

No. 1.

(Circular.)

SIR,—

Downing Street, 18th March, 1905.

I have the honour to inform you that, in view of the difficulty experienced in establishing the nationality of the claimants when the British claims recently came up for examination before the Venezuelan Claims Commission, it has been decided by His Majesty's Government to encourage as much as possible the practice of registration at His Majesty's consulates abroad, and more especially in the case of British subjects resorting to Central and South America; and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has suggested the desirability of posting public notices at the various ports of emigration in the West Indies or other places in which it may seem advisable, impressing upon all emigrants of British nationality the advisability of having themselves registered at a British consulate on the earliest opportunity after arrival at their destination, and warning them against the difficulties which their failure to do so may entail.

2. I enclose for the information of your Ministers a copy of the new regulations which have been issued to His Majesty's consular officers abroad on the subject, and have to request you to invite your Government to consider the necessity for the issue of a notification for the guidance of any emigrants to foreign countries from the colony under your Government, calling their attention to the new consular regulations affecting this matter.

I have, &c.,

ALFRED LYTTETON.

The Officer Administering the Government of New Zealand.

Enclosure.

REGISTRATION OF BRITISH SUBJECTS.

EVERY British subject is entitled, should he desire to do so, to register himself at a British consulate, and to obtain a certificate that he is so registered.

Where it is desirable, on account of the number of persons presenting themselves for registration or for other reasons, to keep a special register of British subjects, it should be kept in accordance with the provisions of this circular.

The register should contain the particulars provided for in the form of Annex 1.

An applicant for registration should be required to fill up a form (Annex 2), and should not be registered until his claim has been established to the satisfaction of the consular officer.

British-protected persons should be registered in the register of British subjects, but the fact that they are British-protected persons should be noted in the register.

An applicant of European descent, who is not personally known to the consular officer, claiming British nationality on the ground of birth within the British dominions should produce a letter from some known and responsible person certifying to his identity and British nationality, or satisfactory evidence of some other description.

Where British nationality is claimed under the statute 4 Geo. II, cap. 21—*i.e.*, on the ground that the claimant's father was a natural-born British subject though the claimant was born abroad, the following evidence should be required: (a) A certificate of the birth of the applicant; (b) the marriage certificate of the parents; (c) the birth certificate of the father.

Where the nationality is claimed by descent from the paternal grandfather under the statute 13 Geo. III, cap. 21, evidence in addition to that in paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) above should be required as to—(d) The marriage of the paternal grandparents; (e) the birth of the paternal grandfather within the British dominions.

In the case of persons of Asiatic or West Indian descent, or of natives of Africa, the following evidence may in general be considered sufficient:—

(a.) A passport or certificate of British nationality issued to him as a British subject, or certificate of registration as a British subject, in British India or British possessions, or by a British consular officer;

(b.) A birth certificate showing that he was born within His Majesty's dominions, or a certificate of naturalisation in the United Kingdom; and

(c.) In either of the above cases such further evidence of identity as the consular officer may think satisfactory.

Where the documents mentioned in (a) bear a date anterior to this circular, they should not be accepted as conclusive, if the consular officer sees any reason to doubt the validity of the claim to British nationality; and, where the passport has been issued more than six months, evidence may be required from the applicant that he has not changed his nationality since the issue of the passport.