

“ failure of its land revenue, caused by the continued interruptions by the Natives to the survey and occupation of the block.” On the 19th October, Mr. Gisborne replied as follows :—

The proposal in your letter is, that, on account of the delay in the peaceable possession by the province of the Manawatu Block, the General Government should advance a sum of £20,000 to enable the Provincial Government to liquidate its outstanding liabilities, such advance to be repaid out of the first proceeds of land sales within that block, after the deduction of any charges to which such sales may be legally liable. The Government have anxiously and carefully considered this application and the circumstances out of which it has arisen, but they are unable to authorize such an advance. * * * They consider they would not be justified in advancing money for such a purpose on the security of the proceeds of a block of land, the possession of parts of which is at present disputed by Native claimants. The adoption of such a course, involving as it would do not only pecuniary liability but grave political considerations, could alone be properly sanctioned by the Legislature.

And then the letter went on to say what advances would be made, and under what conditions.

On the 26th October, the Deputy-Superintendent, while proposing modifications in the conditions imposed by the General Government, noticed the objection Mr. Gisborne had taken to making such advances without the previous sanction of the Legislature. “ To point out,” he said, “ the objections to that sanction having been sought at an earlier period, would be to raise the question of responsibility for the non-settlement of the Manawatu land dispute, and would neither tend to a furtherance of that settlement nor promote an agreement upon the present application. The Provincial Government are anxious to throw no impediment in the way of an early adjustment of that dispute, and have already given ample proof of such desire by the manner in which, at a ruinous cost to the province, they have, in deference to the wishes of Ministers, desisted from pushing on the surveys in those portions of the block where interruptions from the Natives have occurred.” The two Governments having agreed on the modifications asked for, that part of the correspondence was closed on the 19th November (1870) by the acceptance of the terms on which the advance was to be made: this was immediately prior to the Session of the Provincial Council, which was then under summons to meet.

In the meanwhile, Mr. McLean had gone to Manawatu, and met the Natives. There does not appear to be a connected record in writing of his proceedings, and indeed none such could be expected; but on the 24th November news came that the difficulty was at an end, and that the arrangements made with the Natives were on the point of completion. The Provincial Government were anxious for authentic information, in order to lay before the Provincial Council; and they directed their Chief Surveyor to communicate with Mr. McLean, and execute any survey work he required. The following telegram from Mr. McLean was received and immediately published :—

Marton, 24th November, 4.19 p.m.

You will be glad to hear that the main difficulties of the Manawatu question have been removed. The Ngatikauwhata non-sellers and their agent, Mr. A. McDonald, signed a deed yesterday relinquishing all further claim and opposition, on having certain land adjoining award of the Court made over to them. The extent given in this particular instance has been 1,500 acres. Other reserves of considerable extent have been made in different parts of the block: no settlement could be effected without doing so. To-day I intend to complete arrangements with the rest of the non-sellers, and settle other details. Afterwards I have to meet the Ngatipikiao, who reside on the inland part of the block, opposite Mr. Fox's. The question has been a most difficult one, but I have endeavoured to make the best arrangements I could to secure the future peaceable occupation of the district by both races.

DONALD McLEAN.

The newspaper which contained this telegram gave the following additional information :—

We have received the following further particulars from the Government. Meetings held at Manawatu, Parewanui, Te Awahuri, Oroua, and Rangitikei were very satisfactory. After these meetings were over the non-sellers came to terms, ceded all their rights, and withdrew all opposition, in consideration of certain new reserves being made for them.

Mr. McLean, in arranging with the Natives, gave them distinctly to understand that he did not intend to open up the question of the purchase by Dr. Featherston, or the decision of the Native Land Court. Those matters must be considered as concluded, and all that he desired was to effect a settlement of boundaries and extension of reserves as would remove all future difficulties to the peaceable occupation of the country by European settlers.

The arrangements with the non-sellers of the three admitted *hapus* having been completed, it is expected that the whole question, without reference to Parakaia's claim at Himatangi, will be settled for an extent of land not larger than was claimed by one section of the non-sellers. When it is considered that the Natives are making considerable advances in cultivation, the question of an additional few thousand acres to settle them down to industrial pursuits should not be objected to, as it is in every way calculated to promote the peaceable settlement of the district.

On the 25th November, the following telegram was sent to Mr. Fox by the Provincial Secretary :—

I am very glad to hear of Mr. McLean's success. For my own part, I shall look upon the dispute as cheaply settled at the cost of 3,000 or 4,000 acres of land, if the settlement means a hearty co-operation with us in the colonization of the block, and repression of all opposition on the part of Maoris who would oppose survey for the purpose of being bought off. Concession is apt to increase the number of such obstructionists.