

ABOLITION OF ARIKIS' COURTS AT RAROTONGA.

No. 40.

SIR,—

Rarotonga, 20th April, 1908.

I have the honour to suggest, for your consideration, that it is no longer expedient that Arikis' Courts should be allowed where there are European officers capable of taking the Court work.

The only Court of this description is now that of Makea, and for some time past the administration of the Court has been most unsatisfactory. In every valley of her district there is Sabbath drunkenness, and I cannot find that the offenders are punished—certainly but few fines or fees are paid into the Treasury.

In Arorangi every offender is brought before my Court, and is punished. This is unfair to the people of that village if those of Avarua are allowed to go unpunished. I have therefore the honour to request that Makea be told that the Arikis' Courts be abolished.

I have, &c.,

W. E. GUDGEON,

Resident Commissioner.

The Hon. James McGowan, Minister administering Islands.

No. 41.

SIR,—

Cook and other Islands Administration, Wellington, 28th May, 1908.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 20th April last, suggesting that Makea Arikis' Court at Avarua should be abolished.

You will recollect that it was considered that section 5 of "The Cook and other Islands Government Act Amendment Act, 1904," did not apply to Rarotonga, and the Arikis' Courts were therefore allowed to remain.

I think that Makea's attention should be drawn to the matter, with an intimation that if there are any complaints against the administration of the Court steps will be taken to abolish it.

I have, &c.,

JAMES MCGOWAN.

The Resident Commissioner, Rarotonga.

DRAINAGE OF MAERENGA LAGOON.

No. 42.

SIR,—

Rarotonga, Cook Islands, 7th May, 1908.

On the estimates for the present year there is a sum of £200 for the drainage of the Maerenga Lagoon. This sum has been appropriated on several occasions, but never spent, as I was unwilling to spend a large sum of public money in improving land of which no use would be made by Makea.

At present this land is valueless, by reason of its being covered 6 ft. deep in water for three months in each year. The mere drainage of the land for the land's sake is of small importance. It is the health of the people in this village that I have to consider, and therefore the work has to be done.

The simple method of dealing with the matter would be to take the land under section 3 of the 1904 Act, but without your approval I would not do this, though at present the land lies waste, and it would make splendid taro cultivations.

If, however, you should think it advisable, I could try and make arrangements with Makea, but she is a most impracticable woman.

I think, under any circumstances, the money should not be spent unless the country has a chance of recouping by the betterment of the land drained.

I have, &c.,

W. E. GUDGEON,

Resident Commissioner.

The Hon. James McGowan, Minister administering Islands.

No. 43.

SIR,—

Cook and other Islands Administration, Wellington, 10th June, 1908.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th May last, with reference to the drainage of the Maerenga Lagoon.

In the interests of the health of the people of the village the drainage should be carried out. I think, however, that you had better endeavour to make a satisfactory arrangement with Makea, but if this is not practicable, then your suggestion to take the land under the provisions of section 3 of "The Cook and other Islands Government Act Amendment Act, 1904," should be adopted.

I have, &c.,

JAMES MCGOWAN.

The Resident Commissioner, Rarotonga.