

ignored. The manner in which Hobson set about his task of obtaining signatures for the Treaty of Waitangi was, he said, highly improper, and should never have been countenanced by the laws of nations. The Maoris, in their simplicity and innocence, had scrambled for tobacco like children for apples.

The American observer was particularly caustic concerning certain of the officers in Government employment—both as public servants and in their private capacities. Far too much time was occupied, he alleged, with “lewd Mauri women.” Queen Victoria’s officials at the Bay observed from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for office hours! However, through Bishop Selwyn’s influence all military officers had been ordered to dispense with their Maori mistresses. But while he dwelt at great length on drunkenness and debauchery generally, he found that there was little abuse of alcohol by the Maoris, indeed it was rare to see a drunken Maori in those days.

Six-eighths of the houses at the Bay, he said, were “groggeries.” Because one public house was called after the Queen (whom he held personally responsible, presumably, for all the abuses), he wrote: “Her Majesty must surely feel proud to have her name embellishing such a house, where all kinds of satanical devices are practised with impunity.” An escaped convict from New South Wales was host at the Duke of Marlborough Inn, where, said Williams, he had never witnessed such moral depravity. Furthermore, the American flag had been prostituted by foreigners, as well as by his own countrymen, to “cover a wicked and immoral trade.”

The demeanour of the people at Wahapu was the reason for the abandonment of Clendon’s point, which had been selected by Hobson for a Government township. “Grossly abusive and vile” was Williams’s description of them. “No honourable or respectable man could live among them,” he declared, “the Governor leaving them in disgust, abandoning the settlement, choosing the next site, Auckland, the present site of Government.”

A hill in that vicinity—it was an indication, incidentally, of American influence in those days—was called Mount Washington. “Beneath it is this sad picture,