

No. 25.

His Excellency the GOVERNOR to Lieut.-Colonel GUDGEON.

SIR,—

No. 22.

Government House, Wellington, 2nd November, 1898.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your despatch (11/98), dated 6th October, 1898, inclosing copy of the High Court Bill, as passed by the Parliament of the Cook Islands, and also informing me that the Parliament has asked you to accept the position of Chief Justice.

I have fully considered the question as to the advisability of such a step, and have also consulted my Premier on the subject. We both concur in deeming that it would be for the best interest of the Cook Islands for you to accept the position. At the same time I am by no means certain that your holding the two offices of British Resident and Chief Justice might not at some future time lead to a difficulty with the population; though taking it now, I think, will tend to smooth over the past history.

I have by the mail of the 27th October, *via* San Francisco, informed the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and have asked him to cable to me his approval or disapproval, as your position as British Resident under the Crown and not under the New Zealand Government makes it imperative that the adoption of so unusual a course should be specially sanctioned by the Home authorities. Meanwhile, the Act will remain in abeyance until the approval of the Secretary of State be obtained. This course would not have been necessary if the Cook Islands Parliament had not provided that my approval should be obtained, and that the Act should come into operation on a date named by me. I may point out that the Cook Islands Parliament makes the appointments, and that it would be necessary for them to name Mr. Alfred Ross, of Marton, should they so desire, as either Judge or Registrar.

I have, &c.,

Lieut.-Colonel Gudgeon, British Resident, Rarotonga.

RANFURLY.

No. 26.

His Excellency the GOVERNOR to Lieut.-Colonel GUDGEON.

SIR,—

No. 18.

Government House, Wellington, 2nd November, 1898.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your despatch (7/98) dated the 19th September, 1898, with petition from John Trego, Ariki, Mangaia, addressed to Mr. Moss, and dated the 13th September, 1898.

I should be glad if you would inform him that you have forwarded it to me, with a recommendation to remit, and should you deem it for the public good you are at liberty to inform him that I remit the same; but I should have preferred, however, dealing with the cases of all these fines at the same time.

I cannot under any circumstances concur in the fine, if any, being made payable to Mr. Nicholas; it should without doubt, if exacted, be payable to the Treasury, and it should be for the Treasury to pay over to Mr. Nicholas any sum voted by Parliament, if Mr. Nicholas has suffered damage by means of too high-handed proceedings on the part of Judge Te Pou or his officers.

I have, &c.,

Lieut.-Colonel Gudgeon, British Resident, Rarotonga.

RANFURLY.

No. 27.

His Excellency the GOVERNOR to Lieut.-Colonel GUDGEON.

SIR,—

No. 24.

Government House, Wellington, 2nd November, 1898.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your despatch (12/98) dated the 7th October, 1898, enclosing: (1) "The Import Duties Act, 1898"; (2) "The Medical Officers Act, 1898"; (3) "The Public Health Act, 1898"; and (4) "The Government Buildings Act, 1898."

It is with regret I hear that there is a decided falling-off in the Customs revenue, and that you are of opinion that the cause is likely to be of considerable duration.

I have, &c.,

Lieut.-Colonel Gudgeon.

RANFURLY.

No. 28.

His Excellency the GOVERNOR to the CHIEF of the COOK ISLANDS GOVERNMENT.

MADAM,—

No. 16.

Government House, Wellington, 2nd November, 1898.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 13th September, 1898.

I shall have pleasure in forwarding your explanation to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, with a view to placing the same before Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen.

I am pleased to know that the High Court Bill has now been passed, and I read with interest the reasons of the delay, and your statement that you had not been informed that it was Her Majesty's pleasure that the Bill should be passed.

I am glad to hear that you appreciate Lieutenant-Colonel Gudgeon's appointment as British Resident among you. I am confident that he will ever seek the welfare of your community, and that his advice will be of great value to you. I note with pleasure that he can rely on the goodwill of the inhabitants of the Cook Islands in any endeavours which his duty may demand of him for carrying out the laws of the country.

I have, &c.,

Makea, Ariki, Rarotonga.

RANFURLY,