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## PAKEHA AND MAORI: A NARRATIVE OF THE PREMIER'S TRIP THROUGH THE NATIVE DISTRICTS OF THE NORTH ISLAND.

*Laid on the Table by the Hon. Mr Seddon, with Leave of the House.*

### INTRODUCTION.

ALTHOUGH the Native question does not occupy such a prominent part in New Zealand politics as it did a few years back, it still is a subject of interest to all thinking men who desire to see such a state of affairs brought about as shall draw the European and Maori races into a closer union.

Until recently the "Maori difficulty," as it was termed, was regarded with indifference by the majority of the Southern members of Parliament, and on occasions when Native legislation and Native affairs were discussed in the House the Middle Island representatives took little interest therein. In the South Island, the sparse Native population and the pacific character of the people gave the settlers an idea that the troubles in the North had been greatly exaggerated, and consequently they displayed a degree of apathy concerning Maori affairs which, had they made themselves better informed on the subject, would not have been the case. There were, it is true, a minority of settlers in the South who were posted up in the Native question, and whose sympathies were with their Northern brethren who were struggling to hold their own against some of the more turbulent tribes who took up arms to resist the advance of European civilisation. Those, however, were only a handful of the inhabitants of the Middle Island, and it is an undoubted fact that the bulk of the Southern people, especially in the old provincial days, took little interest in the Northern troubles. The prudent though firm policy which has been pursued towards the Natives during the past few years has accomplished much in the direction of settlement, but much more remains to be done before the vast tracts of Native-owned land which are at present lying waste can be properly utilised for the benefit of both races.

New Zealand has with truth been called the "Wonderland of the Pacific," and travellers from all parts of the earth have made themselves acquainted with the magnificent scenery of the colony. The sights and sounds of beauty which produce a rapt and refined enjoyment are nowhere to be met with in such marvellous variety as in New Zealand, and they form some of the colony's most valuable assets. If Wordsworth had travelled through our islands he could, with his great power of perceiving and apprehending the beauties of nature, have aptly applied his well-known lines to numbers of our scenes:—

The sounding cataract  
Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,  
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,  
Their colours and their forms, were to me  
An appetite; a feeling and a love  
That had no need of a remoter charm  
By thought supplied.

While, however, too much stress cannot be laid on what a theatrical manager would term our "scenic effects," it must be acknowledged that the Maori people themselves are calculated to inspire as much interest in the philosophic mind as the scenery of their country does in the poetic mind. They are, without doubt, one of the most remarkable races on this side of the equator, and not only "globe-trotters" but colonists themselves have paid too little attention to the study of their character. A people who in times past sailed from distant seas in their rude canoes and made their way over the stormy ocean, braving difficulties and dangers in order to plant themselves on the shores of New Zealand, are not a race to be despised. Although but a remnant of a once great nation of poets and warriors, for such they really were, they are still a "power in the land," and all true colonists are only too anxious to treat them with justice. In years past they proved