

The only district in which we can expect to find an opening for Europeans in this island is at Titikaveka (south side). There I may possibly manage to lease an area of from 200 to 500 acres at 5s. per acre.

At Mauke there should be no difficulty in leasing 500 acres, and at Atiu we may get 1,000 acres—in these two islands at 2s. or 2s. 6d. an acre, for some of the best cocoanut land in the world.

In my confidential memo. on this subject I suggested that the Government should plant the islands where they obtained leases, but the demand created by Miss Grimshaw's articles will render that unnecessary. We have only to acquire the land from the Native owners and there will be no difficulty in obtaining tenants.

There are certain things to be borne in mind by all men that come here—viz., that each acre taken up is equal to five in New Zealand, and that each settler should have a capital of £10 for every acre he takes up.

I have, &c.,

W. E. GUDGEON,

Resident Commissioner.

The Hon. C. H. Mills, Minister administering the Islands, Wellington.

No. 25.

SIR,—

Rarotonga, Cook Islands, 21st July, 1905.

I have the honour to report for your information on the subject of work done by the Native Land Titles Court and Survey Department during the quarter ending the 30th June.

Seventy-two blocks of land have passed through the Court during the quarter, at an expense to the owners of £97 15s. for Court fees and £132 for surveys.

Most of this land has been awarded to members of the Makea family, who form the bulk of the Avarua population; but I am glad to inform you that two independent tribes—Ngatiuritana and Ngatitearera—have also had their lands awarded to them and without contention.

In every instance the ancient rights of the Arikis have been conserved, but the small people have also been admitted to have a right, and are now registered owners of the lands they have occupied and cultivated for the last five hundred years.

During the next two months I shall be hard at work at Mauke, Takutea, and Rakahanga, but I shall during the summer months resume the work on Makea's lands in Tupapa.

I have, &c.,

W. E. GUDGEON,

Resident Commissioner.

The Hon. C. H. Mills, Minister administering the Islands, Wellington.

No. 26.

SIR,—

Rarotonga, Cook Islands, 27th July, 1905.

I have the honour to forward herewith a Village Regulation Ordinance passed at Mangaia, and which I submit for your consideration.

There are one or two matters in connection with this Ordinance that require amendment—viz., the latter portion of section 6. I do not think it advisable that the Resident Agent should be the Inspector. If the place is dirty a policeman could inspect and report, and the owner would not resent inspection by police, but he might by Mr. Large.

An addition is required to the effect that all cases shall be heard in the Island Court, but that there shall be a right of appeal to the High Court if notice of such appeal be given within seven days.

The relations at present existing between Mr. Large and the leading people of Mangaia make me doubt the wisdom of passing any Ordinance at the present time, and I would suggest that your approval be withheld for at least six months.

I have, &c.,

W. E. GUDGEON,

Resident Commissioner.

The Hon. C. H. Mills, Minister administering the Islands, Wellington.

No. 27.

SIR,—

Cook and other Islands Administration, Wellington, 27th July, 1905.

I am in receipt of your letter of the 8th June, No. 66, recommending that Mr. Henry Williams, of Manihiki, be appointed Resident Agent for Rakahanga. This recommendation has been given effect to, and a Warrant of appointment, signed by His Excellency the Governor, is forwarded herewith.

I approve of your proposal to pay Mr. Williams £20 per annum as travelling-expenses. Mr. Williams has proved himself a valuable officer, and now that he has been given the control of Rakahanga as well as Manihiki, it seems only fair that he should receive some small remuneration for his services.

I have, &c.,

The Resident Commissioner, Rarotonga.

C. H. MILLS.