1891, Sess.
II., Enclosure to
No. 17.

I arrived here on the 20th, and on the 22nd delivered your Excellency's Proclamations to the *arikis* of Avarua, Arorangi, and Taketumu to be published in their respective districts. The *arikis* met at my temporary residence to-day to consider various questions, and the Proclamation was then formally read to them. Among others was a petition from a Mr. Engleke for remission of part of the fine levied upon him (\$150) for selling two bottles of lager beer to two of his German fellow-countrymen during their dinner-time. The purchasers had no permit, and in this the offence consisted. The fine was in strict accordance with the law, and the petition to the *arikis* equally so. The fine had been paid under protest, and on the understanding that its final settlement should be left to my decision on returning from Auckland.

I asked for a report from the Judge, Tepou, who had dealt with the case. The report was not forthcoming; but Tepou attended the meeting of the Council, who formally left it to me to decide. I did so with a full sense of the responsibility; but, after careful inquiry from Tepou as to the circumstances, I recommended, with his full concurrence, that a remission of \$100 should be made in each of the cases—Engleke, Nicholas, and Amenê—to which the Council assented accordingly.

In view of the long laxity in dealing with the old laws, of these being the first and only offences to the present time of any description against the new law, of the ready obedience shown to the Native Court, and of the offences of Nicholas and Amene having been committed during a public Chinese feast, I believe that justice and public policy alike rendered the remission advisable, and trust that it will meet with your Excellency's approval. Warning will be, at the same time, given that in future cases the full fine will be strictly enforced.

At the Council, and on various other occasions during a busy week, the Rev. J. Hutchin has kindly acted as interpreter. This interferes a good deal with his other duties, and an official interpreter attached to the Residency is very necessary. I shall meanwhile have to trespass on Mr. Hutchin, whose missionary, scholastic, and medical duties sufficiently occupy his time.

In accordance with your Excellency's directions, I shall endeavour to affect a union of the islands for general purposes, and, having now an opportunity of visiting them, hope for success. The proper working of the Protectorate without such a union will be very difficult, and probably impracticable.

The *arikis* have decided to defer the meeting of the Rarotonga Council, which was to have been on the 4th May, till my return.

A seal will be necessary, and I have the honour to ask that one may be sent. The crown, with the letters "C. I.," surrounded with the words "Protectorate of the Cook Islands," would, I think, be the most suitable.

I enclose for your Excellency's information—

No. 1. A notification that I had assumed the duties of the office, &c.

No. 2. A similar notification to the foreign residents specially.

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