

by him for a constituent at Tahiti. These gentlemen all expressed themselves at the time as quite satisfied with Judge Tepou's action in their respective cases. (2.) "*No protection from thieves, &c.*" Life and property could not be safer than they are in these islands. Whatever the "*&c.*" may mean, the rest of the statement is certainly without foundation. The principle of the old Rarotongan law is restitution, not the imprisonment of the delinquent. Mr. Engelke, a few months ago, purchased coffee from a native at various times to the extent of 568lb. This was found to have been stolen from Mr. Exham. The property in the native's possession was seized and converted into cash, and he was sentenced to work out the remainder of the value of the coffee. Mr. Exham has been paid for the coffee stolen from him, and Mr. Engelke allowed to keep the stolen coffee as well. I mention this to show that the native Government and Courts endeavour to and do carry out the law well, in accordance with their old practice. In this case it is the more creditable because, in order to break the tapu, or "*raui*," placed upon the sale of coffee at that time, Mr. Engelke purchased it at various times, secretly and at night, under the belief that the native in question was selling his own coffee in that way to evade the "*raui*." The native authorities were aware of this, but it did not prevent their carrying out the law, and seeing that restitution was made. (3.) *As to "the enjoyment of protection under the old native law,"* to which they look back apparently with regret, these gentlemen must surely be aware that the "*old native laws*" are still in force. I can only say that a year ago I found, on my arrival, that I received constant complaints, and was continually being pressed "*to put my foot down*," and assured that it was the only way of dealing with natives. One of the legacies from the old happy time is the Mangaian affair, which has given me more anxiety and more concern than all the rest of the troubles together. The natives themselves lived in constant dread of the threatened visit of a man-of-war—English, French, German, or American. They almost believed that every foreign resident had one at his disposal. This was the old state of affairs, which these gentlemen seem to regret that they do not now enjoy. (4.) *The suggestion to give prizes to the natives to stimulate industry.* This suggestion I cordially agree with. In fact, I had at various times spoken to these gentlemen and to the native chiefs about it. I have urged the complainants to form themselves, with some of the chiefs and others, into a society that will provide the machinery to carry out the suggestion, and told them that I would gladly advise the Government to contribute funds. If this is done I shall be well repaid for what has been a troublesome and, I think, a needless correspondence.

Avarua, 17th December, 1891.

FREDERICK J. MOSS,
British Resident.

No. 9.

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

(No. 26/91.)

MY LORD,—

British Residency, Rarotonga, 17th December, 1891.

I have the honour to enclose a report on the trade of the Cook Islands. As I am leaving for New Zealand by the "*Richmond*," daily expected, I thought it better to make this report before the end of the year. Considerable delay will thereby be avoided.

I have, &c.,

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

FREDERICK J. MOSS,
British Resident.

REPORT on the TRADE of the FEDERATED COOK ISLANDS. By FREDERICK J. MOSS, British Resident.

Rarotonga, 17th December, 1891.

In making my first report on the trade of the Cook Islands I may be allowed to take a wider view of the field than would otherwise be justifiable.

The islands are seven in number, extending at irregular distances over an ocean-area some hundred and eighty miles square. They are on the verge of the tropic, and the climate is pleasant and healthy. Though small, the Cook Islands are extremely fertile. Their chief value consists, however, in their position at the gateway of the extensive and beautiful archipelagoes studding the eastern Pacific south of the equator. With the exception of the Cook Islands, these archipelagoes—the Austral Islands, the Society Islands, the Paumotus, and the Marquesas—are all French possessions. They extend over an area about two thousand miles long and one thousand broad, and are inhabited by the same race (the Maori) as the people of the Cook Islands. The total native population is not less than sixty thousand, and the islands are capable of supporting many times that number.

Tahiti, one of the Society group, is the centre of trade for these eastern islands. The opening of the Nicaragua Canal will give to Tahiti, on the line of communication between the western world and the South Pacific, the position now held by the Hawaiian Islands, and must develop the whole of them to an extraordinary degree.