

No. 195.

SIR,—

Niue Island Administration, Niue, 16th April, 1906.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 57, dated the 16th February, together with a number of printed copies of the regulations under section 28 of "The Licensing Acts Amendment Act, 1904"; also the memo. by the Solicitor-General elucidating the provisions of the various Acts and Ordinances dealing with liquor.

No. 141.

The regulations appear to me to cover everything necessary to facilitate the proper working of the Act. I note the distinction between "spirituous liquor" and "fermented liquor" pointed out by Dr. Fitchett. I have hitherto construed the term "spirituous" liquor as including all potable liquor containing alcohol, and consequently more or less intoxicating, and dealt with it accordingly.

Neither spirituous nor fermented liquors have been permitted to be sold or given to any Native of Niue since I have been in charge here. No attempts have been made by Natives to import fermented liquor, although small quantities of spirits have been landed by them and seized by the Customs.

As a matter of fact, the Niue Natives do not like fermented liquor, and I doubt whether many of them would drink it. I found this to be the case in Tonga, where there are large numbers of Niueans and (previous to my visit) no restrictions on the free sale of liquor to them. As "The Licensing Acts Amendment Act, 1904," does not appear to forbid the gift of intoxicating liquor to Natives, and such gift is controlled here only by section 4 of the Niue Ordinance No. 6, which does not go far enough, it will, I assume, be necessary to amend sections 3 and 4 of this Ordinance by substituting "intoxicating" liquor for "spirituous" liquor, if circumstances require it.

At present I see no necessity for such an amendment.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. C. H. Mills, Wellington.

C. F. MAXWELL.

No. 196.

SIR,—

Rarotonga, Cook Islands, 19th April, 1906.

I have the honour to forward herewith my report for the year 1905-6, and Schedules A to H, which form part of the report.

The plans referred to therein will be sent by separate parcel, in order to prevent damage to the tracings.

I forward also Mr. Connal's report on the survey-work, &c., and Mr. Blaine's report on the work performed by the Government schooner, and the future prospects of that vessel.

I further submit for your information a return of the births, deaths, and marriages for the year in those islands from which I have received returns.

I have, &c.,

W. E. GUDGEON,

Resident Commissioner.

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

Enclosure.

REPORT ON THE COOK AND NORTHERN ISLANDS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st MARCH, 1906.

TRADE.

THE Schedules A and B attached to this report disclose the trade of the Cook and Northern Islands for the year ending the 31st December, 1905, and by reference thereto it will be seen that the imports have been valued at £36,993, an increase of £3,594 on the previous year; and the exports at £34,890, as against £38,245 for the year 1904. This falling off in the exports is the natural result of the cyclone of January, 1905, for in the single item of copra the Islands of Mangaia and Aitutaki are short by 285 tons, valued at £3,049. At Manuae, where two or three thousand trees were uprooted, the loss may be estimated at 30 tons of copra for the next ten years.

In addition to losses by the cyclone, I have to report a total failure of the Rarotonga coffee crop of 1905, the deficiency being 45,394 lb., or £761. So, also, the manufacture of limejuice has for some reason fallen off to the extent of 17,000 gallons, of the estimated value of £900.

This year we have the promise of an abnormal crop of coffee; but the price that the traders will be justified in offering is so small that it is very doubtful whether the Native landowners will condescend to pick the berries. Hitherto our best market for coffee has been Tahiti, notwithstanding the 30 per cent. duty; but for some years past the settlers of that island have planted large areas of coffee, and, aided by a wise policy of protection, can now supply their own requirements.

In Schedule C I show in detail the products of each island of this Administration. The return is instructive, since it discloses the important part played by Rarotonga in the matter of exports, and also how much more might be done by the other islands. Atiu, Mauke, and Mitiaro do undoubtedly suffer from their isolated position and want of communication with the outer world. These islands produce the finest oranges in the Pacific, and could, if there was any real demand for good fruit, ship five times the amount recorded in Schedule C; but we know by experience that there is no such demand; that a few thousand extra cases will at any time disorganize the New Zealand market, and make the whole shipment unremunerative.