

The Bush Fires.

The dry weather and the gales that have been blowing have resulted in the fires that were smouldering brightening up and blazing fiercely. Last night the view from any position that commanded an outlook was very fine, and would have been very pleasing if it was not for the thought that fire is such a bad master, and that it was putting so many people in danger. It is years since Woodville was in the midst of such a sea of fires as it is at present, and even then it was not so great, as the Mangahao was not then cleared.

Yesterday and the day before the Mangahao district was covered with smoke, and news from it was very anxiously awaited. We hear that a good deal of damage has been done, and that several settlers have been burned out, but owing to the wires being interrupted, it is very hard to get full particulars. We have been informed that our old friend, Mr John Harding, had to lower his wife and children down the well to save them from the flames, but we are not clear as to whether he was able to save house or not.

THE TOWN.

We have not heard of any serious damage done in the town itself, but there were very great apprehensions yesterday afternoon. About

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half-past three the fire bell rang out an alarm, and the engine was taken down to Station Street behind Jull's hotel, where it was used to prevent Mr Hancock's cottages catching alight. If these had caught the probability is that Mr Jull's stables would have been set alight by them, and that the fire would have spread to the hotel itself, and probably further. It would have been impossible to have saved the railway cottages and the stationmaster's house, but we are glad to say that the brigade did good work again, and checked the fire.

Mr Troup has lost a large stack of hay on his farm on Woodlands Road, Mr Cunningham one on the Pinfold Road (he had only got it up in the morning), and Mr Ware a good stack in the cemetery. Many others have gone too that have not been reported to us.

MANGATAINOKA.

Mr Greville, of Mangatainoka, lost his cowshed and outbuildings, while Mr Wyeth was unfortunate enough to lose everything, house, outbuildings and all, even to his dog kennel. Messrs Monckton Bros. have lost a lot of sheep, and Mr Wm. McDonald has lost some sheep and some cocksfoot grass.

A couple of days ago a fire was started on Mr Ormond's Maori reserve across the Manawatu, and rapidly spread. All the grass on the whole of the reserve about two

WHOLE OF THE RESERVE, ABOUT TWO thousand acres, was burnt up completely. Mr Harris was soon at work and got 2400 of the sheep transferred to this side of the river, and the balance and the cattle taken down to the low land by the junction of the Manawatu and Mangahao, so that the stock is all right. The fire spread along the river bed to the boundary of Messrs Ormond's and J. H. Monteith's properties, and soon covered the latter. The country hereabouts is very thickly covered with fallen timber, and is burning furiously. We hear that Mr Monteith has had to get his belongings packed ready for removal, and that all the settlers near him are very hard at work trying to prevent the flames reaching their dwellings. We sent a reporter down this morning, but the fire was so fierce across the road that he was unable to get through. Up in the

MAHARAHARA

it has been very bad. In the Coppermine Valley Messrs Omundsen, Jas. Carter, W. Murray, and Foley have lost all their cocksfoot. Mr Foley in addition has had the misfortune to lose his house, but we are unable to say if it is insured or not. Mr Murray had a great struggle to save his house and barns, but has managed it so far, although he has lost his buggy shed. We also hear that Mr John Read has lost his house in the centre of Maharahara.