

That your petitioners have approached the present owner of the said lands with a view to an arrangement being made whereby they could commence mining operations thereon, but although satisfactory terms can be arranged, yet, as the owner did not acquire the right to mine, your petitioners are advised that they cannot safely commence operations.

That your petitioners are advised that, owing to the peculiar reservation contained in the Crown grant, serious complications are certain to ensue unless arrangements are come to with the owner of the freehold.

That your petitioners are informed by the owners that, if your petitioners can obtain the right to mine under the proposed arrangements, the owners are prepared to relinquish their rights to the surface of the lands required by them for mining, and cede such surface as Crown land for mining purposes.

That if your petitioners have no reason to be in any way dissatisfied with the proposed arrangements, and are prepared forthwith, can they be assured of their position to develop any mines that may be found to exist upon the said lands, as the necessary capital has been provided therefor?

That, should the proposed arrangement between the owners of the said lands and your petitioners be carried out, the lands will then become ordinary mining lands, and will then come within the jurisdiction of the Warden for the district, and all usual fees and payments will be made on account thereof.

Your petitioners therefore pray that your honourable House will be pleased to take their petition into their most favourable consideration, and grant your petitioners the relief they desire, by enabling them to enter into the proposed arrangements with the owners of the said lands for the mining and developing of the same.

And your petitioners will ever pray.

FREDERICK MOORE.
A. F. MOGINIE.
E. B. GREY.
JOHN ALISON.

J. H. GRAY.
D. S. GRAY.
SYDNEY COLDICUTTS.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORT on the PETITION of FREDERICK MOORE and 5 Others, No. 250
Session 1896.

Mines Department, Wellington, 10th August, 1896.

THE statements as to the issue of Crown grants to Natives, with a reservation as to the right to mine for gold or other precious metals, are correctly referred to by the petitioners.

The question as to the respective interests of the Crown and the owner of the freehold of the land are so intermixed that it has been proposed to the owner that, so soon as he has removed all doubts as to the validity of his title to the lands referred to in the petition by bringing them under the Land Transfer Act, the Government will be prepared to negotiate with him for the acquisition of his rights in respect to such lands. Should the Government ultimately acquire the lands, they will be opened for mining under "The Mining Act, 1891," and the amendments thereto.

The petition is returned herewith.

H. J. H. ELLIOTT, Under-Secretary.
