

## No. 9.

His Excellency the GOVERNOR to the MERCHANTS and OTHERS at Rarotonga.

(254/97.)

GENTLEMEN,—

Government House, Wellington, 7th October, 1897.

I have received your petition, and have given it my fullest attention, and I am shortly sending a Commissioner, as requested both by the British Resident and the petitioners, to thoroughly investigate the matter.

The Merchants, Cook Islands.

RANFURLY, Governor.

## No. 10.

His Excellency the GOVERNOR to Mr. F. J. Moss.

(256/97.)

SIR,—

Government House, Wellington, 7th October, 1897.

With reference to your despatch (19/97), I beg to enclose you a copy (257/97) of my reply to Mr. Kohn. I consider it would have been the best course if you had forwarded this petition, together with any comments and explanation you might desire to make thereon.

I have, &amp;c.,

F. J. Moss, British Resident, Rarotonga.

RANFURLY.

## No. 11.

The PRIVATE SECRETARY to Mr. KOHN and OTHERS, Rarotonga.

(257/97.)

GENTLEMEN,—

Government House, Wellington, 7th October, 1897.

I am directed by His Excellency the Governor to return you your petition. The petition should have been sent through the proper channel—namely, through the British Resident at Rarotonga.

Yours, &amp;c.,

Messrs. Kohn and others.

DUDLEY ALEXANDER, Captain,  
Private Secretary and A.D.C.

## No. 12.

Mr. F. J. Moss to His Excellency the GOVERNOR.

(326/97.)

MY LORD,—

British Residency, Rarotonga, 10th November, 1897.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt on the 3rd instant of your Excellency's despatch of the 7th October (256/97), and in accordance therewith enclose: 1. The petition of Kohn, Piltz, and others. 2. My comments thereon.

Copies of the enclosures will be given to Sir H. Berkeley on his arrival.

I find that I have omitted to refer to the appointment of Registrar of Deeds, included in the petition. Mr. Seard was appointed on the 17th July, 1891, and has filled the office without complaint of any kind ever since. The payment is only by fee, and for some time past I find that only one deed per month has on the average been presented. Registration is only compulsory in dealings with native land, and the object is to secure publicity. In all other cases it is voluntary, and only to give security against loss of the original deeds.

I have, &amp;c.,

FREDERICK J. MOSS,  
British Resident.

His Excellency the Earl of Ranfurly, K.C.M.G., Governor of New Zealand.

## Enclosures.

(326/97.)

SIR,—

Rarotonga, 15th September, 1897.

We, the undersigned merchants and importers of the Cook Islands, do humbly pray that your Excellency will be pleased to grant a Royal Commission to inquire into the general administration of affairs in this group whilst under the general supervision of the British Resident, F. J. Moss, Esq. Our humble petition to your Excellency is made on the following grounds:—

(1.) That at a meeting of the Cook Islands Parliament in the year 1894 a resolution was passed that the Government bond, Customhouse, and post-office should be removed from the premises of Messrs. Donald and Edenborough and placed in a more central situation, and entirely away from any mercantile house. That this resolution was not approved by the British Resident, and thus could not become law. That this question was brought up at three separate sessions of Parliament, but was vetoed on every occasion by the British Resident, although the necessary funds for the purpose were guaranteed by Parliament.

(2.) That Messrs. Donald and Edenborough, to the detriment of all other merchants and traders, are the Government bankers, and have full control of all Government moneys.

(3.) That a private door connects the Government bond with the premises of Messrs. Donald and Edenborough.