

All the members expressed their sincere regret at the continued illness of Tepou, who, as Chairman, held the respect of all. It was then proposed that Mr. John Salmon (Arorangi) be appointed Chairman. There being no dissentient, that gentleman was duly elected Chairman for the ensuing year.

The newly elected Chairman and members then waited upon the Chief of the Government (Makea Takau), the former informing her of his election as Chairman, and that the Parliament was organized and prepared for work.

The Chief of the Government then handed him the opening address from the Federal Government.

On the party returning to Parliament House, the Chairman read the address, and distributed printed copies of the same amongst the members.

Message No. 2, address to the new Governor of New Zealand, was read and adopted, of which the following is a copy :—

“To His Excellency the Right Hon. the Earl of Ranfurly, K.C.M.G., Governor of New Zealand, &c.: Salutations! We, Arikis of the Cook Islands, desire to join with the Federal Parliament of the Cook Islands in welcoming your Excellency to the great Colony of New Zealand, with which we are so closely connected, and from which we have received so many marks of kindness and much valued help in our young Government. We welcome you as the representative of Her Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, under whose protection we happily live, and we welcome your Excellency personally, with sincere wishes for the happiness of yourself and your family and for the prosperity of your Governorship in New Zealand. May your days be long and happy, and the blessing of God and His Son Jesus Christ be on you and your family, and on the colony which you are called to govern.

“Dated at Rarotonga, this 5th day of July, 1897.”

The Import Duty Amendment Bill was laid on the table. *Resolved*, That a Committee, consisting of the Chairman (Mr. J. M. Salmon), V. Moate, and Ngaropu, take evidence from the Hospital Board and the Medical Officer, and inquire into the reasons for the proposed change.

A letter was read from the Clerk of Parliament (Makea Daniela), requesting leave of absence for one month, and guaranteeing to supply a competent person to fill the post during his absence. Parliament willingly granted the request, at the same time expressing their appreciation of the services rendered by Makea Daniela.

Parliament then adjourned, the next meeting to take place as soon as possible after the arrival and departure of the “John Williams”; to be convened by the Chairman.

Enclosure No. 4.

MESSAGE No. 3.—From the CHIEF of the GOVERNMENT to the PARLIAMENT.

I HAVE received from Sir George Grey a letter, in reply to the address sent by me in accordance with your resolution of 10th August, 1896, and send it to you that you may know. You will be glad to hear that he whom we all look to as a father and protector of the Maori people in all countries was as strong and well as his many years, so much above the number allotted to most men, will allow.

Rarotonga, 8th July, 1897.

MAKEA TAKAU, Ariki,
Chief of Government.

52, Stanhope Gardens, Queen's Gate, London, 2nd November, 1896.

To the Queen Makea, Ariki, and to the representatives of Parliament in the Cook Islands assembled:

SALUTATIONS! I have grown old in the service of the Maoris and among other duties which have rendered my life toilsome, and must soon pass away from you, so I thank you for the letter you have written to me, and say to you “Go on.” Persevere in all that is requisite for the carrying-out of the good and fruitful measures laid down for you to promote the welfare of the natives, and think sometimes of me while you yourselves are labouring for the good of your people, and say, “Yes; he also did work to promote the happiness and welfare of all.”

From your attached friend,
G. GREY.

Enclosure No. 5.

MESSAGE No. 5.—From the GOVERNMENT to PARLIAMENT.

I SEND herewith, for the information of Parliament, the results of a census taken in Rarotonga on the 1st June, 1895, and one taken in Atiu on the 21st September, 1896.

These are taken entirely by the local island Governments, but I think it well to place them on record with the Federal Parliament, and to hope that the example may be followed by Mangaia, Mitiaro, Mauke, and Aitutaki.

Rarotonga, 9th July, 1897.

MAKEA TAKAU, Ariki,
Chief of the Government.