

No. 5.

The Hon. G. M. O'RORKE to His Honor the SUPERINTENDENT, Auckland.

SIR,—

General Government Office, Auckland, 13th May, 1874.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of date 8th instant, indicating the course you propose to adopt with reference to Mr. Stewart's application to have a block of land set apart for the special settlement he proposes to establish, and further stating that the Kati Kati lands, which I informed Mr. Stewart were no longer at the disposal of the General Government, have not yet been placed under your administration. I have also had placed before me by your Honor your letter to Mr. Stewart of date 12th May (instant), in which you state that there are, so far as you are at present aware, no means to enable either yourself or the Provincial Council to give effect to any obligation which may have been incurred by members of the General Government, and that you do not know of any obstacle to prevent the General Government from carrying out its own promises or engagements with Mr. Stewart. Since my interview with you on the subject of Mr. Stewart's application for reserving the block of land at Kati Kati for his body of immigrants, on which occasion I was accompanied by the Hon. Dr. Pollen, I have been in communication with the members of the General Government at Wellington, and I have now, on behalf of the General Government, to state that in order to bring the negotiations that have been for some time pending between Mr. Stewart and the Provincial and General Government to a termination satisfactory to all parties concerned, they (the General Government) will, if you request them to do so, reserve the Kati Kati Block, consisting of 8,000 acres, for Mr. Stewart's party of immigrants, for a reasonable time, subject to the terms offered to him by your predecessor and approved by the General Government. In making this proposal, the object the General Government wishes to attain is, not to interfere with any other arrangements you might prefer to make with regard to the location of this body of immigrants, but to show your Honor that the desire to co-operate with your Honor's predecessor in founding a settlement of immigrants of the small-farmer class, with sufficient means to occupy land and maintain themselves thereon, is still the desire of the Government, provided that in doing so your Honor's concurrence is fully obtained. It only remains, then, for your Honor, if you approve of the reservation of the Kati Kati Block for Mr. Stewart's party, to express that approval. It appears to me that, irrespective of the matter whether this block is within your administration or not, the foundation of settlements within the borders of your province is one on which your Honor is fairly entitled to be heard before a decision is arrived at, independently altogether of your having accepted the supervision of the location of immigrants within your province.

His Honor the Superintendent, Auckland.

I have, &c.,

G. MAURICE O'RORKE.

No. 6.

His Honor the SUPERINTENDENT, Auckland, to the Hon. G. M. O'RORKE.

SIR,—

Superintendent's Office, Auckland, 15th May, 1874.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th, proposing, in reply to mine of the 8th instant, that I should request the General Government to reserve the Kati Kati Block for Mr. Stewart's party of immigrants.

I can only reiterate what I have already stated in my former letter, and subsequently at the interview with you, in company with Mr. James Dilworth, at this office—namely, that, while I offer no objection or obstacle to the fulfilment of whatever engagements may have been entered into with Mr. Stewart, either by members of the General Government here or by their agents in Great Britain, for the settlement of families proposed to be brought out to the Province by that gentleman, I must respectfully decline the responsibility of requesting the Government to fulfil engagements and to carry out arrangements with the details and conditions of which I am unacquainted, and which may be (for aught I know) unsatisfactory to Mr. Stewart himself. And, moreover, I do not feel at liberty to ask the General Government to undertake a business which the Provincial Government itself is adequate to conduct, if only the block of land in question be handed over free from encumbrance for administration. The land being still held in possession by the General Government, that Government retains the exclusive right to dispose of it in such a manner as is best calculated to promote the interests of the colony; and "The Immigration and Public Works Act Amendment Act, 1871," confers ample power upon the General Government to take any provincial lands for the location of immigrants, without any request in that behalf from the Superintendents of provinces. I enclose, for your information, the copy of a letter* handed to me by Mr. Stewart on his arrival in Auckland, from the Agent-General (Dr. Featherston). Upon receipt of it, I at once instructed the Waste Lands Commissioner to furnish Mr. Stewart with all information and particulars which his department would supply, to enable that gentleman to make a suitable selection of such lands belonging to the province as he might consider best adapted for the purposes of his proposed settlement; and I must again repeat, that the Provincial Government is still prepared to fulfil the promise made by my predecessor for encouraging the settlement of Mr. Stewart's party of small farmers upon lands which were then, or have been since, placed in the hands of the Superintendent for administration under the Waste Land laws of the province.

I have, &c.,

J. WILLIAMSON,
Superintendent.

The Hon. G. M. O'Rorke, Secretary for Crown Lands,
Auckland.