

May I ask your Excellency for an early interview, relating to the despatch of Sir Michael Hicks Beach, which is founded on an error or misapprehension in regard to our firm.

My object will be to show to your Excellency that—

First. Mr. Cornwall, on whose estate the outrages on Natives occurred, is *not* and *never* was an agent of ours.

Secondly. That we *have not* and *never had* any power or authority over Mr. Cornwall, but that he is a trader living in Samoa, to whom we supply goods, and from whom we only receive money or produce in payment.

Thirdly. That we *have not* and *never had* any partnership connection with Mr. Cornwall, so as to be in any way or degree responsible for his doings, or for the acts of his servants.

Fourthly. That the words in the despatch of Sir M. Hicks Beach (note first page of enclosed document), "The estate on which these cruelties have been practised is worked by an agent of Messrs. McArthur and Co., of Auckland," is an error in every respect.

Fifthly. I have the honor to inform your Excellency that the outrages referred to came to our ears soon after their occurrence. That we wrote *thus* to Mr. Cornwall, on the 11th of February, 1878 :—" *Re treatment of ' Labour ' (viz., Natives) :—*It is reported to us that your overseer does not treat the Natives well. One instance is given of real cruelty. We hope it is not true, for your sake."

Sixthly. Mr. Cornwall dismissed the offender, one Mr. Moors; and our belief was that Mr. Maudsley knew the whole case.

Seventhly. We cannot think how or why he came to be described as our agent, since Mr. Cornwall is only a customer of ours.

Awaiting your Excellency's summons in regard to this painful matter,

I have, &c.,

FREDK. LARKINS,

Resident partner of W. McArthur and Co., Auckland.

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By Authority: GEORGE DIDSBURY, Government Printer, Wellington—1879.