

2. In reply, I am directed by their Lordships to acquaint you, for the information of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, that they attach great importance to the attainment of the object so clearly defined by the Government of Victoria, and that the subject is under consideration, with a view of obtaining the desired result.

3. A communication has, with this object, been sent to the Commander-in-Chief on the Australian station to the effect that the proper status will be given to these officers by conferring upon them acting commissions and appointment, and dealing with the question of the duties to be entrusted to them.

I am, &c.,

The Under-Secretary of State, Colonial Office.

EVAN MACGREGOR.

No. 6.

(New Zealand, No. 58.)

MY LORD,—

Downing Street, 13th December, 1890.

With reference to your Lordship's telegram of the 25th October, and to my reply of the 15th ultimo, respecting the selection by the Government of New Zealand of Mr. F. J. Moss as Resident in the Cook Group, and the instructions under which it is proposed that he should act, I have the honour to transmit to you, for communication to your Government, copies of the ordinances enumerated in the margin, which have been enacted by the Administrator of British New Guinea, with the advice and consent of his Legislative Council, with the view of carrying out objects similar to those referred to in my despatch, No. 8, of the 28th February.

Nos. 1, 2, and 3,
of 1888.

2. As already stated in that despatch, legislation by means of ordinances is unsuited to the conditions of a protected territory; but your Advisers will no doubt consider the requirements of the case, and instruct Mr. Moss to provide, either by regulation or declaration, for the objects which these ordinances are intended to secure.

3. In some cases the provisions may be found too elaborate to be adopted in their entirety, and local circumstances, as to which the information in this department would necessarily be incomplete, may entail modification or alteration; but the general principles which the ordinances involve are such as have recommended themselves to Her Majesty's Government in the case of a protectorate, and should not be departed from without very grave reason.

4. As an instance in which a regulation generally in force may be relaxed to suit local conditions, I may mention the case of Samoa, though not a British protectorate, where the rule, absolute elsewhere in the Western Pacific (except in Tonga), under the High Commissioner's regulations, prohibiting British subjects from supplying natives with arms has been relaxed under special circumstances by the declaration agreed to by the three Powers so far as rifles for sporting purposes are concerned, with the view of not diminishing the opportunities of gain and the supply of food in a country where wild pigeons are plentiful.

5. The final Act of the Samoan Conference containing this declaration accompanied my circular despatch of February last.

6. In all cases where regulations or declarations are issued connected with the affairs of the Cook Group, it would seem fitting that such instruments should be issued through the local chief or chiefs, and countersigned by the representative of the New Zealand Government.

7. Her Majesty's Government have reserved to themselves full liberty of action as regards the particular form which from time to time it should be recommended that the Queen's authority in respect of islands in the Pacific Ocean should assume; and as to the Cook Group, your Lordship is already aware, from the tenor of the despatches which I have had the honour of addressing to you, that the action of Captain Bourke is not held to render necessary the incorporation of the Cook Islands into Her Majesty's dominions, or the transfer of the jurisdiction over the inhabitants generally from their native rulers to the British Crown.

8. It will therefore devolve upon the Government of New Zealand to instruct Mr. Moss, in the event of any doubt being entertained on the subject, to explain to the natives of the group in general that, for the present at least, British authority will assume the form of a protectorate except in the case of