

Enclosure in No. 7.

MANGONUI—PROGRESS OF THE SETTLEMENT.

I READ in the *Weekly News* the account of a "Trip to the North." I fully agree with the description given of Ahipara, and the salubrity of its climate; but with regard to the Forty-Mile Road leading to it from Mangonui, I believe nothing in New Zealand can surpass it for impassability for coaches, or wheels of any sort, or in the bad management and ignorance of the Highway Board, notwithstanding the assistance of a professional man, the pay to whom is, in my opinion, a sheer loss. Mangonui township is evidently improving: there is to be another hotel, a wharf is to be erected at the cost of the Government (which is much needed), another storekeeper to commence business, and a new store is being built, which, when completed, will be an ornament to the township and a credit to the builder. There has been some little excitement here during the week relative to the ownership of a dog, which came before the Magistrate's Court for a hearing, and which lasted three days. A decision was given in favour of defendant. The claimant lectured the Bench, animadverted on the conduct of the Resident Magistrate (who was absent), insulted the witnesses and his neighbours, and descended to abuse the Maoris. The Bench showed great, in fact too much, forbearance. Previous to its hearing, the Resident Magistrate addressed the Court as follows:—"He was subpoenaed, but should not sit, though he thought he had a right to. He had not issued a warrant, as promised, because he had reason to believe—in fact, he felt assured—the plaintiff was not the owner. He (the plaintiff) had given up the right of ownership to the dog in question." Would it not have been better to have said this subsequently? Four of the six Justices were unable to sit, because of being interested parties. After the trial the plaintiff said to defendant, "This dispute will not affect your license next year." Whether spoken ironically I can't say. It was taken as such by him and others. This case affords an additional proof that the present system of the administration of justice is bad, when Justices of the Peace are interested and acquainted with cases coming before them beforehand. A periodical Court should be held, presided over by a barrister or one versed in law, who could not hear out-door talk or be prejudiced, and which would be far better for country districts. The Mangonui people have memorialized the Government repeatedly, but in vain.

No. 8.

Mr. FOUNTAIN to Mr. W. H. CLARKE.

(No. 772.)

Colonial Secretary's Office (Judicial Branch),
Wellington, 28th October, 1872.

SIR,—

I have the honor, by direction of Mr. Hall, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 1st instant, relative to the alleged mal-administration of justice at Mongonui; and in reply, to inform you that the attention of the Government having already been drawn to the matter, inquiries are being made.

I have, &c.,

R. G. FOUNTAIN,

(for the Assistant Law Officer).

W. H. Clarke, Esq., Mongonui.

No. 9.

Mr. H. H. FENTON to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Mongonui, 5th November, 1872.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a letter from the Assistant Law Officer, in reply to mine asking for an inquiry into the conduct of our Resident Magistrate, Mr. W. B. White. I am told, in reply, that a copy of my letter has been forwarded to Mr. White for his remarks thereon. I fear it will be found that those remarks will ill represent the true state of the case. I am a respectable settler and on the Commission of the Peace, in which character I think I have always done my duty. The charges I laid against Mr. White were not made until long consideration had been given to the serious position in which I was placing myself. Indeed, at the present moment I would gladly see the matter in other hands. For some years the irregularities of the gentleman complained of have been patent to the public, and repeated representations have been made to the Government, but hitherto without bringing about any practical result. I have myself staved off this unpleasant duty as long as possible, although feeling all along that I was hardly justified in so doing. The charges I have made I am fully prepared to prove. Other charges of quite as grave a character will be brought forward at the inquiry; but as they will involve the evidence of other persons, I have not thought proper to specifically refer to them. The Clerk has thought proper to bring charges against me. I am not aware whether they have been forwarded by the Resident Magistrate, but in case they have not I now enclose the original letter containing them. As I am not guilty of the matters there imputed to me, I think they afford an additional reason for my demanding an inquiry. In conclusion, I beg to assure you that the time has now arrived when the Government should interfere and put a stop to irregularities that are a scandal to the district.

I have, &c.,

HAROLD H. FENTON.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

Enclosure in No. 9.

Mr. G. KELLY to Mr. H. H. FENTON.

Fenton v. Frear.

SIR,—

Resident Magistrate's Office, Mongonui, 23rd September, 1872.

I have written to the Resident Magistrate making complaints against you, and requesting