

1894.
NEW ZEALAND.

FEDERATION AND ANNEXATION: PACIFIC ISLANDS.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BRITISH RESIDENT, RAROTONGA.

[In continuation of Parliamentary Paper A.-3, 1894.]

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

REPORT ON THE TRADE OF THE COOK ISLANDS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER, 1893.

SHIPPING AND NAVIGATION.

THE entries during the year (Table I.) have been: Inwards, eighty-three vessels of 19,013 tons; outwards, eighty-three vessels of 19,071 tons. Of these, the mercantile tonnage inwards was 18,208, against 14,752 of a similar tonnage for the year 1892. The increase is due to the more frequent visits of the mail-steamer "Richmond." The smaller sailing-vessels show a decrease of 942 tons. The "Richmond" brings cargo from Tahiti as well as from New Zealand, but the French and American vessels from Tahiti show an increase of 160 tons for the year. During the year, the schooner owned by the Penrhyn Island Natives has been transferred to their own island, which is a British possession. This leaves three schooners owned by the Natives of the Cook Islands and under their flag. The largest of these is the "Takitumu," built at Rarotonga, entirely by the Natives, but chiefly of material imported from New Zealand. Her tonnage is about one hundred.

The mail-steamer "Richmond" has called regularly at Rarotonga, both on her voyage to Tahiti and return to New Zealand, during the past year.

The port charges continue as in my last report for 1892.

EXPORTS AND IMPORTS.

The currency of the Cook Islands being the Chilian dollar (nominally at its original value of 4s., but actually current at 3s.), a practice had grown up of valuing imports by converting the pound sterling of the invoices into a sum of five dollars. The exports, on the other hand, were valued at the prices actually paid—namely, 3s. to the dollar. To remedy this, an Act was passed in July last, by the Federal Parliament, to provide that imports should in future be valued in the dollar, at its current rate of 3s. Hence the import entries since July, 1893, are converted (in Table III.) into pounds sterling, at a different rate to those of the preceding half-year. It is hoped that the difficulty of the currency will be obviated altogether by the adoption of British money as the only legal tender; but this young Government is scarcely strong enough at present to deal with a question so largely affecting fixed engagements, and involving a rearrangement of prices in every department of trade. I have no doubt that the change will be made as soon as it is possible.

There have been no additional duties, or other taxes, during the year; but the change in valuation of imports makes the duty paid 5 per cent., instead of $3\frac{3}{4}$, to which it was practically reduced under the old system.

Exports.

The exports for 1893 (Table II.) were £19,668, against £20,336 for the preceding year. The decrease is only in pearl-shell, bêche-de-mer, and copra, the produce of islands outside the Cook group, sent to Rarotonga for export. The decrease for the year under this head was £4,086. The exports of Cook Island produce for the year show an increase of £3,418 on the total. The increase in the fruit trade is noteworthy, and it is capable of considerable expansion. The respective items of increase and decrease are stated in detail in the comparative totals included in the table.

It is to be observed that the proportions of exports to New Zealand and Tahiti show a considerable decrease to New Zealand (£3,323), but an increase to Tahiti of £2,654.

The chief exports to Tahiti were,—

	1893.	1892.
	£	£
Coffee	1,804	1,357
Copra	1,200	627
Cotton	2,122	624
Pearl-shell	198	Nil
	<u>5,324</u>	<u>2,608</u>

Through Tahiti, these exports find their way to California and Hamburg. The figures are noteworthy, as indicating the efforts of Tahiti merchants to extend their trade with these islands, encouraged, no doubt, by the absence of similar efforts on the part of merchants in New Zealand during the last two years. I can only repeat what I have before said on this subject respecting the intrinsic superiority of most articles of New Zealand produce used in these islands to the meats and other produce sent from California, with which they have to compete.

Imports.

The imports for 1893 (Table III.) amounted to £19,284, against £16,249 for the previous year. From New Zealand there was a falling-off to the extent of £808; while from Tahiti there was an increase of £3,843. The respective totals were,—

	1893.	1892.
	£	£
From New Zealand	10,187	10,995
" Tahiti	9,097	5,254
	<u>19,284</u>	<u>16,249</u>

The chief imports from Tahiti were:—

	1893.	1892.
	£	£
Clothing	383	238
Rice and fancy goods	3,882	2,357
Provisions	328	337
Breadstuffs	720	502
Groceries	420	252
Timber	738	194
Hardware	916	373
Tobacco	208	132
Spirits and wines	191	73
Miscellaneous	1,283	767
	<u>9,069</u>	<u>5,225</u>

The "Miscellaneous" include articles of which no separate account is kept in the entries; but, excepting perhaps in some descriptions of fancy goods, there seems little reason to doubt that New Zealand merchants could compete successfully with California and Hamburg, and retain the large proportion of the trade they have always held.

Specie.

In addition to the imports shown in the table, specie, in the form of Chilian dollars, has been brought from Tahiti during the year to the amount of \$34,371, and from New Zealand, \$506. During the year the returns show an export of specie to Tahiti of \$9,100.

This specie is sent to purchase produce in Rarotonga, and is obtained from Tahiti by New Zealand as well as other merchants in these islands. Chilian coin is still the chief currency in Tahiti, and in the other French islands in the Eastern Pacific, although at a discount of 40 per cent. at present, in exchange for French money.

The exports of the Cook Islands for the year being £19,668, against imports of £19,284, the balance is in favour of the Cook Islands, but not sufficiently to account for so large an excess of import over export of specie, £3,586. I am inclined to think that the export of specie is understated. There are no means of securing accuracy on this point. All that is certain is that, with the Chilian currency, buyers of Native produce are compelled to provide themselves with specie from Tahiti, at the opening of the coffee and copra seasons, to meet all possible demands.

POSTAGE STAMPS.

The new postage-stamps referred to in my last report have been issued during 1893, and consist of 1d., 1½d., 2½d., 5d., and 10d. stamps, bearing the likeness of Queen Makea, the elected Chief of the Federal Government. The remainder of the old issue on hand, when replaced by the new, have been destroyed, in accordance with the undertaking of the Federal Government with the purchasers of those stamps, from whom an appreciable addition to the revenue was derived.

FREDERICK J. MOSS,
British Resident, and Agent of the New Zealand Government
in all matters relating to Trade.

STATISTICS, 1893.

TABLE I.

REPORT of all SHIPPING at the Port of RAROTONGA (Cook Islands) during the Year ending the 31st December, 1893.

	Sailing.		Steam.		Men-of-war.		Total, 1893.		1892.	
	No.	Tonnage.	No.	Tonnage.	No.	Tonnage.	No.	Tonnage.	No.	Tonnage.
<i>Inwards.</i>										
British ..	22	2,363	22	13,816	1	805	45	16,984	55	14,990
American ..	1	120	..	..	..	..	1	120	8	336
French ..	7	556	..	..	..	..	7	556	3	180
Native ..	30	1,353	..	..	..	..	30	1,353	29	1,626
Totals ..	60	4,392	22	13,816	1	805	83	19,013	95	17,132
<i>Outwards.</i>										
British ..	23	2,462	22	13,816	1	805	46	17,083	53	14,835
American ..	1	120	..	..	..	..	1	120	7	294
French ..	7	556	..	..	..	..	7	556	2	120
Native ..	29	1,312	..	..	..	..	29	1,312	31	1,728
Totals ..	60	4,450	22	13,816	1	805	83	19,071	93	16,977

TABLE II.

EXPORTS of PRODUCE from the COOK ISLANDS for the Year ending 31st December, 1893.
(Valued in Chilian Dollars at 3s. each.)

	March Quarter.		June Quarter.		September Quarter.		December Quarter.		Total for 1893.		1892.	
	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.
Coffee .. lb.	4,425	\$ 844	40,429	\$ 8,525	106,998	\$ 24,298	39,647	\$ 9,283	191,499	\$ 42,950	156,914	\$ 32,179
Copra .. cwt.	1,387	3,759	4,490	12,176	3,412	9,792	4,403	12,350	13,692	38,077	18,818	50,570
Cotton .. lb.	10,376	1,597	69,640	10,367	27,407	2,251	40,180	6,246	147,603	20,461	99,163	15,358
Limejuice .. gal.	2,756	600	3,900	702	2,241	467	478	111	9,375	1,880	22,122	5,450
Oranges .. cases*	666	888	2,352	3,036	3,714	4,952	5,642	8,041	12,374	16,917	6,251	8,571
Pearl-shell .. lb.	..	..	25,602	2,947	..	..	16,741	2,511	42,343	5,458	99,072	18,896
Bêche-de-mer lb.	..	..	3,293	152	..	..	1,971	118	5,264	270	34,989	2,251
Fungus .. lb.	..	..	2,963	127	803	56	882	58	4,648	241	1,968	105
Cocoanuts .. hundreds	..	..	72	90	72	94	16	20	160	204	396	489
Bananas .. bunches	3,244	811	4,044	1,011	1,820	441	1,568	392	10,676	2,655	1,891	492
Arrowroot .. lb.	..	..	..	..	..	..	9,072	479	9,072	479	..	..
Cotton-seed .. tons	..	..	..	..	..	..	15	60	15	60	..	..
Pine-apples ..	160	9	1,040	58	60	4	11,964	675	13,224	746	8,636	416
Other articles	..	52	..	263	..	222	..	182	..	719	..	795
		\$8,560		\$39,454		\$42,577		\$40,526		\$131,117		\$135,572
		£1,284		£5,918		£6,387		£6,079		£19,668		£20,336

* About 300 in each.

To what Places Exported.								1893.		1892.	
								£		£	
New Zealand ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	14,307		17,630	
Tahiti ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5,360		2,706	
								£19,667		£20,336	

MEMO.—Included in the above are pearl-shell, &c., from Penrhyn and other islands not within the Cook Group, to the value of £359 sterling.

4827
 7585
 2184
 818
 1286
 338
 15
 72
 62
 119

TABLE III.
IMPORTS into the COOK ISLANDS for the Year ending 31st December, 1893.

	Chilian Dollars, Rated at 4s. each.		Chilian Dollars, at New Rate, 3s.		Totals.	
	March Quarter.	June Quarter.	September Quarter.	December Quarter.	£ sterling. 1893.	£ sterling. 1892.
	\$	\$	\$	\$		
Animals	166	37	117	..	58	Nil.
Clothing	552	1,326	2,955	675	920	729
Piece and fancy goods	5,064	8,185	20,167	6,103	6,590	5,841
Provisions (salted and preserved)	1,755	2,218	4,480	2,472	1,838	1,534
Breadstuffs and biscuits	1,284	2,725	3,329	2,352	1,654	1,562
Groceries	1,713	2,405	4,197	1,695	1,707	1,735
Spirits	518	280	594	1,074	410	324
Wines	7	192	46	52	54	25
Beer .. .. .	..	431	2	17	89	153
Timber (manufactured and unmanufactured)	706	2,574	2,604	2,457	1,415	501
Ironmongery	1,202	3,780	3,748	3,961	2,153	1,784
Tobacco	407	652	375	672	369	425
Other articles	1,621	3,307	3,398	3,542	2,027	1,636
	\$14,995	\$28,112	\$46,012	\$25,072	£19,284	£16,249
	£2,999	£5,622	£6,902	£3,761	..	..

Whence Imported.	1893.	1892.
	£	£
From New Zealand	10,187	10,995
„ Tahiti	9,097	5,254
	19,284	16,249

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, nil; printing (1,375 copies), £3 5s.

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