

Customs Tariffs, and stating that the New Zealand Government had no wish to withdraw from the Convention, I have the honour, at the request of Ministers, to inform you that it has since been ascertained that New Zealand is the only remaining contributor of the Australasian Colonies, and that, as their consent to the continuance of their subscription for another term of years was given in ignorance of that fact, this Government would be glad to be relieved, if possible, of their obligation to subscribe further, say from the 31st March, 1899.

I have, &c.,

RANFURLY.

The Right Hon. J. Chamberlain,  
Secretary of State for the Colonies.

No. 15.

(No. 51.)

SIR,— Government House, Wellington, 11th August, 1898.

I have the honour to request that you will inform the United States Government that New Zealand has ratified the act of its representative, the Hon. J. G. Duffy, with reference to the Universal Postal Convention signed at Washington on the 1st June, 1897.

I have, &c.,

RANFURLY.

The Right Hon. J. Chamberlain,  
Secretary of State for the Colonies.

No. 16.

(No. 53.)

SIR,— Government House, Wellington, 20th August, 1898.

With reference to your despatch (New Zealand—General), dated the 29th April, 1898, respecting a proposal of the Royal Society to hold during the present year an International Convention, to consider the report of the Royal Society's Committee upon the preparation of an international catalogue of scientific literature, I have the honour to inform you that New Zealand will be represented by its Agent-General, the Hon. W. P. Reeves.

I have, &c.,

RANFURLY.

The Right Hon. J. Chamberlain,  
Secretary of State for the Colonies.

No. 17.

(No. 56.)

SIR,— Government House, Wellington, 1st September, 1898.

I have the honour to inform you that, in accordance with your cable of the 18th August, 1898, I informed Major (now Lieutenant-Colonel) W. E. Gudgeon of his appointment as British Resident at Rarotonga, and further, a notification to the same effect was published in the *New Zealand Gazette*.

For your information, I have much pleasure in enclosing you a copy of Lieutenant-Colonel Gudgeon's services.

During the past week he has been carefully studying in this house the despatches from Mr. Moss relative to the affairs of the Cook Islands, and I have given him every facility to make himself thoroughly acquainted with the history of the British connection with this group from its inception.

All points that were subjects of dispute have been thoroughly gone into. The Federal Court Bill has been redrafted by the Minister of Justice, but, owing however to the altered circumstances, it will have again to be materially revised by the Resident, his appointment as a Deputy Commissioner under the High Commission of Fiji having to some extent altered his position, and considerably strengthened it, thereby putting an end to the excessive delays in settling Court cases at Rarotonga, which have proved a source of much annoyance, and have considerably increased the difficulties of the situation.