

No. 110.

SIR,— Cook and other Islands Administration, Wellington, 9th January, 1906.

No. 90.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th November, with reference to the proposal to establish a Government plantation, &c., at Rarotonga. I submitted your letter to Mr. T. W. Kirk for his remarks, and enclose a copy of his memo. herewith.

These papers, and those relative to the question of imposing a duty on tropical fruit imported into New Zealand from the outside islands, are being again referred to Cabinet, so that the whole question may be carefully considered and some decision come to as to what shall be done next session.

I am pleased to note from your letter that the circumstances of the islands have greatly improved since our visit, and I hope that we shall continue to see a steady progress in all matters affecting their welfare.

I have, &c.,

The Resident Commissioner, Rarotonga.

C. H. MILLS.

Enclosure.

Department of Agriculture (Divisions of Biology, Horticulture, and Publications),
Wellington, 23rd December, 1905.

Cook Islands.

I HAVE perused Colonel Gudgeon's memo. of the 7th ultimo, and other papers.

It seems to me that several points have become somewhat obscured since the earlier correspondence.

1. (a.) Fumigation: I recommend that all plants, &c., imported into the Cook Islands be examined, and, if necessary, fumigated or dipped at Rarotonga, which should be the only port of entry for the Group. This would prevent the introduction and spread of fresh diseases.

(b.) Fruit exported from Rarotonga itself would, of course, be examined and fumigated in the official fumigator by the Horticultural Officer, who would control all horticultural matters in the Group. When his certificates were found to be reliable they would be accepted at face value.

(c.) The fruit exported from other islands of the Group there would, however, be some difficulty in treating. Either there would have to be a shed and competent officer at each island, entailing an expenditure not yet warranted, or the fruit would have to be collected at Rarotonga by local boats ready for the regular steamer. As an alternative, the present system must continue so far as those islands are concerned.

2. The advantages of the suggested plantations are set out in my "suggestions" already on this file.

3. In Colonel Gudgeon's "recurring charges," £100 is put down for rent. I was given to understand that the land would be provided free.

4. The imposition of a duty or other protection for Cook Islands fruit, as per my "suggestion" No. 5, is very important. Some such protection is necessary if the Cook Group is to compete successfully with Tonga and Fiji.

T. W. KIRK, Biologist.

No. 111.

SIR,— Cook and other Islands Administration, Wellington, 9th January, 1906.

No. 75.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th October, forwarding a statement of the Niue Island Revenue for the Quarter ending the 30th September, 1905.

I have, &c.,

The Resident Commissioner, Niue.

C. H. MILLS.

No. 112.

SIR,— Niue Island Administration, Niue, 9th January, 1906.

I have the honour to hand to you herewith a Return of Exports from Niue for the Quarter ended the 31st December, 1905.

The total value of Niue produce exported during the period amounts to £795, of which 407 pounds' worth was sent to New Zealand, and 388 pounds' worth to Samoa.

Compared with the figures of the return for the same period of 1904, there is a decrease in the value of Niue produce exported of £1,822.

This shrinkage may be accounted for in this way: About 60 tons of copra which is usually exported in December quarter was not shipped until 5th January. This amounts to nearly £600 in value. Hats show a shortage of 1,154 dozens, value £895: the cause of this is already known to you.

The quantity of fungus exported is £145 less in value than for the corresponding quarter of 1904. The same reason which affected the quantity of copra exported applies to fungus also, but primarily the dry weather we have had here reduced the crop considerably.

I have, &c.,

C. F. MAXWELL,

Resident Commissioner, Niue.

The Hon. C. H. Mills, Minister in Charge
Cook and other Islands, Wellington.