

I think it would have been better, as a matter of formal compliance with the law, if nothing else, had you given effect to section 5 during your recent visit to Penrhyn, notwithstanding Captain Nagle's pending retirement. I assume you will have this matter settled if possible when you go north again next month.

The Resident Commissioner, Rarotonga.

I have, &c.,

C. H. MILLS.

No. 33.

SIR,—

Niue, 5th August, 1905.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 113, dated the 7th June, 1905, covering a report made by Mr. Paul recording his impressions of Niue. See A.—3,
1905, No.
185.

I beg to say that I concur generally in what Mr. Paul has stated in his report, but there are one or two subjects that he has touched upon that I desire to make some remarks about.

1. The rate of pay: He is not strictly accurate in stating the rate of pay ruling here at 2s. per day. This only applies to roadwork, and then only in certain cases—*e.g.*, when numbers of Natives are employed without adequate supervision. The usual system is piecework. When small parties of reliable men are employed the daily rate is 4s. for foreman and 3s. for labourers. When Natives are employed as carriers or lumpers on arrival of shipping they are invariably paid 4s. per day each.

2. Waste land: As it seems impossible to persuade the Natives to remain here and cultivate their land, I am in hopes that when land titles are put in order some enterprising Europeans with capital may be induced to take up areas of surplus land on long leases and grow cocoanuts, which it seems is about the only thing of commercial value which could profitably be grown here. It must be remembered, however, that the Niue people are hard and difficult to deal with in the matter of land.

3. Timber: A good deal of ebony was exported from here in past years, but the traffic was abandoned as marketable timber became scarce. In my explorations throughout this island I have observed comparatively little marketable timber of any kind, and over twenty years' experience in New Zealand forests enables me to form a fairly accurate opinion.

4. Sanitary conditions: I do not think the sanitary conditions of any of the villages are so bad as might be inferred from Mr. Paul's remarks. The nature of the surface is so rocky and porous that evaporation and absorption take place very rapidly. No cases of zymotic disease—as typhoid, for instance—ever occur here that I am aware of.

During my long experience amongst the Maoris in New Zealand I observed many sad instances of the ravages of this disease amongst them. The physical conditions of the two places are, however, very different. I think that, generally speaking, Niue villages will compare favourably as regards cleanliness, &c., with those of most aboriginal peoples.

I have, &c.,

C. F. MAXWELL,
Resident Commissioner, Niue.

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

No. 34.

SIR,—

Niue, 7th August, 1905.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 173, dated the 14th July, No. 20. and note the purport of His Excellency's decision regarding the subject-matter of the petition from the Natives.

I will convey His Excellency's decision to the King and other petitioners, as directed.

I have, &c.,

C. F. MAXWELL,
Resident Commissioner, Niue.

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

No. 35.

SIR,—

Rarotonga, Cook Islands, 9th August, 1905.

I have the honour to forward herewith a report by Mr. Blaine, of the Schooner Department, on the returned labour from Malden Island. It is most satisfactory to find that the men are so well pleased with the arrangements on that island and all wish to return.

With the Mangaia people who have been at Malden the effect will be productive of much good, for the young men of that island have hitherto been simply held in bondage by the chiefs, and have had to work for the benefit of those men only—men who have done their best to prevent the young men going away to work, and who have hunted out as vagrants all who would not work for them. The force of public opinion will now be too strong for the chiefs, and the small people have now a chance of earning some money, for the Mangaians are industrious.

I have, &c.,

W. E. GUDGEON,
Resident Commissioner.

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