

twenty families of the immigrants who have or are expected to arrive from Europe, as by so doing it will be a sure means of giving a constant and steady supply of labour to the flax mills, without which it is impossible to make the returns needed for the prosperity of the flax enterprise and people of Opunake. The deputation having urged upon me that which I have stated, and many other points, the inspiring of confidence, giving security to life and property, &c., I requested them to be so good as to put in writing their wishes and views, which I promised to communicate to the Government.

I now therefore beg leave to submit, for the consideration of the Government, a copy of the letter I have received on the important matter in question; and I would respectfully observe that it appears to me (if approved) the wishes of the Flax Companies herein named may be complied with under the 39th section of "The Public Works Act, 1870,"—which request, so far as I am concerned, I strongly recommend.

I have, &c.,

F. A. CARRINGTON,
Superintendent.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

Enclosure in No. 7.

Messrs. HULKE, KING, &c., to the SUPERINTENDENT.

SIR,—

New Plymouth, 8th February, 1871.

Referring to the conversation that the deputation from the Cape Egmont and Opunake Flax Companies had with you yesterday relative to the location of immigrants at Opunake, we have now the honor to state in writing the views of the directors of the two Companies on the subject.

About sixty men and boys are at present employed by the two Companies at their flax works, and an extension of the works at both mills will take place if the supply of labour can be more depended upon than is at present the case.

Natives have been and are now employed in some of the mill operations, but every day's experience confirms the impression that European labour must mainly be employed to render the enterprise successful, as no dependence can be placed upon the Natives; for a feast, a tangi, or any other trifling cause, they will leave their work without any notice, and thus suspend the entire operations at the mills.

Under present circumstances, the supply of European labour is very precarious and unsatisfactory, as there is no settled population in the neighbourhood, owing in a great measure to the fact that all the land, with the exception of that occupied by the two Companies, belongs to the Government, and therefore families cannot locate themselves there.

Hearing that immigrants have arrived at Wellington under the auspices of the General Government, the Flax Companies believe that some of them might be advantageously located at Opunake; and as there is some suburban land around the township, they would suggest, for the consideration of the Government, the advisability of locating, say, twenty families there, granting them five acres of land each, under certain conditions as to occupation.

The two Companies would gladly avail themselves of their services, and would remark that, in the operations at the mills, employment would be found for families if they were inclined to accept it.

The wages at present paid by the Companies vary from 3s. to 5s. per diem according to the occupation, and this amount is often increased by overtime work.

The cost of provisions is very little above the price at New Plymouth, a store being kept by one of the Companies with the object of keeping prices at a reasonable rate.

It is scarcely necessary for us to point out to your Honor the great benefit that will accrue to the Province and to the Natives if the flax mills at Opunake are successful in their operations, as upon their success or failure depends in a great measure whether this industry will be fully developed, or whether it will collapse.

The present Companies have laid out upwards of £8,000 upon their works; and although, owing to the many adverse circumstances attendant upon starting a new industry away from a settled population and in a Native district, the enterprise has not hitherto been successful, yet, looking to the improved state of the flax trade, the Companies now see a prospect of succeeding, if the difficulty of the supply of labour can be overcome, and some assistance is rendered in the way of facilitating the shipment of the flax. If successful, the present Companies will only be pioneers in establishing a large manufacture, as there is no doubt that the great flax district extending from Oeo to Stoney River would then be taken up, as the Natives saw the benefits arising from it, and would employ a great number of mills.

Knowing that your Honor is favourably disposed to the introduction of immigrants as proposed, we have only to request that you bring the subject under the immediate notice of the General Government, and will use your influence in support of it.

We have, &c.,

W. K. HULKE,	}	Directors of the Cape Egmont Flax Dressing Company, Limited.
AUGT. WEYERANG,		
T. KING,	}	Directors of the Opunake Flax Company, Limited.
WILLIAM HUMPHRIES,		

His Honor the Superintendent, New Plymouth.

No. 8.

The Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY to His Honor the SUPERINTENDENT, Taranaki.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 14th April, 1871.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 9, of the 11th February last, and in reply to inform your Honor that it has been considered desirable not to separate the