

It is right that your Honor should be informed, that it is not expected that the payment of this sum will operate at once in overcoming the opposition of the party which has persistently set itself against the opening of the district, but it may have the effect of maintaining in their present disposition, and of stimulating to greater exertion, those who have been friendly, and who are willing to give up their lands, and I am informed that this payment will probably be found necessary to effect those objects.

It will be for the Provincial Government to consider whether or not it is prudent to make this advance in the present condition of the negotiations, and upon this point I shall be glad to be favoured with your Honor's opinion.

His Honor the Superintendent of Auckland.

I have &c.,

DONALD McLEAN.

No. 17.

His Honor T. B. GILLIES to the Hon. the DEFENCE MINISTER.

SIR,—

Superintendent's Office, Auckland, 9th February, 1870.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday's date, relative to an advance of money to the Natives, in anticipation of the opening of Ohinemuri. I am prepared at once to provide the sum of £5,000, or any other sum necessary, to effect the immediate opening of Ohinemuri; but until the negotiations show some signs of success, and are put into some tangible shape as to terms, it does not appear to me prudent to make any advances to the friendly Natives, who appear to be unable to open even their own lands without the consent of their opponents. Nor do I think it would be wise to arrange with the Natives on the basis of their receiving fees on miners' rights, &c., as at Shortland, which has raised so many questions of difficulty with both Europeans and Natives. I would suggest dealing with them for a lease of their lands (subject to reserves) at a fixed rental, to cover both mining and surface rights, for a period of twenty-one years or upwards. The country could thus be opened up, not only for mining but for settlement, which, from the gold-bearing capabilities of the country being yet untested, would be the only safe way of dealing with the matter. I desire very earnestly to urge upon you the importance of prompt and energetic action in the matter, otherwise serious consequences may ensue. If you see no immediate prospect of overcoming by your negotiations the opposition of the King party, I would respectfully request you to permit me to undertake such negotiations as I might think proper to adopt in order to accomplish the end in view. It may appear almost presumptuous in me to hope to succeed in a matter in which your agents have been so long unsuccessful, but I am unwilling to leave any stone unturned which might possibly result in opening that country speedily.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS B. GILLIES,
Superintendent.

The Hon. the Minister for Native Affairs, Auckland.

No. 18.

The Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER to His Honor T. B. GILLIES.

SIR,—

General Government Offices, Auckland, 26th February, 1870.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th instant, relative to the opening of Ohinemuri. I have inadvertently overlooked replying to it before, but in verbal communications I have sufficiently fully expressed to your Honor my opinions. Thus you are aware that I agree with you, that, if the Natives are willing to accept it, a yearly rent for all rights over the land, is preferable to a payment for the right only to mine for gold. Still I hope your Honor will agree with me, that if the Natives are not willing to entertain the offer you make, it will not be wise to refuse to agree to other terms. So strongly indeed am I of opinion that it is desirable Ohinemuri should be opened, that in the absence of a specific recommendation from you to the contrary, I shall feel myself at liberty to exercise much discretion in accepting such terms as the Natives are willing to agree to.

I thank your Honor for your offer to undertake the negotiations, and am willing to agree with you that though the offer may appear presumptuous, it is dictated by no other desire than an earnest regard for the public service. I would willingly accept your Honor's offer if I could see a probability of its tending more speedily to the attainment of the object in view. But you give me no information by which I can gather that you have either special plans or special facilities, and I observe that at the Thames you have stated that if the matter were intrusted to you, you could not profess to hope to conclude it in three months.

It appears to me that at present I am in a better position than your Honor to carry through negotiations which are already far advanced, and to which I am constantly attending with the utmost anxiety to see them conducted to a successful result.

Whilst declining your Honor's offer, allow me again to thank you for it, and to express my conviction that it is dictated solely by the desire to promote the public service.

I have, &c.,

His Honor T. B. Gillies, Esq., Superintendent, Auckland.

DONALD McLEAN.

No. 19.

His Honor T. B. GILLIES to the Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER.

SIR,—

Superintendent's Office, Auckland, 26th February, 1870.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 59, of this date; and in reply, have to state that I am happy to see, from the tone of your letter, that you have hope of an early accomplishment of the opening of Ohinemuri. The special plans and facilities which are at my command for the achievement of that object are such that to divulge them would be to destroy them, and render them powerless; and I must therefore rest content with leaving the matter in your hands.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS B. GILLIES,
Superintendent.

The Hon. the Minister for Native Affairs, Auckland.