

The letter recently deposited in the Library was discovered by Rev. J. A. G. Day amongst papers in the vestry of Holy Trinity Church, Fitzroy, New Plymouth. Archdeacon Hadfield wrote from Otaki to Archdeacon Govett at New Plymouth on 10 May 1860 two months after the outbreak of hostilities. He brings his letter to a close by asking for 'a few lines' on occurrences which 'may not be clearly conveyed in the papers'. While providing no new information this letter sets down clearly Archdeacon Hadfield's views on the purchase and its effect and pinpoints the close liaison with Archdeacon Govett while filling out some details concerning the views of Hadfield's Maori friends and informants. There is significance in the observation 'the shameless falsehood of these assertions of McLean amazes me. He did not venture to speak in that positive way to me in Wellington when I told him that I knew of fifty claimants who opposed the sale.' This anticipates and supports Bishop Patteson's view of the value of McLean's evidence at the Bar of the House. In a letter of 5 February 1861 to his father Patteson refers to *The story of New Zealand* by A. S. Thomson published in London in 1859 in which it is maintained that no individual had the right to alienate Maori land without the consent of the tribe.<sup>4</sup> He asserts on the authority of the Bishop of Wellington '... that Mr. McLean, the chief Land Purchase Commissioner and Native Secretary, ... had himself sanctioned the proof sheet of that book as far as it dealt with all questions affecting native Interests ... [and] that he had warned the Governor not to involve himself in a "land quarrel" at Taranaki. You may judge from these facts, and I could supply many more, of the value of his *Evidence* before the House of Assembly.' In fact McLean's evidence records more than one view of Maori land tenure.<sup>5</sup>

The text of Archdeacon Hadfield's letter is as follows:

Otaki, May 10 1860

My dear Archdeacon,

... I have had some difficulty in dealing with these people. Even if I had been inclined to put a favourable construction on the Governor's proceedings in reference to the occupation of Waitara, the people here are far too intelligent and well-informed for anything but a distinct avowal of my opinion, that a military occupation of land, when there had not been even a breach of the peace, was illegal. But they are not prepared to take any part in the war: they still have faith in the Queen's Government, though they have none in the present Governor. I, however, rather fear that the injustice of the attack on W. K. will be made much of by the supporters of the Maori-King throughout the country. I know that many in this district have been led by the Waitara affair to join it. How strange it seems that with such a formidable and widely spread conspiracy