

The Estimates

Will be prepared with a view to keeping expenditure at the lowest suitable point, and with a due regard to the accumulation of savings from revenue which have enabled us to undertake improvements in the past, and on which we must largely depend for the future.

Summarising the receipts and expenditure of the past year they were as follows:—

Receipts.

	£	s.	d.
From import duty	919	9	8
From Hospital	183	17	10
From Post Office	120	5	3
Miscellaneous	6	10	0
	£1,230	2	9
To which must be added the balance in hand on the 1st July, 1896, being the savings of previous years, but subject to liabilities then outstanding to the amount of £218	481	7	11
Total	£1,711	10	8

Expenditure.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Fixed appropriations—				Caretaker (Ngatipa)	22	10	0
Subsidies to the several island Governments in accordance with the Constitution Act and for the maintenance of their Arikis' Courts, Judges, and police	309	0	0	Interpreting and clerical assistance	40	6	5
Toward maintenance of children at Tereora school	121	5	0	Care of the insane	15	15	0
Hospital	180	0	0	Compiling and reprinting the laws to December, 1896, and printing material and paper for same	43	13	4
Parliament and Executive Government—				Buildings, fittings, roofing, painting, water-supply, fencing, and approaches to Ngatipa	165	2	8
Including payment and passages of members and current expenses	117	10	0	Victoria Road, from Avarua to old road, and fencing	36	6	4
Departmental—					1,428	6	2
Salaries and contingencies, including stationery, current printing, and advertising	283	2	9	To which must be added school furniture and fittings—a liability from 1895-6	167	5	9
Carrying ocean mails	34	14	8		£1,595	11	11
Rent of post-office	9	0	0				
Subsidy to wharf sheds	50	0	0				

The balance of the £1,654 expended consisted of various similar liabilities of smaller separate sums carried to account this year.

Looking back over the last seven years during which our Federal Parliament, Councils, Courts of law, and Government, Post-office, and public revenue have been established, we acknowledge with thankfulness the help which we have received in that work from the Government of New Zealand, and may point with, we hope, justifiable pride to what our Parliament and Government have done. We have, so far, been able to do without gaols and armed bodies of any kind, yet life and property are perfectly safe throughout the Islands. The taxation is of the slightest, and we know of none who can complain of wrongs not righted. We have seen free schools established and liberally fitted for teaching in the English tongue, and have been able to aid the boarding- and training-school at Tereora. A convenient Parliament House has been built, and a good hospital, while material progress has been aided by subsidies towards the making of roads and in other ways. Regular payments of our Judges and police has been substituted, throughout the Islands, for the old system of paying themselves by such fines as they could exact from offenders brought before them. Our people have been thereby relieved, not only from much money exaction, but from the continual spying and harassing by which that system was necessarily attended.

The only taxation has been a duty on imports of 5 per cent., to which must be added the receipts from the post-office. A further duty of 1 per cent. has since been specially levied for the maintenance of the hospital, but no other tax of any kind has been so far found necessary. The practice of strict economy and an adherence to simplicity and directness in the constitution of our Government and in its forms and proceedings, can alone enable us to continue with this small taxation. That is a point upon which we desire to lay special stress, and which we must not fail to bear constantly in mind if we would keep taxation within due bounds.

Finally, we pray for the blessing of the Almighty upon your labours, and that they may prove for the good of the people of the Cook Islands.

For the Government,

MAKEA TAKAU (Ariki),
Chief of the Government.

Rarotonga, 5th July, 1897.

Appended Address to the Queen.

[Translation.]

To Her Most Gracious Majesty Victoria, Queen of Great Britain and Ireland and Empress of India. Health and blessing of God and of His Son Jesus Christ be on you and on your family and people.

I, MAKEA TAKAU, Ariki of Avarua, and Chief of the Federal Government of the Cook Islands, approach your Majesty on behalf of the Arikis, the Parliament, the Mataiapos, and the people of the Cook Islands, to humbly offer our heartfelt congratulations on the attainment of the 60th year of your glorious and beneficent reign.

Under the protection of the British flag we in this far-away country have been given the blessing of self-government, and are and ever shall be your Majesty's loyal and devoted people. Our children are being taught the English tongue in all our schools. Many of our people are already working as missionaries and teachers in New Guinea and other islands of this great ocean. The children now in the schools will go forth to do God's work and to spread the Gospel, stronger than their father from the knowledge which English books will give them, and will imbue the heathen with the loyalty and devotion which they feel themselves.

Gladly would we be present in person to do honour to your Majesty. But that cannot be, and in spirit we bow before you and pray that the blessing of God may long rest upon your Majesty, your family, and your great nation.

MAKEA TAKAU,

Chief of the Government of the Federation of the Cook Islands.

TEROU-O-TE-RANGI,

Chairman of the Federal Government.

Rarotonga, 25th March, 1897.