

CORRESPONDENCE.

(We are not responsible for the opinions expressed by correspondents. The writer's name as a guarantee of good faith, must be enclosed in the letter).

THE LATE CHIEF POHARAMA, OF MOTUROA.

(To the Editor.)

Sir,—The earliest and also the most consistent friend and ally of the Europeans in Taranaki was Poharama Te Whiti, the head chief of the Ngamotu (Moturoa) Maoris. A steady and true friend to the settlers in the early days, and through the troubles of the Maori war, this old chief and gentleman passed away some thirty years ago, honoured and respected by all who had been brought in contact with him. He stood in respect to New Plymouth what E'Puni did to Wellington, and although he did not, like this celebrated chief, receive a public funeral, the Government was represented at his burial rites, and at their expense, I believe, a very substantial enclosure was made around the family burial plot at Moturoa, and every precaution taken to preserve it from desecration. Can any of your readers, Mr Editor, inform me what has become of this grave and enclosure. My esteemed friend, the late Captain Holford, carefully attended to it during his lifetime. I searched yesterday in the locality, but things have so changed. Where I thought it should be I found nothing but a tangle of fowl runs. Surely I must have been mistaken in my locality, for it is impossible to think that a sacred spot like this was, and still should be, has been desecrated in this manner. Failing information from your readers, I will visit the ground again, and, if possible, find out exactly what has happened to our old friend's last resting place, and through the medium of your paper, let the public know the result, and also, as it may interest many, a brief sketch of his life and action, as bearing on his connection with the colonisation of this part of New Zealand.—I am, etc.,

W.H.S.

August 21st, 1905.

AUGUST 25, 1905.

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THE LATE CHIEF POHARAMA'S GRAVE.

To the Editor.

Sir,—Please permit me through the medium of your paper to thank Capt. Hood for the information supplied in last evening's issue as to the condition of Poharama's grave. I'm glad to hear that the enclosure is tapu still, and that my eyes deceived me in thinking I saw a stalwart rooster with his covey of lady attendants vigorously scratching over my old friend's last resting place. My memory at once brought back the lines of the Immortal Bard:

"Imperial Caesar dead and turn'd to clay
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away."

So here, in a somewhat similar fix, was this old warrior and protector of the embryo New Plymouth providing the foundation for a breeding ground for prize chickens and such like. Naturally I felt wrathful. But, Mr Editor, it was all a mistake, and my mind is relieved at the genial captain's explanation. I hope to take an early opportunity of visiting the grave with a view of renewing my acquaintance with the spot, and appreciating the thoughtful care exercised over the enclosure by Capt. Hood. After that I may crave your permission to publish a short sketch of Poharama and his times.—I am, etc.,

W.H.S.

Captain Hood writes in reply to the letter of "W.H.S." re site of burial place at Moturoa, and enclosing a rough plan. He says that the burial ground is kept intact, and that the picket fence is still enclosing the three graves, and the graves are marked still with the shrubs planted years ago, and that the site is marked in the centre of the Harbour Board property by three old pine trees, which can be seen from the road or from the train when passing. Captain Hood further informs us that he has kept the ground clear of weeds and rank growth.