

I am strongly of the opinion that the Government would be wise in allowing a lot of the poor lands to be occupied free of rent for, say, ten years, subject to improvements being made. It would encourage people to take up the waste land, which will lie idle for many years unless liberal terms are offered. I do not think it is wise to make residence compulsory, but make the tenants do the improvements. Residence would follow as the land got productive enough to warrant it.

Farming on land will, in my opinion, in no way interfere with mining, but will open up the country for the miner to get about.

Hoping the new Bill will improve the present unsatisfactory state of affairs, and with kind regards,

Mr E. H. Taylor, M.P., Wellington.

Yours, &c.,

JOHN GILLAN

SIR,—

Thames County Council Chambers, Thames, 1st September, 1910.

We have the honour, by direction of a conference held between the Thames County and Borough Councils, to forward you the under-noted copy of a resolution adopted thereat:

‘That this conference of the Thames County and Borough Councils desires to bring under the notice of the Government the large area of Crown and other land lying waste in the Coromandel, Thames, and Ohinemuri Counties within the goldfields area, and requests that it should appoint a Commission to inquire into the best means of (1) roading, (2) cutting up and leasing (a) for fruitgrowing, (b) agricultural and dairying, (c) grazing, with the object of making them productive, (3) to conserve all mining rights; and (4) the question of the dual authority over these lands.’

In conveying this resolution we are further directed to bring under your notice that the conditions and restrictions subsisting under the present Acts are too stringent to promote the settlement of these lands, and tend to retard the progress and prosperity of the district.

We would respectfully suggest that a simpler method for the right to occupy these lands be introduced during the ensuing session of Parliament, so that mining and farming could be carried on under and over the same areas.

It is needless to say that the greater portion of these lands could be profitably settled and made productive. The lands vary in character, but have proved to be eminently suitable for pastoral and agricultural purposes, and with easier terms of tenure would soon be settled on.

As previously stated, a decided change in the conditions of lease is most essential if speedy settlement is desired; and in the interests of the district and its inhabitants we sincerely trust you will give this important matter your most favourable consideration.

We have, &c.,

W S CLARK,
County Clerk.

J CHAPMAN,
Town Clerk.

E. H. Taylor, Esq., M.P., Wellington.

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