

themselves “worthy of British steel,” and now they are proving themselves worthy of our confidence. There is no doubt that our statesmen have an earnest desire to deal fairly with them, and to bring about still more fraternal relations between the two races. The best method to accomplish this desirable object is to push civilisation and settlement into the large areas of fine country which only await proper development at the hands of industrious yeomen. If the Legislature adopt this course, it goes without saying that strict justice and equity will be the standard which will guide them. On this head a few remarks by an able political writer may be to the point. “What is that which government is meant to secure?” he asks, and the reply is, “Primarily and supremely the aim of government is justice. In proportion as it diverges from this aim does government become tyranny, and public opinion must be inspired by the sense of justice, and must aim at securing justice, else it too becomes tyrannous, and becomes so in proportion as it fails to be inspired by this sentiment, and directed to the securing of this result.”

In the opinion of many thoughtful men the Maori character, with its many sterling traits, has not been sufficiently understood by our lawmakers. The Native mind has changed from time to time, and in different tribes opinions vary considerably, and this has led to a great deal of misunderstanding between the races. For years the Natives have taken up a negative position. They have been sullen, or, as named in their Native language, they have been *pouri*—discontented with their lot, labouring under supposed grievances. Powerless to openly resist the authorities, occasionally stopping surveys, pulling up survey-pegs, &c., to show their resentment of the encroachment of civilisation. Unable and even unwilling to meet the Government in Wellington, not comprehending how to bring their wishes before Parliament, they simply retired to their Native fastnesses, living in almost destitution. The remnants of a noble race, richly endowed in lands, and yet this wealth was of no benefit to them. The course adopted by them, whilst not benefiting them, retarded settlement, and seriously militated against the prosperity of the North Island. The Natives could not come to the Government—why not deal with them as Europeans are dealt with? Ministers go from centre to centre so as to keep touch with the pakehas and to explain social and political questions, the settlement of the land, and the labour problems. Why not deal with the Maoris in the same way? This thought induced the Premier to undertake a fatiguing journey, perilous in its incidence—mountains, rivers, and lakes having to be negotiated—and, by meeting the Natives in their haunts, making himself thoroughly acquainted with all the “ins and outs” of the Native question.

That many of the chiefs are adepts in diplomatic duelling goes without saying, and the manner in which some of them subjected the Premier to a rigid examination in the political catechism afforded ample proof that, on the point of intelligence, the Maori is quite equal to the pakeha. Whilst doing their utmost to “corner” him, they at the same time mingled dignity with shrewdness, thus affording a lesson in courtesy and good manners to numbers of politicians who imagine themselves to be—

Heirs of all the ages in the foremost files of time.

His recent trip has given him a thorough insight into the condition of the Maori people, and has, no doubt, enabled him to form an intelligent opinion as to the best course to adopt in order to secure the prosperity of both them and the Europeans. The words of the Tuhoe chief show the visit was well timed, and are worth quoting. Addressing the Premier, he said, “You are our parent, if you have come for our good, you are welcome, if you come to destroy, let it be done quickly. You are welcome. We are only the remnant of a great people, better we should go quickly than to perish slowly as we are doing. We have not wished to do wrong. We have tried to preserve our people. We have endeavoured to retain our lands, for land is our life.

We are not dealing with an ordinary savage race, but with a people who, even in their wildest state, possess many attributes which cannot fail to command our respect and esteem. If members of Parliament could only spare the time to take a trip through the Urewera and King-country they would learn much that could not fail to interest and instruct them; for, to quote Wordsworth again,—

For the instructed, time will come
When they shall meet no object but will teach
Some acceptable lesson to their minds
Of human suffering, or of human joy.
So shall they learn, while all things speak of man,
Their duties from all forms; and general laws
And local accidents shall tend alike
To rouse, to urge, and, with the will, confer
The ability to spread the blessings wide
Of true philanthropy.

March, 1894.

THE TRIP.

GILBERT tells us that “A policeman’s lot is not a happy one.” And what about a Premier’s existence? It is only those who have been in political power who can appreciate the troubles and difficulties which a Minister of the Crown has to contend with. All sorts and conditions of men—yes, and women—have their grievances, and a man requires the “patience of Job” to satisfy a tithe of the requirements of interviewers—their name is legion. Verily, many persons prefer their claims upon the Government of the day. People of all shades of political colour labour under the hallucination that the sole business of the Government is to provide for their wants. When the Premier (Hon. R. J. Seddon), the Hon J. Carroll, with their Private Secretary and special correspondent, started on their tour through the Native districts of the North Island, it was only to be expected that they would be met with deputations in all the business centres *en route*. But it was not only in the big centres, but also in the small ones, that the Premier and party were welcomed.