

No. 177.

SIR,—

Rarotonga, Cook Islands, 28th April, 1904.

I have the honour to report, for your information, that I returned yesterday to Rarotonga, after a ten days' inspection tour round the islands of Mauke, Mitiaro, Atiu, and Manuae. During this visit I cleared up all the cases pending in the High Court and Land Titles Court, and finally settled the claims of the London Mission in those islands.

Among other matters at Atiu I formally took the main road from Taunganui landing to the Village of Areora, 155 chains long, in the name of His Majesty King Edward, and proclaimed it as a high road for all time. The people of Atiu recognise the necessity for this action and approve it; in fact, they are proud that the old paths trodden by the feet of their ancestors should obtain formal recognition in the Court.

It is my intention to continue this line of action by surveying every road-line throughout the Islands, marking the chief points with iron pegs imbedded in concrete blocks, as points of departure for future surveys. By these means we shall shortly possess detailed maps of each island. At Atiu and at Mitiaro the people live in content under their own chiefs, and though they may do but little good either for themselves or their island, they are satisfied with their lot; but at Mauke it is otherwise, for there they have religious discord and intense tribal jealousy. The Catholic Mission of St. Joseph has obtained a footing in the island among the adherents of Tamuera, of the Ngatitoua, and that tribe has given to the mission a piece of land which is claimed by the Chief Tararo. This question of ownership I attempted to settle, but found that it involved the tribal boundaries. I had therefore to defer the investigation until I could survey the outer boundaries of each chief's territory, and thus settle the small question without prejudice to the larger interests involved in the tribal boundaries.

I much fear that Tamuera has become a Catholic merely to assert his independence of Tararo and Te Au, and if so the bad feeling of the present day will continue.

The Hon. C. H. Mills, Minister for the Islands.

I have, &c.,

W. E. GUDGEON.

No. 178.

SIR,—

Eastern Pacific, Rarotonga, 28th April, 1904.

No. 173.

With reference to your letter of the 15th instant, No. 42, I have the honour to inform you that Captain Nagle has authority to supplement the ordinary collection made in support of the lepers at Penrhyn from the Government funds, but has not hitherto found it necessary to do so. The lagoon swarms with fish, and there are coconuts growing on the Island of Morokai; therefore the European food supplied is ample to support the few lepers on the island. Captain Nagle is a kindly humane man, and can be trusted to see that these unfortunate people do not want, for he knows my opinion on the subject.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. C. H. Mills, Minister for the Islands.

W. E. GUDGEON.

No. 179.

SIR,—

Eastern Pacific, Rarotonga, 28th April, 1904.

No. 160.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter No. 29, of 21st March last, with reference to the annual payment on cost of schooner. Personally, I can see no other method of dealing with the matter than that proposed by you, unless it be decided to sell the schooner, and that is hardly expedient at present. I would, however, suggest that you bear in mind the value of the schooner to Niue, and the fact that that island has hitherto borne no part of the expense of the schooner, and that the amount due by Niue be definitely fixed for each annual payment.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. C. H. Mills, Minister for the Islands.

W. E. GUDGEON.

No. 180.

Cook and other Islands Administration, Wellington,
28th April, 1904.

SIR,—

No. 126.

I am in receipt of your letter of the 18th January, with a statement of Niue revenue for the quarter ending the 31st December, 1903, showing a credit balance of £1,101 1s. 8d., and other accounts setting forth the financial position of the island at that date, and have to express my satisfaction with the good results shown.

I am having a computation made in the Customs Department to ascertain what will be a fair percentage to allow to Niue Island Account for goods which have been shipped from New Zealand duty paid. I note what you say regarding duty collected at Rarotonga on goods shipped to Niue, and will ask the Resident Commissioner to supply me with a statement of account. I am writing you separately on the subject of stamps.

I have, &c.,

The Resident Commissioner, Niue.

C. H. MILLS.