

No. 17.

SIR,—

Cook Islands Administration, Rarotonga, 7th December, 1910.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th ultimo (C.I.A. 1908/37 No. 196), forwarding to me copy of a question addressed to you in Parliament on the subject of the Maraerenga Lagoon, and in reply to enclose herewith copy of the Engineer's report.

One has to be very careful in draining the land of Natives, which would undoubtedly interfere with their food-supplies in the shape of taro-plantations, on which they place great value. This drainage question has not been lost sight of, and will be attended to when my finances will permit.

You will note that the Engineer anticipates that in addition to his rough estimate of £500 the survey and preliminaries alone would cost £200, making a total of £700. I have previously pointed out to you that in my opinion it would cost £1,000.

I have, &c.,

J. EMAN SMITH,

Resident Commissioner.

The Hon. the Minister in Charge, Cook Islands Administration, Wellington.

Enclosure.

Rarotonga, 1st December, 1910.

SIR,—

Drainage Maraerenga Swamp.

With reference to the drainage of Maraerenga Swamp, no survey has yet been made, and it is therefore difficult to give an estimate of the cost. The late Resident Commissioner placed £200 on the estimates for the undertaking, but that I suppose he only meant for cost of survey, clearing the land, and a small portion of the drains. Roughly, I estimate it would cost at least £500 to drain the swamp. Again, it seems to me that the Government would have to take over the land first, as at present it is private property.

I have, &c.,

H. M. CONNALL,

Engineer, Public Works.

The Resident Commissioner.

REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS, DEATHS, AND MARRIAGES.

No. 18.

SIR,—

Cook Islands Administration, Rarotonga, 14th January, 1911.

I may state that I think the time has arrived to make all Government Agents Registrars of Births, Deaths, and Marriages. I would like your opinion, however, before doing anything in the matter.

I have, &c.,

J. EMAN SMITH,

Resident Commissioner.

The Hon. the Minister in Charge, Cook Islands Administration, Wellington.

No. 19.

SIR,—

Cook Islands Administration, Wellington, 15th February, 1911.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th January last.

Your suggestion as to making all Government Resident Agents Registrars of Births, &c., will receive consideration, and I will communicate with you later on the subject.

I have, &c.,

J. CARROLL.

The Resident Commissioner, Rarotonga.

No. 20.

SIR,—

Cook Islands Administration, Wellington, 3rd March, 1911.

Referring to your letter of the 14th January last, with reference to the appointment of various Resident Agents as Registrars of Births, Deaths, and Marriages, I observe that by an Ordinance of 1892, provision was made for the appointment of Registrars; and I shall be glad to be informed whether any appointments have been made.

I have, &c.,

J. CARROLL.

The Resident Commissioner, Rarotonga.

No. 21.

SIR,—

Cook Islands Administration, Rarotonga, 28th April, 1911.

Referring to your letters of 3rd March (C.I.A. 11/5 No. 40) and 15th February (C.I.A. 10/52 No. 20), *re* Resident Agents being appointed as Registrars of Births, Deaths, and Marriages, I have the honour to inform you that I have ascertained that the Act of 1892, which provided for the registration of Births, Deaths, and Marriages, has been a dead-letter for the past ten years. This does not apply to Rarotonga, where a Registry was established in 1903.

With your approval I will now cause a comprehensive system to be handed to each Resident Agent after appointment, so as to have this important work placed on a business footing.

I have, &c.,

J. EMAN SMITH,

Resident Commissioner.

The Hon. the Minister in Charge, Cook Islands Administration, Wellington.