

No. 10.

Office of Commissioner of Trade and Customs,
Wellington, 4th June, 1902.

SIR,—

I have the honour to inform you that it has been decided in Cabinet that, in respect to Customs revenue and Customs officers, all the islands are to be under you as Administrator of the Government, and interpretations of the tariff are to be decided by you. To aid you in this the decisions given by the Commissioner of Trade and Customs in New Zealand from time to time will be sent to you. It will not therefore be necessary to send forward protests of importers, as these can be dealt with on the spot by you under the above directions.

I have, &c.,

The Resident Commissioner, Rarotonga.

C. H. MILLS.

No. 11.

Premier's Office, Wellington, 5th June, 1902.

SIR,—

Referring to your letter, No. 26, of the 23rd April, forwarding a plan of a building now in course of erection at Niue for Customs and Post-office and residence for the Agent, which I herewith return, I have now to inform you that the expenditure of £100 to provide doors and windows and iron for the roof is approved. This is to be regarded as a loan against the revenue of Niue. No. 4.

I have, &c.,

The Resident Commissioner, Rarotonga.

J. G. WARD, Acting-Premier.

No. 12.

Premier's Office, Wellington, 18th June, 1902.

SIR,—

I have the honour to forward for your information, and of the Resident Agent at Niue, two copies of the *New Zealand Gazette* of the 12th instant, containing Governor's Orders establishing the Port of Rarotonga, Cook Islands, and the Port of Alofi, Island of Niue.

I have, &c.,

The Resident Commissioner, Rarotonga.

J. G. WARD, Acting-Premier.

No. 13.

British Residency, Rarotonga, 19th June, 1902.

SIR,—

I have the honour to report that I have taken advantage of the presence of the mission steamer "John Williams" to visit the northern islands, from Penrhyn to Pukapuka; and in pursuance with the instructions contained in section 7 of "The Cook and other Islands Government Act, 1901," have instituted Island Councils at Penrhyn, Rakahanga, Manihiki, and Palmerston.

At Pukapuka I found a very singular population, who have now some knowledge of the Rarotongan language, but whose language is not intelligible to the Maori of the Pacific. This is such a very primitive people that I considered it advisable for the present to leave them under their own ancient form of government, inasmuch as they are seldom visited by Europeans and produce only a little copra.

I have further to report that I found the islands in a very satisfactory condition. In Penrhyn, Captain Nagle has done excellent work, and the people of the Omoka Village have formally presented to me, as representative of the New Zealand Government, with a piece of land and the buildings thereon—viz., a good iron and weatherboard dwelling-house, a good iron store, and a stone wharf. They have also given a large piece of the lagoon, which will be planted with shell, for the purposes of the Island Government.

At the present moment there are a number of land disputes which require to be settled, as the irritation caused by these disputes is very great, and may at any time cause a serious breach of the peace. There are also civil actions pending which must be settled. I therefore propose to visit the northern islands during the hurricane season, when there is nothing doing in the Cook group, and hold a sitting of the High Court (or Land Court, if constituted), in order to settle all disputes. This may probably take at least two months, but I can well spare the time in December, January, and February.

A plan of the land and lagoon given to the Government will be forwarded so soon as I can obtain a survey of that and other places.

I have, &c.,

The Right Hon. the Premier, New Zealand.

W. E. GUDGEON,

Resident Commissioner.

No. 14.

British Residency, Rarotonga, 24th June, 1902.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant, No. 286/53, notifying me that the Customs revenue and Customs officers in all of the islands were to be under me as Administrator of the Government, and, as a sequence, that the interpretations of the tariff were to be decided by me. No. 10.

I have the honour to thank you for this decision, which will, I think, prevent many unnecessary references to you.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. C. H. Mills, Commissioner of Customs.

W. E. GUDGEON,

Resident Commissioner.