

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 or armed bodies of any kind, yet life and property are perfectly safe throughout the islands. The taxation is of the lightest, 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 payment 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 continued 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 pray 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 the 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 sixtieth 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 fathers 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.

TEFOU-O-TE-RANGI,
Chairman of the Federal Government.

Rarotonga, 25th March, 1897.

Enclosures Nos. 2 and 3.

COOK ISLANDS PARLIAMENT.—MONDAY, 5TH JULY, 1897.

THE seventh session of the Federal Parliament opened at 10 a.m. on the above date, according to the Constitution Act.

Before proceeding to business, members, officials, guests, and representatives of the Press were invited to partake of the usual luncheon incidental to the opening.

A few minutes before 12 noon members took their places, and the Clerk of Parliament called the roll, when were present: Rarotonga—J. M. Salmon (representing Arorangi); V. Maote (representing Takitumu). Atiu—Utakea (representing Atiu); Tua (representing Mauke); Kaketava (representing Mitiaro). Aitutaki—Memarau (representing Arutanga); Ngaropu (representing Reurea); Ngapo (representing Tauta).

Absent: The member for Avarua and the three members daily expected by the s.s. "John Williams."

Prayers: Utakea.

The next business was to elect a Chairman. The Clerk stated that Tepou-o-te-rangi was, unfortunately, still too ill to attend, and it was feared he would not be fit for work this session.