

the office of the Under Secretary for Native Affairs, or in the Land Court Office at Poverty Bay. But as it afterwards appeared that, for anything he knew to the contrary, some officer in one of those departments might be implicated, and as the matters casually came up in evidence, we thought it right to hear something about it. Mr. Wilson seems to have believed that Cooper or Read, or both of them, had some official correspondent in Wellington who was able to send them the contents of a telegram from the Native Minister to him (Mr. Wilson) as speedily as he could receive it himself. It seems certain that the contents of a telegram sent by Mr. Wilson to the Native Minister on the 12th April, 1876, was known to Mr. Cooper either on the same or the following day. But we do not think it necessary to imagine a mysterious correspondent in Wellington so long as it seems possible that Mr. Wilson's clerk may have revealed the secret to Mr. Cooper during a convivial interview at a public-house. A greater difficulty arises out of Mr. Wilson's statement that the reply to his telegram, which he received on the evening of the 13th, was known to Cooper before Mr. Wilson had informed any one of its contents. In this telegram, Mr. Wilson was requested to write instead of going to Wellington, and it seems that Cooper had remarked that Mr. Wilson wished to go to Wellington, but the Government did not want him, or he would not get leave, or something to that effect. The former part of the information may, as we have seen, have come from a nearer source than Wellington, and it seems not impossible that the latter part may have been a chance remark of Cooper's which happened to hit the mark. At all events, we are informed by a telegram which Mr. Lemon was good enough to send us, that neither Cooper nor Read received any telegram on the days mentioned.

We have now given our opinion on all the matters which have come before us, and it is time that we should bring this long report to an end with a few general remarks.

With the exception of the unfortunate letter written by Mr. Rogan to the *Poverty Bay Herald*, which we consider indefensible, we have met with no proof of his ever having done anything unbecoming his position as a Judge. We consider that all Mr. Wilson's accusations affecting his good faith and integrity have broken down, and that no ground has been shown for any charge against him, unless, perhaps, some little irregularity in matter of form. But to say this is to throw upon Mr. Wilson a very heavy responsibility for the language of his report of the 6th June. The general tenor of that report undoubtedly suggests that Mr. Wilson's land-purchase operations have been thwarted by a combination or "ring," in which the Judge of the Land Court and the District Officer were in league with private speculators. It is fair to say Mr. Wilson disavows this interpretation of his language, and even seems to think that he has made no charges against any one. If any one can read this report without finding in it very serious charges against the Judge and the District Officer, so much the better for Mr. Wilson's view of the matter; but since we think that most persons will find the report full of such charges, our opinion that they are unfounded seems called for as a matter of justice to both the gentlemen concerned.

We think it probable that an unfriendly feeling has for some time existed between Mr. Wilson and Judge Rogan. The former declared at an early period that he would not attend Mr. Rogan's Court again; and he seems for a long time to have watched the proceedings of the Court, so far as possible, without attending it, and to have noted them in no friendly spirit. And the evidence which we have heard, together with the documents put before us, impresses us with the conviction that Mr. Wilson has given too much indulgence to a feeling of jealousy and distrust of the persons, official and otherwise, with whom he has had to do, and that this feeling has led him to magnify molehills into mountains, to convert suspicions into certainties, and to jump to conclusions where it would have been much better to ask for information. On no other supposition can we understand his keeping aloof from Mr. Baker when he wanted surveyors; his abstaining from attendance on the Court when his presence and advice might have enabled his Native clients to put their case properly before the Judge; and his perpetual disposition to see machinations and plots in everything that was done. A little more liberality of sentiment and cordial intercourse with others would probably have cleared up many matters which appeared dark to Mr. Wilson, and might have saved him from making such grievous imputations as form the principal matter of his report. We regret to be obliged to express this opinion, because the evidence which has led us to it has also convinced us that Mr. Wilson is an officer of great ability, energy, and perseverance, and quite capable, by the proper use of these qualities, to render valuable service to the public.

It now only remains for us, whilst acknowledging the confidence which the Government has shown in us by placing this commission in our hands, to express the hope that we have been enabled to arrive at fair and just conclusions, and that our investigation has been successful in throwing the necessary light upon the matters referred to us.

We have, &c.,
CHARLES BROWN.
JOSEPH GILES.

The Under Secretary, Native Department, Wellington.