

No. 37.

Sir,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 18th July, 1903.

In reply to your letter No. 25, of the 10th June, I approve of your arrangements with Messrs. Dexter and Winchester to plant the Aitutaki lagoon with Scilly pearl-shell. At the same time I think that if 40 tons can be procured in one year, a ten-years lease is far too long for the exclusive right. However, I leave it to you to make the best arrangement you can.

I have, &c.,

C. H. MILLS.

The Resident Commissioner, Rarotonga.

No. 38.

Sir,—

Niue, 24th July, 1903.

I have the honour to submit to you a copy of an order that I have placed with Messrs. Wingate and Co. for tools, &c., required for public purposes in Niue.

I find that in conducting roadmaking operations the lack of tools hampers the work very much. I have already procured a few tools, but quite insufficient for the work required. Hitherto the Natives have brought to the work such tools as they possess, but their efficiency as workmen is much impaired by the unsuitability and paucity of their implements. In fact, I require many more hammers, &c., before I can properly equip the eleven villages for the work required. In this island roadmaking is an arduous and tedious undertaking, as the material to be dealt with is chiefly coral rock, which has to be disintegrated with hammers or blasted with dynamite.

I have tried the experiment of constructing roads by day labour, at 4s. a day, under a foreman. While I have no fault to find with the way the Natives work under this system or with the result of their labour, it is evident that this method is altogether too costly, as it averages £2 per chain and more when the rock is hard.

Hitherto whole villages have turned out to make roads—often a hundred men and double that number of women and children. While engaged in this work I have given them some provisions and a small quantity of tobacco per head. It is quite beyond the resources of the island to pay wages to such a large number of people. I propose to in future pay the able-bodied men a small sum in cash and give the others some tobacco as an encouragement, and for this purpose I wish to import a case of tobacco. I can obtain it much cheaper in this way than by purchasing it from the traders, who ask 150 per cent. more than what I can buy it for in Auckland. I am therefore about to place an order for a case of tobacco with Messrs. A. H. Nathan and Co., who supply the class of tobacco used by the Natives only. No European here smokes it.

The system I have hitherto followed is that I have ordered goods required, and the invoices have been sent to the Resident Commissioner for his approval. He has sufficient confidence in my discretion to know that I will not order goods unnecessarily or extravagantly. If I am required to obtain your sanction before ordering articles which may be urgently required the delay will be very great; but by sending you a duplicate of the order it is an easy matter to countermand the goods if you decide that they are unnecessary. I think this system is the most workable under the circumstances. This is subject, of course, to any future instructions which you may send me.

Tobacco is a medium of exchange and barter here, and is easiest handled in lieu of cash.

I will be glad if you would be so good as to give me a general authority to order necessary goods, sending you in each case a copy of the order.

I have, &c.,

C. F. MAXWELL,

Government Agent, Niue.

The Hon. C. H. Mills, Commissioner of Trade and Customs, Wellington.

No. 39.

Sir,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 30th July, 1903.

Referring to the petition against the introduction of spirits, &c., into Niue forwarded by you on the 30th April last, I have the honour to inform you that it has been laid before His Excellency the Governor, who has directed that the petitioners should be informed that the Island Council should pass an Ordinance absolutely prohibiting the sale of spirits, &c., to all Natives, but that His Excellency cannot interfere with the introduction of spirits by the European residents for their own consumption. The Resident Agent at Niue has been so informed.

I have, &c.,

C. H. MILLS.

The Resident Commissioner, Rarotonga.

No. 40.

Sir,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 30th July, 1903.

I have the honour to inform you that the petition against the importation of spirituous liquors into Niue forwarded by you through the Resident Commissioner on the 6th December last has been submitted to His Excellency the Governor, who has directed that the petitioners should be informed that the Island Council should pass an Ordinance absolutely prohibiting the sale of spirits, &c., to all Natives, but that His Excellency cannot interfere with the introduction of spirits by the European residents for their own consumption.

I have, &c.,

C. H. MILLS.

The Resident Agent, Niue.