

<i>Expenditure.</i>		£	s.	d.
Benzine	...	55	16	8
Wages (including about £140 from previous year)	...	482	0	9
Outfit and repairs	...	106	13	5
Provisions	...	133	6	10
Agency and office expenses, Auckland and Rarotonga	...	37	1	9
Miscellaneous expenditure	...	66	0	6
Contingencies, £10; insurance, say, £75	...	85	0	0
		<hr/> £965 19 11 <hr/>		
Approximate loss for six months	...	£136	10	6

E. BLAINE,

Secretary, Government Schooner Department.

Rarotonga, 20th September, 1904

No. 72.

SIR,— Cook and other Islands Administration, Wellington, 30th September, 1904.

I am in receipt of your letter of the 3rd August, No. 66/04, forwarding a plan showing the land at Mangaia that you have taken for a landing-place, and for a site for a residence and Courthouse. I have also received the letter of the 3rd August, addressed to you by the Rev. J. J. K. Hutchin, in which he declines to claim any compensation for the land, and asks you to accept it as a free gift to the Cook Islands Government. I shall be glad if you will convey to the Rev. Mr. Hutchin the Government's hearty appreciation of his courtesy in this matter, and its thanks for the magnificent gift of the London Missionary Society Corporation. I return Mr. Hutchin's letter herewith as requested.

The Resident Commissioner, Rarotonga.

I have, &c.,

C. H. MILLS.

No. 73.

SIR,—

Niue, 1st October, 1904.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 175, of 6th August, 1904, covering the opinion of the Solicitor-General with reference to introducing part of the New Zealand Divorce Acts into Niue; also the Niue Island Marriage, Divorce, and Registration Ordinance, No. 4, which is returned for alteration.

I am rather disappointed that it has been found impracticable to confer the necessary power to enable divorces between Natives to be effected in the island. A considerable number of divorces are sought by Natives here on various grounds—*e.g.*, incompatibility of temper, adultery, and—by far the greater number—complete desertion of wives by their husbands for several years. These latter are extremely pitiable cases, as the woman has to maintain herself and often a family, and cannot marry again because the resident missionary has set his face against remarriages of this kind since annexation, although previously they were allowed. I regret to say I have raised false hopes in the minds of these people, as I was under the impression that power to grant divorce would be conferred as contemplated.

The Cook Islands are in a better position in this respect than Niue, as the High Court is able to grant divorces. Something should be done to place Niue on the same footing, and afford relief in deserving cases.

I will delete all the clauses relating to divorces in the Niue Ordinance, and have it repassed by the Niue Island Council.

I have, &c.,

C. F. MAXWELL,

The Hon. C. H. Mills, Minister in Charge,

Resident Commissioner, Niue.

Cook and other Islands Administration, Wellington.

No. 74.

SIR,—

Niue, 1st October, 1904.

Your telegram of 24th August, 1904, concerning labour licenses, came to hand on the 12th September.

I am rather surprised at the position. I note that "The Niue Island Emigration Ordinance, 1903," is the only law now governing the labour traffic here.

I must confess that I am doubtful as to the best means of restricting emigration without unduly interfering with the liberty of the people. It is quite clear to me that merely increasing the emigration fee would not have the desired effect, for when the fee was 10s. per head it did not restrain emigration to an appreciable extent. I am not in favour of increasing the fee. The matter requires careful consideration; the most feasible course seems to be to fix the rate of wages by Ordinance at not less than £2 5s. per month to Malden Island, and £2 10s. to Samoa or elsewhere. The reason for fixing the rate of wages for Malden Island lower than for Samoa is, that the gangs are returned to their homes from the former place, whereas in Samoa they have the option of accepting a sum sufficient to defray their passage by other vessels than those which