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A Newly-available Resource for Historians of Early New Zealand:

The Marist Missionary Letters (1838-54)

The 7000 pages of primary documents of the *Lettres reçues d'Océanie* constitute a vast new source for the study of the Pacific during the period 1838-54.¹ Published in 2009 after sixteen years of transcription, the *Lettres* are the collected correspondence of the first French Marist missionaries to New Zealand and other Pacific islands. In the words of Pacific historian Hugh Laracy, they are 'the single most important foundational contribution to Pacific history in its fullest extent since J. C. Beaglehole's magisterial editions of James Cook's *Journals*'.² About 2000 of those pages are transcripts of letters written in New Zealand that open up a fresh perspective of life before the wars of the 1860's. This paper will locate the early French Marist Māori mission within the context of New Zealand public history before exploring how the *Lettres reçues d'Océanie* can complement existing views of early colonial New Zealand. To better contextualise the correspondence, it would be useful to begin with a brief background of the Marists' presence in New Zealand.

The Society of Mary, whose members were known as Marists, was an order founded during France's post-Revolutionary renewal of interest in Catholicism. The Society was based in Lyon, and its early members, both priests and brothers, were typically of humble origins from nearby rural parishes. The priests were well-read and highly literate after years of study, while the brothers had less formal education but were generally skilled in a particular craft and aspired to work as lay missionaries. In 1836, the pope entrusted the Society of Mary with the mission of evangelising Western Oceania, a vast area containing many of the Pacific's archipelagos. After a journey of more than a year, the first Marists arrived in New

Zealand in the Hokianga in January 1838: just one priest and one brother, with their bishop, Jean-Baptiste-François Pompallier. Correspondence was a key factor in the mission's success, and neither Pompallier nor the head of the Marists in France, Father Colin, had allowed sufficiently for the difficulties of lengthy delays in communication. Funding and more missionaries depended on prudent accounts and favourable reports from New Zealand but without money and men, Pompallier could do little. More Marists eventually arrived with funds in mid-1839, enabling Pompallier to found missions throughout the country in the early 1840s.

Pompallier's remarkable charisma and his status as the first bishop of any denomination in New Zealand gave him great mana among Māori and Pakeha alike and saw him seated prominently during discussions preceding the Treaty of Waitangi. However, his priests believed Pompallier appropriated the mission's mana and borrowed too much money maintaining it. During his visits around the country, the bishop would come ashore in magnificent robes from the mission's large schooner, distribute generous gifts to Māori as he established a station and then leave a lonely and impoverished priest to carry on. By 1842 the priests reported to Colin that they were isolated, starving and demoralised. The Society of Mary broke with Pompallier and stopped sending priests to New Zealand. Negotiations with the Vatican resulted in a diplomatic solution: Pompallier would have the newly-created diocese of Auckland with non-Marist priests, while the French Marists would move to the Wellington diocese. The growing urban Irish Catholic population drew the Marists away from their Māori mission, which they abandoned during the wars of the 1860s. Their later work with Māori a generation later will not be considered here.³

The public perception in New Zealand of the French Marists has changed significantly in the past generation. Once considered outsiders relevant only to the Catholic community in New Zealand, they are now recognised more and more as contributors to New Zealand's contact history, as a part of the colonial experience.

Until recently, their impact on New Zealand history had been marked less by academic histories than by what Pierre Nora calls the Realm of Memory, or the incorporation of people, places and events into national identity and public history.⁴ The pioneer French missionaries in New Zealand left few physical remnants of their presence. Their tiny isolated wooden buildings disappeared rapidly, while their most notable success, the Rangiaowhia settlement, was sacked in 1864. Most former mission stations are now farmland with no sign of their past significance. The early French presence in New Zealand has been largely forgotten and the pioneer Marist Māori mission has almost no original physical sites of memory. The names of the French Marists, often associated with education, are becoming more prominent in New Zealand's Realm of Memory. Catholic schools have been traditionally named after saints; only within the school community does one usually find houses and buildings named after local bishops and priests. In recent decades, however, the French Marists' names have become more visible to the public. Bishop Viard College in Porirua was founded in 1968;⁵ Whangarei's Pompallier Catholic College in was founded in 1971;⁶ and St Joseph's School in Taradale was renamed Reignier School in 1974.⁷ This trend has continued into the present century. Garin College opened in Nelson in 2002, followed a year later by Tauranga's Aquinas College, named after the mission station Pompallier founded there in 1840.

Factors outside education have also contributed to the recent rise in public awareness of the pioneer Marists. On 24 January 2002 Pompallier's remains, disinterred from a suburban cemetery in Paris, were brought to New Zealand. After a three-month tour of the country that attracted widespread national and local media attention, the bishop's remains were re-interred under the altar of St Mary's in Motuti, near where he had first landed in the Hokianga.⁸ Since the event was a celebration of Pompallier's work in New Zealand, the bitter dispute between the bishop and his priests was naturally neglected and failed to make its way into public presence.

The Marists' prominence in the last decade is also linked to their former printery in Russell, built in the early 1840s and now managed run by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust as an interactive museum.⁹ Long known as Pompallier House, the site was renamed Pompallier Mission to correct public misconceptions that the bishop lived in a large lofty residence, and characterized as the country's oldest factory. It is a superb example of the transformation of a site of memory into a narrative. The building functions as an interactive destination with three intertwined themes. First, as a working printery branded as the country's oldest factory, it offers tactile demonstrations of the entire printing process. The second theme recounts the pioneer French mission and the struggle to construct the printery, while the third describes the battle of Kororāreka in 1845. Pompallier Mission integrates the Marist experience into New Zealand's colonial experience by successfully conveying all three strands of its history as it links historic preservation to public memory.¹⁰

The growing trend of increased public awareness of the early Marists has also been influenced by the work of Jessie Munro, whose biography of Suzanne Aubert won the Book of the Year at the 1997 New Zealand Book Awards.¹¹ Aubert arrived in New Zealand a generation after the pioneer Marist missionaries, but her Lyon origins and her work in education and health provide a bridge the connection between the days of Pompallier and the twentieth century.

Scholarly studies of the Marists have followed a similar trend. Once isolated in liminal historical domains like 'Catholicism in New Zealand' or 'French-New Zealand contacts', their history can now, largely thanks to the publication of their correspondence, be incorporated into the mainstream. Early works on the Marists and their writing such as *Fishers of Men* and *Sons of France* were aimed principally at a Catholic readership.¹² They presented the missionaries subjectively in a saintly and evangelical light, and were unsuitable sources for academic historians. E. R. Simmons later produced serious and balanced histories of the Catholic Church in New Zealand, including a biography of Pompallier that examined the bishop's faults

as well as his good points.¹³ University French departments have also been a source of Marist studies since the 1990s.¹⁴ More recently, a number of doctoral theses have examined the intercultural dimension of the Marists' lives in New Zealand.¹⁵

Early works on New Zealand history aimed at a wider public had very little to say about the early Marists. As an example, Keith Sinclair's *A History of New Zealand* mentions them once, almost in passing, without even mentioning Pompallier's name.¹⁶ A similar lacuna occurs in Nancy M. Taylor's anthology of early New Zealand travel writing, which features a number of accounts by missionaries but none by a Marist.¹⁷ This omission is particularly unfortunate given that one of the Marists, Fr Claude-André Baty, explored the East Coast in 1841 at the same time as William Colenso. Both wrote about their experiences and even their encounters with one another, but only Colenso's version is widely known. Lydia Wevers' study of nineteenth-century New Zealand travel writing would also have benefited from contrasting the accounts by Baty and Colenso.¹⁸ More recently, James Belich, in his *Making Peoples*, gives some account of the Marists, as does Michael King in his *Penguin History of New Zealand*, which is little surprise given his earlier work on Catholicism in New Zealand.¹⁹

The doubly foreign nature of the missionaries, French and Catholic, once a hindrance to their recognition in New Zealand's history, should now be seen as an advantage for the different viewpoints they provide. Their perspectives add a counterpoint to the prevailing British and Protestant view of events, people and everyday life in early colonial New Zealand. Even the environment was different to the Marists. They saw it through Romantic eyes as a dramatic landscape, but never as a territory to possess - unlike most British writers of the time. Similarly, their different perception of Māori is also invaluable. The next part of this article provides examples of the Marists' correspondence that illustrate the varied subject matter of their writing. Religious issues were evidently the main purpose of their writing, but this did not prevent them describing many other aspects of life in New Zealand.

Since a recent study has discussed descriptions of Māori and of the environment, the focus below will be on the colonial European society.²⁰

Despite British beliefs that Pompallier advised chiefs not to sign the Treaty of Waitangi, the bishop was wise enough to realise that any meddling could see his mission expelled. Marists welcomed the Treaty because they believed it would bring the lawless European population under control:

So the government of that nation [England] has decidedly taken possession of the country in the name of Queen Victoria and soon it seems that New Zealand will be functioning entirely as an English colony. Thank God that the priest makes no distinction between nations; he wishes to save everyone. This situation will speed the development of our establishments and will give them greater security, particularly those of women.²¹

The stability that would enable them to bring out sisters from France and establish hospitals was slow to materialise. Fr Forest regretted the colonial government's powerlessness, even in the capital:

Here in Auckland there are more than 2000 Europeans; it is a small town whose excesses and debauchery most certainly surpass the worst places of France. Drunkenness and excess are the two vices that have conquered this unfortunate place entirely. The women drink like the men, perhaps even more so.²²

Fr Petit-Jean experienced remarkable changes in just three years. When he arrived in the Bay of Islands in late 1839, New Zealand was, judging from his letters, mostly Māori with a marginal and anarchic European population. Labour and timber were so prohibitively expensive that the Marists had to build their printery themselves employing a rammed-earth technique common in their native province around Lyon but unique in New Zealand. By 1842 Petit-Jean was based in Auckland while the colonial government struggled with an economic crisis. The missionary marvelled at the rapid changes and wrote:

The government, which one can say is bankrupt, is forced to give work to newly-arrived immigrants who have none. Fathers receive only half-a-crown, or 3 francs, per day, for them and their children. Single men receive just 1s9d, or 2F15. A man easily used to earn 10 or 12F per day.²³

You can get 100 feet of sawn timber, planks, etc for 9 shillings, delivered to Auckland. It used to cost 30, 35s., even £2.0.0.²⁴

Petit-Jean was saddened by Auckland in 1843. He commented:

What misery in this capital of New Zealand. Debt is everywhere or nearly everywhere. The government itself owes many arrears to its employees. The high sheriff signed a seizure of property against himself. Merchants sell only for cash. The only people making money are prosecutors and moneylenders.²⁵

The Marist correspondence paints Wellington in a more favourable light; though it did not surprise the priests that during the early 1850s so many immigrants should leave New Zealand for the goldfields of Australia. Several of them described the effects of gold fever on New Zealand settlers. On 22 September 1852, Fr Rozet wrote:

People here are leaving in crowds to look for gold. Only a week ago a ship left here for Port Phillip with 200 people from Wellington and the surrounding area in search of gold.²⁶

Other economic issues feature in the Marists' writing. Fr Garin wrote several pages on the development and economics of sheep-farming on the Canterbury Plains in 1853.²⁷ He then recounted a five-week journey he undertook in the Nelson region, naming many of the people he stayed with along the way: Ward, Palmer, Redwood, Morse, Sweet, Maxwell, Kerr among others.

Their prominence in early education led the Marists to describe schooling in some detail. Fr Moreau's detailed account of daily routine at the Marists' school in Nelson in 1852 will be of great interest to public historians of education in early New Zealand as he noted:

We have two types of boarders. The majority pay only 25 shillings per month but have to work for the school. Their work is valued at 10 shillings per month, thus they are supposed to pay 35 shillings per month. The others pay 2 pounds per month, but we are not allowed to make them do work apart from that related to their schooling.²⁸

The work was mainly gardening with some carpentry. Although the routine was regimental, beginning at 5.25am, the school was highly regarded in Nelson because of the progress the children made in writing, French and Latin. It attracted day-boys

from wealthy Protestant families and the priests were careful to avoid giving them religious instruction. They had two teachers, a competent and popular ex-sailor known for late nights in town, and an acerbic mistress who was unpopular with parents and pupils alike.

The Marists also described major events of the time, such as the Robertson murders and disputes between Māori and the Crown.²⁹ They also showed how the Frenchmen, despite popular suspicion, did their best to avoid becoming involved in perpetrating or contributing to anti-British sentiment. On the Northern Wars, Fr Séon wrote in October 1844:

The events that have taken place in this part of the island since 8 July last and that have reduced English authority to almost nothing have honoured the Catholic religion in that neither the priests nor the Catholic Māori have become involved for evil but to re-establish order. The flagpole cut down by Protestants was rebuilt by a Catholic chief. It showed that we were not at all hostile, neither ourselves nor our doctrine, to the government. This is what the governor told Fr Baty and me when we went to greet him in the Bay of Islands.³⁰

The Marists mentioned many of the leading figures of the day, both Māori and Pākehā. One whom they praised particularly—perhaps thereby indirectly criticizing their own bishop—was Selwyn, as evidenced in Petit-Jean’s note to Épalle in June 1843:

This bishop seems an intrepid man and a prudent observer. He comes and goes, travels discreetly, takes notes everywhere and oversees everything almost without consulting with the former Protestant missionaries.³¹

He is a very active man; he has crossed the whole of New Zealand several times on foot. It is said that he has talent, much learning and is very diplomatic.³²

Of interest to historians investigating travel in early New Zealand will be the Marists’ many journeys. Fr Antoine Garin wrote of a trip from Nelson to Auckland. He wrote of the perils of crossing Cook Strait, pointing out places where ships had been wrecked. Then there was the dangerous Taranaki coastal route, which included narrow cliff paths and a long stretch of beach that had to be crossed rapidly between

high tides. Crossing the Kawhia bar was another hazard. A waka journey down the busy Waipa and Waikato Rivers then followed and Garin recorded:

We have at last arrived in the Waikato River. Do you see what the water is carrying? They look like floating eggs. They are pumice stones, stones burnt by volcanoes and consequently so light that they float on water. Every bank of the river is covered in these stones both big and small.³³

Fr Forest related an 1842 voyage from Auckland to Kororāreka. His vivid narrative of several days of hell on a small boat crewed by drunken barbarians could come from an historical novel. A small extract about preparing tea will have to suffice:

Then they took an old tin mug, which was also used to give food and water to the dogs and to a little pig. It was wiped with great care in front of me, using a dirty and ancient handkerchief, no doubt to show me how clean it would be.³⁴

The last word is reserved for Fr Reignier, writing from his station in the Rotorua district:

At the summit of one hill, the soapy blue hot-water pool makes the most magnificent sight; the water, falling gently, bathes the contours of the hill, forming an amphitheatre of sixty wide terraces, as if carved by man, of marbled columns in all colours. Nothing surpasses this sight. The beauty and magnificence of the terraces of the Palace of Versailles cannot compare.³⁵

These few extracts from the pioneer Marists' correspondence show just how rich a resource their letters are for public historians. Previously unused descriptions of daily life, public figures, education, agriculture, economics, major events and travel are now readily available to provide a fresh perspective of early colonial New Zealand. It is hoped that this paper will encourage further use of this major source so recently made available to the wider public. It will also help to integrate the French mission into the mainstream of New Zealand's historical narratives.

WILLIAM JENNINGS

NOTES

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- ¹ *Lettres reçues d'Océanie par l'administration générale des pères maristes pendant le généralat de Jean-Claude Colin (1836-1854): Édition critique*, ed. by Charles Girard (Paris: Karthala, 2009). All extracts of Marist correspondence in this article will be referenced using the document and paragraph numbers in the Girard edition; e.g. LRO, Doc. 125 [8] is paragraph 8 of document 125. All translations are mine.
- ² Hugh Laracy, 'Notes and news', *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, December 2007, 383. Laracy was commenting on a pre-publication version of the *Lettres reçues d'Océanie*.
- ³ Sandy Harman, 'The Struggle for Success: a socio-cultural perspective of the French Marist Priests and their Māori Mission, 1838-1867' (PhD thesis, University of Waikato, 2010); E.R. Simmons, *A Brief History of the Catholic Church in New Zealand* (Auckland: CPC, 1978) and *Pompallier: prince of bishops* (Auckland: CPC, 1984).
- ⁴ Pierre Nora, *Realms of memory: rethinking the French past* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996-1998).
- ⁵ Bishop Viard College, *Our History*, <http://www.bvc.school.nz/about.html> [accessed 20 November 2011].
- ⁶ Pompallier Catholic College, *History*, <http://www.pompalliercollege.school.nz/pompallier.php?record=history> [accessed 20 November 2011].
- ⁷ St Mary's Parish, Taradale-Greenmeadows, *History of the Parish*, <http://stmarystaradale.freehostia.com/history.htm> [accessed 20 November 2011].
- ⁸ The Catholic Church in Aotearoa New Zealand, *Pompallier returns*, <http://www.catholic.org.nz/our-story/dsp-default.cfm?loadref=183> [accessed 20 November 2011].
- ⁹ Pouhere Taonga New Zealand Historic Places Trust, *Pompallier Mission*, <http://www.historicplaces.org.nz/placesToVisit/northland/PompallierMission.aspx> [accessed 20 November 2011].
- ¹⁰ See e.g. Randall Mason, 'Historic Preservation, Public Memory, and the Making of Modern New York City', in *Giving Preservation a History* ed. by Max Page and Randall Mason (New York: Routledge, 2004), pp.131-62.
- ¹¹ Jessie Munro, *The Story of Suzanne Aubert* (Auckland: Auckland University Press & Bridget Williams Books, 1996).
- ¹² McKeefry, *Fishers of Men* (Auckland: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1938); Mary Catherine Goulter, *Sons of France: a forgotten influence on New Zealand history* (Auckland: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1957).
- ¹³ E.R. Simmons, *A Brief History of the Catholic Church in New Zealand* (Auckland: CPC, 1978) and *Pompallier: prince of bishops* (Auckland: CPC, 1984).
- ¹⁴ Peter Tremewan, *French Akaroa : an attempt to colonise southern New Zealand* (Christchurch: University of Canterbury Press, 1990, revised 2010) includes many details of the Marist mission. Peter Low, 'French Bishop, Maori Chiefs, British Treaty' in *The French and the Maori*, ed. by John Dunmore (Waikanae: Heritage Press, 1992), pp.97-106. See also M. O'Meeghan, 'The French Marist Maori Mission' in *The French and the Maori*, ed. by John Dunmore (Waikanae: Heritage Press, 1992), pp.38-68.
- ¹⁵ Hélène Serabian, 'Le journal du Père Antoine Garin, 1844-1846 : une édition critique présentée avec commentaire, transcription et annotations' (PhD thesis, University of Canterbury, 2005); Giselle Larcombe, 'Antoine Marie Garin: a biographical study of the intercultural dynamic in nineteenth-century New Zealand authors' (PhD thesis, University of Canterbury, 2009); Sandy Harman, 'The Struggle for Success: a socio-cultural perspective of the French Marist Priests and their Māori Mission, 1838-1867' (PhD thesis, University of Waikato, 2010).
- ¹⁶ Keith Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand* (Auckland: Penguin, 1959).
- ¹⁷ *Early Travellers in New Zealand*, ed. by Nancy M. Taylor (London: Oxford University Press, 1959).
- ¹⁸ Lydia Wevers, *Country of Writing: travel writing and New Zealand, 1809-1900* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2002), p.46.

¹⁹ James Belich, *Making Peoples: a history of the New Zealanders from Polynesian settlement to the end of the nineteenth century* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001); Michael King, *The Penguin History of New Zealand* (Auckland: Penguin, 2004); Michael King, *God's farthest outpost: a history of Catholics in New Zealand* (Auckland: Penguin, 1997).

²⁰ William Jennings, 'Travel writing and the first Marists in New Zealand', *Studies in Travel Writing*, 14.4 (2010), pp.345-364.

²¹ 'Voilà que le gouvernement de cette nation a décidément pris possession du pays au nom de la reine Victoria et dans peu à ce qui paroît la Nouvelle-Zél(ande) sera complètement sur le pied de colonie anglaise. Dieu soit béni, le prêtre ne fait distinction d'aucune nation, il désire sauver tout le monde. Cet état de chose accélérera nos établissemens quelconques et leur donnera plus de garantie surtout à ceux des femmes.' Petit-Jean to Paillason, 18 March 1840, LRO, Doc. 53 [5].

²² 'Ici à Auckland il y a plus de deux mille Européens; c'est une petite ville dont le luxe et la débauche surpasse certainement nos plus mauvais endroits de France. L'ivrognerie et la luxure sont les deux vices qui se sont emparés entièrement de ce pauvre endroit. Les femmes boivent comme les hommes, peut être plus.' Forest to Colin, 7 October 1842, LRO, Doc. 205 [7].

²³ 'Le gouvernement, qu'on peut dire sans argent, est forcé de donner de l'ouvrage aux émigrants nouveau-venus qui n'en ont pas. Or, les pères de familles ne reçoivent pour leur journée que *half crown*, environ 3 fr(ancs). Voilà pour eux et pour leurs petits enfans. — Les jeunes gens non mariés n'ont que 1 sh(illing) et 9 d(enarii), c'est-à-dire 2 f(rancs) et 15 c(entimes). Jadis un homme se faisoit facilement 10 f(rancs), 12 f(rancs), par jour.' Petit-Jean to Colin, 24 April 1843, LRO, Doc. 252 [7].

²⁴ Les 100 pieds de bois scié, planches, etc. — vous pouvez les avoir à 9 shill(ings) rendus à Auckland — tandis qu'ils coûtoient naguères 30, 35, sh(illings) et même £2.0.0.' Petit-Jean to Épalle, 8 June 1843, LRO, Doc. 260 [8].

²⁵ 'Quelle misère dans cette capitale de la Nouvelle-Zélande. Partout ou presque partout des dettes. Le gouvernement lui-même doit maints arrhérages à ses employés. Le high sheriff a signé une saisie contre lui-même. Les marchands ne vendent guères qu'au comptant. Je ne vois presque en voie de fortune que les procureurs et les usuriers.' Petit-Jean to Épalle, 8 June 1843, LRO, Doc 260 [8].

²⁶ 'Les gens ici quittent en foule pour aller à l'or. A Port Phillip il y a huit jours qu'un navire est parti d'ici avec 200 personnes de Wellington et ses environs pour l'or.' Rozet to Poupinel, 22 September 1852, LRO, Doc. 1184 [11].

²⁷ Garin to Numa Garin, 3 March 1853, LRO, Doc 1227 [16-23].

²⁸ '[...] nous avons deux espèces de pensionnaires; les uns plus nombreux en ce moment ne paient que 25 schellings par mois; mais ils doivent leur travail à la maison, et leur travail leur est compté pour 10 schellings par mois. Ainsi ils sont censé donner 35 schellings par mois; enfin les autres 2 pounds par mois; mais nous n'avons pas droit de les faire travailler si ce n'est à ce qui regarde leur classe.' Moreau to Colin, 3 March 1852, LRO, Doc 1125 [6].

²⁹ In November 1841 Maketu Wharetotara killed Elizabeth Roberton and four others of her household, including the grand-daughter of Ngāpuhi chief Rewa. His father handed him over to colonial authorities for trial in what became a test case of a Māori being tried under British law.

³⁰ 'Les évènements qui ont eu lieu dans cette partie de l'île depuis le 8 juillet dernier et qui ont réduit presque à rien l'autorité anglaise ont honoré la religion catholique en ce sens que ni les prêtres ni les Maori catholiques n'y ont trempé pour le mal mais bien pour rétablir l'ordre. Le mât du pavillon coupé par des protestants a été relevé par un chef catholique. Il a fait voir que n'étions point hostiles ni nous ni notre doctrine, au gouvernement. C'est le témoignage que m(onsieu)r le gouverneur nous a rendu au père Baty et à moi lorsque nous allions le saluer à son arrivée à la Baie des îles.' Séon to Colin, 23 October 1844, LRO, Doc 350 [2].

³¹ 'Ce bishop paroît un homme intrépide et prudent observateur. Il va, il vient, fait des voyages sans bruit, recueille partout des notes, partout préside sans prendre presque l'avis des anciens missionnaires protestants.' Petit-Jean to Épalle, 8 June 1843, LRO, Doc 260 [9].

³² 'C'est un homme très-actif; il a parcouru plusieurs fois toute la Nouvelle-Zélande à pied. On dit qu'il a des talents et beaucoup d'érudition et de politique.' Comte to Colin, 29 November 1844, LRO, Doc. 352 [6].

³³ 'Enfin nous sommes arrivés dans la rivière *Waikato*. Vois-tu ce que cette eau charie; on dirait des oeufs qui surnagent. Ce sont des pierres *ponce*, c'(est)-à-d(ire) des pierres brûlées par les volcans et devenues en conséquence si légères qu'elles peuvent flotter sur l'eau; tous les bords de la rivière sont recouverts de ces pierres plus ou moins grosses.' Antoine Garin to Numa Garin, 23 January & 13 February 1854, LRO, Doc. 1322 [47].

³⁴ 'Ensuite, l'on prenoit une vieille tasse de fer blanc qui servoit aussi pour donner à manger et à boire aux chiens et à un petit porc et, avec un sale et vieux mouchoir de poche, on l'essuie avec beaucoup [de] soin devant moi sans doute pour me montrer combien elle seroit propre.' Forest to Épalle, 9 November 1842, LRO, Doc 222 [13].

³⁵ 'Une colline ayant à sa cime un bassin d'eaux chaudes, d'un bleu savon, présente le coup d'œil le plus magnifique; l'eau, tombant doucement, baigne les contours de la colline, formant une soixantaine de larges degrés d'amphitéâtre, ciselés comme de main d'homme, des tourelles marbrées en toutes sortes de couleurs; aucun spectacle n'est plus imposant. La beauté et la magnificence des degrés du palais de Versailles n'a rien d'approchant.' Reignier to Feret, 23 December 1843, LRO, Doc. 299 [15].