

They observe that the notice speaks of the return as duly certified, but does not say by whom it is certified. In order to prevent misapprehension, my Lords would suggest that it should be added by whom the return is certified, the object being to show that the Government only publishes, without verifying, the return furnished by the Bank.

My Lords would be ready, if the Secretary of State desired it, to give copies of the charters of banks carrying on business in the colonies for the use of the Government of such Colonies. The model charter which my Lords are now granting on the expiry of existing charters exempts Governors from responsibility for verification, if such responsibility is imposed by the expiring charter. A Bill now before Parliament will, if it passes, put an end to any such responsibility in the case of the Oriental Bank.

My Lords would suggest that the principle of non-inspection should be consistently put into practice, and that inspection should therefore be discontinued in the Colony of Hong Kong; but on this point the Secretary of State may like, in the first instance, to learn the views of the Government of the Colony.

I return, as requested, the papers which you enclosed.

The Under-Secretary of State, Colonial Office.

I have, &c.

LEONARD COURTNEY.

No. 9.

(New Zealand, No. 17.)

SIR,—

Downing Street, 12th April, 1884.

I have the honour to transmit to you a copy of a letter which I have received from the Directors of the Auckland South Sea Island Produce Company, Limited, relating to the alleged claim of their company to the lease of certain landed properties in Samoa.

As this letter contains complaints against the Acting High Commissioner for the Western Pacific and one of the Deputy Commissioners, in regard to the claim put forward by the company, I have forwarded a copy of it to the Acting High Commissioner for his report, and I request that you will be so good as to inform Messrs. Henderson and Shera of the course taken in the matter.

I have, &c.

Governor Sir W. F. D. Jervois, G.C.M.G. C.B. &c.

DERBY.

Enclosures.

The AUCKLAND SOUTH SEA ISLAND PRODUCE COMPANY to the COLONIAL OFFICE.

MY LORD,—

Auckland, New Zealand, February 4th, 1884.

We have now the honour of forwarding to your Lordship the enclosed correspondence with Sir G. W. Des Vœux, the Acting High Commissioner for the Western Pacific. We would respectfully add, in further explanation, that our claim consists of a lease to certain landed properties in Samoa, leased to us by a Samoan woman named Manaema.

Our agent, on arriving in Samoa, found that these properties, lawfully and justly ours, were in possession of a certain firm called William McArthur and Co., whose only claim and title to the properties were, that they had been put in forcible possession, first, by Mr. Churchward, the British Deputy Commissioner at Samoa, and, on being afterwards forcibly dispossessed by the Samoan people, again forcibly reinstated by the Acting High Commissioner in person, who went from Fiji to Samoa in H.M.S. "Diamond" for this purpose, and who at the same time imposed a fine on the Samoan Government for presuming to dispute the title of William McArthur and Co. to take possession of any Samoan lands they might claim.

The Deputy Commissioner at Samoa, moreover, refused to recognize in any way our agent in Samoa, or to afford him any assistance whatever, but, on the contrary, tried in every possible way to thwart him in making his mission a successful one.

Our agent complained to the Acting High Commissioner, but his letter of complaint was unnoticed—the receipt of it not even acknowledged.

The correspondence enclosed and referred to above contains all we have since done in the matter.

We beg herewith also to enclose an amended and more complete account of our expenses and losses up to the present time, caused by the extraordinary action of the Acting High Commissioner in the present case; and would most respectfully request your Lordship's interference on our behalf, and to inform us how we can best proceed to make good our losses up to the present time, or any further losses in future: whether we must look to Sir G. W. Des Vœux personally, or to the High Commissioner, or to William McArthur and Co.

We feel the more confidence in approaching your Lordship on this important matter, as we cannot but believe that the Order in Council for the Western Pacific was framed in the interests of all British merchants alike, and not alone in the interest of any one merchant.

We have, &c.

H. W. HENDERSON, } Directors.
J. M. SHERA, }