

occupied all Tuesday and part of Wednesday. Franheim, in 1894, obtained from Tararo a renewable lease of thirty years for three pieces of rural land at Mauke, and claims to have expended \$1,000 in cultivating the same. A law passed by the Federal Parliament to guard against secrecy in dealing with Maori lands required that all deeds should be entered in a registry and made public or be null and void. These deeds were then registered, and the lease thus made public, whereupon Rongo Matane, an Ariki of Atiu, at once denied Tararo's right to lease the land. Proceeding to Mauke with Ngamaru and Parua, Arikis of Atiu, Tararo was publicly arraigned there, and admitted that the land was Rongo Matane's, though he considered that he, as a relative of hers, had a right to act as he had done. The land was taken from Franheim by the Arikis, and Tararo was formally displaced as an Ariki of Mauke. Franheim then claimed \$1,000 compensation, and sought to recover it from the whole people of Mauke, who he said had, at a public meeting, recognised Tararo's right, and so misled him. It appeared that there are two violently-opposed parties in Mauke, of one of which Tararo is a leader. The meeting in question was not called in the only way in which public meetings are convened in Mauke—namely, by notice in the church or by ringing the church-bell. It was a mere gathering of natives on another subject, to which Franheim, taking other Europeans with him, propounded the question. Some asserted Tararo's right; the others, thinking they had nothing to do with the question, said nothing. However, as it came out in evidence that this meeting was subsequent to the expenditure by Franheim on the land, the Judge decided that it had nothing to do with the case—that Tararo admitted that the land was Rongo Matane's, and that Tararo and his people were alone responsible to Franheim.

This point having been settled, Rongo Matane said now that her rights had been proved she did not wish Franheim to lose through Tararo's act, and would voluntarily give him a lease if he abandoned his claim upon Tararo for compensation. The parties retired from the Court, and finally arranged that Franheim should have a lease for thirty years at \$150 a year, and acquit Tararo of all liability.

This was announced in Court.

Mr. Moss, who had watched the case throughout, then said: "I am glad that this dispute has been settled. The settlement shows the kindly feeling of Rongo Matane and the Arikis of Atiu who have come to the help of Tararo, though he had done wrong in dealing with the land. They also do not wish to have it said that a foreigner has suffered by the wrongful action of a Maori placed in authority by themselves. As British Resident I take the opportunity of reminding all foreigners of all nationalities in the Cook Islands that when the British flag was hoisted the Maoris were guaranteed that their laws and customs then in force should be upheld so long as they did no wrong or injustice to any one living among them. Now, in nearly every appeal made to me I have found the complaint resting on some technical ground, or on the absence of some form or proceeding usual in British Courts of law. Every one must clearly understand that such rules of procedure are not at present to be expected in Native Courts, and that so long as substantial justice is done the ends of the Courts are answered. Appeal can always be made to the British resident, who is here to protect people of all nationalities; but the appeal must be on substantial grounds, and not on forms of procedure alone. I wish also to remind residents who were here in 1891 that my instructions—then published—directed me to enjoin upon them that they would be expected to do all in their power to live on friendly terms with the Maoris, to conform to their laws, and thus to aid in avoiding friction in the good government of the several islands. I make these remarks because the case now settled is sure to attract notice throughout the Cook Islands. It seems to me a favourable opportunity of recalling the position to older settlers, and of making known to those who have arrived since 1891 the relative position of the Native Governments and Courts, the British Resident, and themselves in these islands. I wish also to thank Ngamaru Ariki for the great trouble he has taken and the good feeling he has shown in bringing about a settlement of this dispute. I hope it is the last we shall hear of for some time in Mauke."

No. 2.

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

MY LORD,—

Cook Islands, British Residency, Rarotonga, 23rd July, 1896.

I have the honour to report the arrivals of H.M.S. "Goldfinch" on the 17th instant and of H.M.S. "Ringdove" on the 18th. The "Goldfinch" brought Mr. Hamilton Hunter from Fiji to act as Judicial Commissioner in the trial of a civil suit by Emil Pitts, of Rarotonga, against the Natives of Penrhyn for debt. The suit was settled between the parties prior to the arrival of the Commissioner, who has therefore been detained here by the "Goldfinch" waiting for coal to be brought by the Union Steamship Company's steamer "Corinna," which arrived to-day from Tahiti. The "Goldfinch" will therefore leave to-morrow for Penrhyn and Manihiki, which are under the High Commissioner's exclusive jurisdiction.

I had hoped that the "Ringdove" would be able to take me round the group, but Captain Bremer informed me that he could only do so on my assurance that it was urgent. The Natives throughout the Cook Group being loyal, orderly, and peaceable, I could not give such an assurance. I beg leave, however, to represent to your Excellency that the time has passed when I could with advantage continue to make use of trading schooners crowded with Natives, of uncertain destination, and in every way unsuitable. More especially does this apply when the Natives observe the very different provision made for the officers of the High Commissioner's Court when they visit these islands.

The occasional opportunity of visiting the other islands of the Federation in one of Her Majesty's ships would not only be an advantage in strengthening my somewhat isolated position, but of material service in binding the Natives more closely to the Empire, towards which their loyalty is strong and undoubted.

I have, &c.,

F. J. Moss,
British Resident.

His Excellency the Earl of Glasgow, G.C.M.G.