

I have also been informed that there is a great deal of delay between the time of the arrival at Auckland of fruit from the Cook Islands and the time of its reaching Wellington. It has been pointed out that, while the "Taviuni" arrived at Auckland on Thursday last the fruit brought by her will not reach Wellington until to-day. The cases in being transhipped at Auckland into the steamers coming south receive a considerable amount of rough handling, much to the detriment of the fruit. Are there any means of obviating this, as it places the fruit from the Cook Islands in a much worse position than that which is brought from Fiji? You will understand that I am anxious to do whatever is possible to improve the commerce between the Islands and New Zealand.

Yours, &c.,

C. H. MILLS.

The Manager, Union Steamship Company (Limited), Wellington.

No. 47.

SIR,

Matai-moana, New Plymouth, 17th August, 1903.

I have the honour to state that Uea, the Native teacher at Alofi, Niue Island, is very desirous that his adopted boy shall be educated at an English school, with a view to his becoming a teacher on the island. I have arranged with the authorities of St. Stephen's Native School, Parnell, Auckland, that they will take the boy and teach him in the usual thorough manner in which they turn out the Maori boys at that institution. I now write to ask you to grant the boy a passage by the "Countess of Ranfurly" from Niue to Auckland.

I need scarcely point out to you the advantage it is if the younger generation of Niue become proficient in the English language, for the time will assuredly come when English will be the language spoken there. It is, moreover, very desirable that a closer connection with New Zealand should be cultivated, seeing that the island is governed from here, and that an endeavour should be made to break down the antagonistic feeling the Natives have against this country, a feeling, I may say, that has grown up since I left there, owing to that unfortunate provision as to the Rarotonga Council, and I submit that Government should do all in its power to remove that feeling, towards which the education of some of the young people in New Zealand will largely tend.

I have, &c.,

S. PERCY SMITH,

Late Government Resident, Niue.

The Hon. the Minister of Marine, Wellington.

No. 48.

Cook and other Islands Administration, Wellington,

21st August, 1903.

No. 47.

SIR,—

Your letter of the 17th instant, addressed to the Hon. the Minister of Marine, has been referred to me, as I am in charge of the Islands. I quite agree with you as to the desirability of getting some of the lads of the Islands properly educated, and I have written to Captain Worsley, instructing him to bring the boy you refer to with him when he next comes from Niue, and see that he is taken to St. Stephen's School, at Parnell.

I am glad to say that, since visiting the Islands with the parliamentary party, I have been able to remove some of the prejudice in Niue by arranging that all the correspondence from there shall come to me direct instead of through Rarotonga, and we intend to deal with the matter of the Rarotonga Council very soon. The Right Hon. the Premier has just received a letter from Togia, King of Niue, who expresses his satisfaction at being annexed to this colony. He says, "It is very good that my kingdom is not to be connected with Rarotonga. Let New Zealand and Niue be one kingdom."

There are several important matters in connection with the Islands that I have been anxious to deal with, but the pressure of parliamentary business has prevented my giving them the necessary attention through Cabinet.

Yours, &c.,

S. Percy Smith, Esq., Matai-moana, New Plymouth.

C. H. MILLS.

No. 49.

Cook and other Islands Administration, Wellington,

26th August, 1903.

Memorandum for the Hon. the Postmaster-General.

No. 12.

I HAVE made application to the Audit Department and others to see if I could obtain the services of an Auditor to go down to the Cook Islands to audit the accounts, but have been unable to get a suitable man. Will you kindly give permission for one of the officers of the Postal Department to proceed to Rarotonga as soon as the "Countess of Ranfurly" leaves Auckland for that port, and possibly to Niue as well. It is estimated that the officer will be away between five and six weeks. A sum of £40 will be allowed him for his expenses.

C. H. MILLS.

Mr. GRAY.—Can you arrange this?—J. G. W. 14/9/03.

Hon. the P. M.-G.—This has been arranged.—W. GRAY. 14/9/03.

Hon. Mr. Mills.—J. G. W. 16/9/03.