

(41.)

ILLEGAL SALE OF LIQUOR.

YOUR HONOUR,—

Collector's Office, Rarotonga, 29th December, 1897.

I am unaware of having acquiesced in breaches of the Passenger Act, or of offering facilities for obtaining drink. I shall, as soon as possible, give you a statement, as requested, in some detail *re* liquor law and its administration.

The return for which you ask, relative to the number of convictions for drunkenness and breaches of liquor law, I am unable to furnish, as this work belongs to the Judges of each settlement.

I am grateful for your suggestion about issuing permits from a more central place, and I shall arrange to have your wish carried out as soon as I possibly can after giving due notice of the intended change.

With reference to native permits, Tepou frequently issued them with several names on each, until at length I was forced to refuse to accept any permit which was not signed by the Ariki's own hand. Permits to foreigners have one name on each only.

Sir James Prendergast, K.C.M.G., Chief Justice.

I have, &c.,

J. H. GARNIER.

(42.)

EXPENDITURE ON NGATIPA.

SIR,—

Rarotonga, 28th December, 1897.

In answer to your inquiry of this morning, I have the honour to state that all the vouchers (warrants) for expenditure on Ngatipa Road up to the 30th June last were duly signed by Makea before the documents were presented to me, and since that date all vouchers have been approved by F. J. Moss, Esq., British Resident, before payment.

Transfers to Ngatipa Road vote from unexpended votes—viz., £54 14s. 3d. from Vote No. 20, and £4 5s. 5d. from Act 4—were made in the usual manner, and were, I believe, laid before Parliament.

With reference to the 10 per cent. deducted by Makea Daniela in making the transfer from Chilian coin to British currency on amounts received by him on account of taxes due to Rarotonga Council, I submit the following as the extent of my knowledge of the matter: During the year 1895–96 Makea Daniela had considerable difficulty in obtaining British currency in payment of taxes due to Rarotonga Council, and he accepted Chilian coin at current rates, and deposited same with Messrs. Donald and Edenborough, with the understanding that a like proportion of Chilian coin to that deposited would be accepted in payment of cheques drawn on Rarotonga Council Account. When the cheques were presented the natives objected to receive any Chilian coin in payment, and at the next meeting of the Council Mr. Moss was requested by the Council to direct British currency to be paid in full for all cheques.

The arrangement (which had been made with Mr. Moss's sanction) having been explained to him, the matter rested for the time being. When deposits were made in the year 1896–97, Messrs. Donald and Edenborough informed Makea Daniela they could only receive British currency on deposit on Government account, and Makea Daniela then made other arrangements to procure British currency.

Some time since, while attempting to audit the Rarotonga Council accounts, I noticed Makea Daniela had deducted 10 per cent. for exchange on Chilian coin received by him, before depositing the amounts with Messrs. Donald and Edenborough, and he informed me it was the expense of converting the Chilian coin into British currency.

I beg to enclose herewith statement of balances, Cook Island Federation, as reported on 30th June, 1896, and 30th June, 1897.

His Honour Sir James Prendergast, Chief Justice, &c.

I have, &c.,

J. SCARD, Auditor.

(43.)

SALE OF LIQUOR TO NATIVES.

SIR,—

Avarua, 29th December, 1897.

A charge was yesterday made against me, in your Honour's presence, to the effect that I am in the habit of selling liquor contrary to law. I keep in bond a small supply of liquor, and when any of my native employés require liquor I send them to the Ariki for a permit, as the law provides. On their obtaining this, I supply them, but not otherwise. I may mention that I am one of the largest employers of native labour in Rarotonga.

I have, &c.

HENRY NICHOLAS.

Sir James Prendergast, K.C.M.G., Chief Justice.

ILLEGAL SALE OF LIQUOR.

YOUR HONOUR,—

Rarotonga, 20th December, 1897.

In reference to Dr. George Craig's statement this morning that he would bring "special evidence" before your Honour in proof of his assertion that liquor had been sold illegally by my senior, Makea Daniela, I wish respectfully to draw your Honour's attention, that, although I am empowered to act for Makea Daniela, both in an official and business capacity, I cannot, being ignorant of this alleged breach of the liquor law, bring evidence for him. I, therefore, respectfully request that your Honour direct Dr. Craig to refrain from giving evidence against Makea Daniela at this inquiry.

Trusting that your Honour will direct that this be done, if in accordance with your Honour's views.

I have, &c.,

FRANK GELLING.

Sir James Prendergast, K.C.M.G., Chief Justice.

(44.)

COMPLAINT *re* POSTMASTER.

YOUR HONOUR,—

Rarotonga, 26th December, 1897.

I wish to bring before your notice a complaint which I have to make in reference to the way Mr. J. H. Garnier, the Postmaster here, discharges his duties at times. On one occasion I had to go to the post-office for a stamp, and placed 3d. down upon the counter for a 2½d. stamp. He told me before persons present that he wanted another ½d., thereby insinuating that I had only placed 2d. upon the counter. Of course I refused to give him the ½d. he asked for, as I can swear before God that I put 3d. down upon the counter for payment for the said 2½d. stamp. This I consider an insult, and not the duty of a Postmaster, as persons present might infer from his remark that I was trying to cheat.

On the arrival of the "Torch" I went again to the post-office to see if there were any letters for me. He said, in a very abrupt way, "What do you want?" I replied, in a civil way, "Have you any letters for me?" He made the remark before persons present, "You are raving." I then asked him for 1d. which he owed me, which I got from him, and left the office. Before giving me the 1d. he made the remark, "It is a pity."

I think this sort of thing is quite out of the province of the duties of a postmaster. I have written twice to him upon this matter, asking for an apology, but he will not give it, and appears to be inclined to deny both incidents, but which I can swear on oath they are true.

If this sort of thing is to be allowed here it will not add to the well-being or harmony of this community. I am not seeking any personal ill-feeling towards Mr. J. H. Garnier, but since he has refused to explain the meaning of this peculiar state of things, I am obliged to place the matter before you.

I remain, &c.,

THOS. H. MALLETT

Sir James Prendergast, Chief Justice of New Zealand, now at Rarotonga.