

MR. SEDDON AND GENTLEMEN,—

On behalf of the Duchess and myself, I thank you and the people of New Zealand most sincerely for the hearty welcome you offer us, and for your sympathetic reference to the loss we have sustained through the death of our beloved and ever-lamented Queen, a loss which we share with the whole Empire.

On behalf of the King, my dear Father, I desire also to thank you for your assurances of the continued attachment and devotion of the people of New Zealand to his throne and person, and of their unflinching loyalty. Of that loyalty they have already given most signal proofs.

The readiness and promptitude with which the Government and people of New Zealand sprung to the assistance of the Mother-country in the struggle—still unhappily proceeding—in South Africa will ever be remembered with gratitude by His Majesty and the people of the United Kingdom.

Your action in that matter has proved to the world that your appreciation of the benefits you enjoy as citizens of the British Empire will, whenever the occasion arises, be shown by deeds, not words, and that you are prepared to share in the responsibility of maintaining the glorious traditions and heritage, which are your birthright as much as that of the people of the Motherland.

I am glad to learn that the inhabitants of New Zealand are prosperous and happy, and that the Maoris, whose numbers are now increasing, are living in complete amity with their fellow-subjects, and are co-operating with them in the work of self-government.

The inclusion in this colony of the Cook and other islands—a step which I understand has the full concurrence of their inhabitants—will, with the same wise and sympathetic system of government which has secured the contentment and happiness of the Maoris, I have no doubt be of lasting advantage to the people.

I regret that the brief period of our stay will prevent us from seeing as much as we could wish of the many beauties and natural phenomena of your Islands, but we shall surely carry with us the most pleasant and lasting recollections of the warmth and cordiality of our reception and of your kindness and good wishes on our behalf.

GEORGE.

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