

### THE NEW ZEALAND VOLCANOES.

#### THEIR LEGENDARY ORIGIN.

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT).

How the fire came to New Zealand is told in Maori legend. The Maoris themselves looked upon the higher volcanic mountains with superstitious awe, and they considered them *tapu*, or sacred. No white man, and certainly no Maori, dared set foot upon them, and the fact that they were *tapu* prevented for a long time the obtaining of scientific knowledge regarding their craters and their summit configuration generally. Their origin is attributed by the Maoris to a famous *tohunga*, or high priest, who piloted one of the canoes of the early migrants from Hawaiki, the fabled home of the Maori people. This man, with another high chief, took possession of all the country between the Bay of Plenty and Mount Ruapehu. In order to assure fruitful years these two ascended the neighbouring volcano of Ngauruhoe, and set up an altar to make the necessary incantations. The cold then, as now, was very bitter—for the winds blow keen from the adjacent snows—and it seemed as if the old *tohunga* would die, when happily the thought occurred to him of sending for some of the sacred fire that was in the keeping of one of his sisters in far-away Hawaiki. She straightway came with the fire. Wherever she halted in her underground travels there fire remained, and where she came to the surface to breathe there appeared boiling pools and geysers. Thus there was a trail of fire and boiling pools all along her route from White Island, down through all the thermal region to Ngauruhoe and Ruapehu. The fire revived the old man, and, in commemoration of the event, he left it burning in Ngauruhoe. As a sacrifice to the gods he cast his slave wife down the crater, and the mountain has ever afterwards been called by her name. The legend is picturesque, but unsatisfying. Years afterwards a famous chief called Te Heuheu was killed in a great landslide on the shores of Lake Taupo. His body was being taken to burial on the sacred mountain, when a terrific thunderstorm, or an eruption, came on, and the bearers, hastily depositing their burden in a cave, turned and fled. This made the mountain still more sacred, and the early scientists dared not attempt to explore the range. Both Hochstetter and Dieffenbach must have been greatly disappointed that they were not allowed to set foot upon these sacred mountains, because, then, as now, Ngauruhoe was the real centre of volcanic energy in New Zealand.

#### THE ROTORUA DISTRICT.

It is, however, the thermal region in the vicinity of Lakes Rotorua, Roto-Mahana, Tarawera, and Taupo that is best known to the great majority of New Zealanders and to the sight-seers, who, from all parts of the civilized world, flock to this truly wonderful region. All the thermal phenomena possible seem to have been plentifully distributed throughout this territory. The crowning glory of it all was the Pink and White Terraces; but these, alas! are no more, for on June 10, 1886, they were either blown to bits or buried in the rain of mud and scoria that came from the eruption of Tarawera, and made the beautiful surrounding country a

desolate wilderness. The story of that eruption with its loss of life, both Maori and European, has often been told, and there is no need to repeat it here. Nature is gradually reclothing the scarred hillsides, and even the bruised and wounded trees have been healed by the hand of time. The tourist wanders through the land just as he did before the eruption, and the birds and the fish killed, or starved to death, as a result of the rain of mud and stones and fiery bombs, have been replaced by others of their kind. In this particular part of the thermal region the main centre of thermal activity remained at the site of the old terraces, but during later years it seems to have shifted to the region of the famous but short-lived Waimangu geyser. This huge geyser threw a column of boiling water, steam, mud, and stones considerably over a thousand feet in air. In August, 1903, the geyser was the scene of a terrible tragedy, an unusually severe eruption resulting in the death of two young girls, another visitor, and the guide, Joe Warbrick. The party had gone rather close in order to get a photograph. The eruption suddenly became terrific, and a great column of boiling water, shooting out at an angle, swept them off the hill into the overflow from the geyser. They were carried down in boiling water for nearly a mile towards Lake Rotomahana. The bodies were recovered shortly afterwards. Within the last few years Waimangu has become quiescent; but there is still great activity near by at a spot that has been aptly named Frying-pan Flat.

The completion of the North Island Main Trunk Railway has now brought the volcanoes within easy reach both of Wellington and Auckland, and, year by year, Ruapehu, Ngauruhoe, and the Tongariro Range are becoming favoured playgrounds for the more energetic class of holiday-makers. Ngauruhoe is apparently entering upon a period of renewed activity, and within the last four or five years there have been some fine volcanic displays from its crater. It is a perfect volcanic cone, 7,515ft. high, and terminates the Tongariro Mountain Range to the southward—a range that has, within comparatively recent times, been the scene of tremendous volcanic energy. The desolate nature of the country on the eastern side of the mountain, and the vast extinct craters of the range itself, are now silent witnesses of the fiery activity of bygone ages.

#### RENEWED ACTIVITY.

There are still several centres of great thermal activity on the Tongariro Range. At the lower and northern end Te Mari and Ketetahi are in a state of almost perpetual turmoil, and clouds of steam rising from their seething caldrons are visible many miles away. The Red Crater, near the middle of the Range, is still hot in places, and jets of steam hiss through small vents in the gloriously-tinted rocks of its sides. At the extreme southern end of the Range is the active volcano of Ngauruhoe. In winter time its slopes are clothed in snow and ice. Occasionally, for days at a time, it sends a vast column of steam fully 3,000ft. in air, and then it is a magnificent sight. At the period of greatest activity the scene must have been almost beyond description. Ngauruhoe was then, indeed, a hell unchained. A New Zealand poet has graphically depicted the scene:—

O'er Vassal Peaks thy smoky banners spread,  
Splashed with red flame as ever on they sped  
In scoried ranks, subdued by the lesser hills  
To purple realms of mystery; the day  
Failed of her sun when his red furnace flamed,  
And night was all aglow when earthquakes played  
Beneath thy heaving breast of startled snows.

A little over a year ago a geologist saw lava in the crater, and a few months ago, when the mountain was particularly active, a glow as from molten lava appeared in the sky. It would not be at all surprising if, at any time, there were an eruption on a grand scale. Fortunately the surrounding country is so unproductive as to be but sparsely settled, and therefore a serious eruption would be more spectacular than destructive.

#### RICHARD SEDDON.

Richard John Seddon was born on June 22nd, 1845, at Eccleston, Lancashire. He was apprenticed to an engineer, but golden dreams of Australia haunted him. He went away to search for gold, and landed in Melbourne en route to the Victorian fields. He worked hard and searched diligently, but in vain. He returned to Melbourne, and found employment at the railway workshops.

After a year's work, news came of the rich gold discoveries on the west coast of New Zealand. Seddon left Melbourne in the *Albatross*, and arrived at Hokitika in 1860. From Hokitika he went to the Old Six Mile diggings at Waima. Still unweary and gold-seeking he opened a store at Big Dam. In 1868 he went back to Melbourne, married Miss Spotswood, to whom he had become engaged three years before, and brought her back to New Zealand with him.

On hearing of the Kumara rush in 1874 he removed his business and his family to Kumara. He took charge of Kumara from its earliest infancy, leading it along the rough road that most colonial towns must have. Mr Seddon developed a liking, which became a passion, for public life. As a miner's advocate, he made himself disliked by red-tape officers, who were not used to being ousted. A new goldfields warden was warned by the Minister in charge of Mines that "there is a political agitator named Seddon down there, who makes a great deal of row because there is no one to attend to the rush on the Kumara field."

Mr Seddon was soon elected to the Ararua Road Board. As chairman of this body he did much useful work. As a member of the Stafford School Committee, and later of the Westland Board of Education, he played a prominent part in the struggle for secular education. On Westland being proclaimed a province, Mr Seddon took his seat in the Provincial Council as the representative of Ararua. In 1876, when Westland was a county again, he was elected to the County Council, and appointed chairman. Till 1891, when he entered the Ballance Ministry, he continued to sit at the Council table.

The later career of Richard Seddon belongs rather to the history of New Zealand than to that of Westland. During the stirring rush days of Westland, he was qualifying himself for the greater work before him, and he could not have entered a better school of politics. In those early years he advocated measures which he never ceased to champion. Manhood suffrage, equitable taxation, reform of the Legislative Council, a good system of local self-government, the settlement of the land, reduction of the gold duty, and the restriction of Chinese immigration, were planks in his platform at this early date. Again he said it was necessary to construct a railway which should unite the East and West Coasts of the South Island.

After the electoral campaign in 1879, in which the above programme was advocated by Mr Seddon with characteristic vigour, the voting was:—

Reid, R. G. ...	917
Seddon, R. J. ...	800
Duncan, P. ...	561
Barff, E. ...	463
Cumming, R. ...	90

Messrs Reid and Seddon were declared elected, and thus began the Parliamentary career of one who was to exercise the profoundest influence on the history of New Zealand.

The development of Mr Seddon's ideas does not concern us here. How he became an Imperialist, and later a humanist in the broadest sense of the word, belongs to the later history of the Dominion, but reference must at least be made to the death of one who loved Westland with an undying love, and who won for himself the affection of a whole population. On June 10th,

1906, Richard Seddon died, as he would have wished, in full harness, and the news, it is no exaggeration to affirm, shocked the whole Empire. The last telegram despatched by the Premier, "Just leaving for God's own country," reveals the love of the statesman for the land he had served so well.

The address of the Maori people to Mrs Seddon may well serve as his epitaph:—

"Sleep thou, O father, resting on great deeds done; sure that to generations unborn they will be as beacons along the highways of history. Thou thou art gone, may thy spirit, which so long moved the heart of kings, inspire us to greater, nobler ends."

"So bide ye in your grief, bereaved ones. Though small our tribute, our hearts have spoken. Our feet have trod the sacred precincts of the courtyard of Death. Our hearts will be his grave. Love will keep his memory green through the long weary years."

"Hei konei ra! Farewell!"

#### WARDEN REVELL.

William Horton Revell landed on the river bank where Greymouth now stands on January 24th, 1864, as agent for the Canterbury Provincial Government. Mr Revell was a man of commanding figure, well and strongly built, and full of energy. With the aid of his brother, John Revell, he built a store and dwelling on the banks of the Grey, just below Tainui's Pah. His duties led him to travel up and down the West Coast in 1864, and he twice crossed over the Alps to Christchurch to report progress. He underwent severe hardships on the long and tedious journeys. He had received instructions to sell off his stores and return by September to Christchurch; but on his second trip overland in July, he took with him 160ozs of gold from the Greenstone, and the officials countermanded the order to sell off.

On his return to the Grey, Mr Revell found parties of diggers had arrived to prospect the Coast and he was kept travelling so as to assist them, the favourite locality, as a starting point,

being from historic Greenstone. At the rush to Hokitika, Mr Revell, assisted by Sergeant Broham, marked off business sections, which were eagerly taken up, and thus, in the Christmas time of 1864, Hokitika was created.

On the proclamation of the goldfield in March, 1865, Mr Revell was gazetted Warden and R.A. On the 21st of March he issued the first Miner's Right on the Coast, to his brother, Mr Henry Revell. He was kept very busy till Mr Sale arrived in April, when he went back to Greymouth, and later he was transferred to other districts. He died at Timaru on the 22nd September, 1893, after a long and useful life. "Revell" street, Hokitika, preserves his name in the records of Westland.

20 Sept 1898

#### DEATH OF SIR G. GREY.

#### CAREER OF A FAMOUS EMPIRE BUILDER.

Sir George Grey, K.C.B., died last night at 10.30 at the Norfolk Hotel, South Kensington, where he had been living for some time past. In his person passes away one of the most striking men of the Victorian era. He celebrated his eighty-sixth birthday on April 14, so that he had far outlived the three score years and ten of the Psalmist.

He was the posthumous son of Lieutenant-Colonel Grey, of the 30th Regiment, who met a hero's death on the breach of Badajoz. He was born at Lisbon.

Educated at Sandhurst, he entered the Army and rose to the rank of captain. In 1839 he retired from the service. Love of adventure and exploration took him to Australia, and his energy and capacity as an administrator secured for him in quick succession a series of Colonial Governorships.

In 1841 he was appointed Governor of South Australia, whence he passed to New Zealand, the colony which he most loved, and which in after years he made his home. In 1854 he governed Cape Colony, and succeeded in winning the affection of the English and Boers alike. They revered him as a man of strong will,

#### UNSINKABLE INTEGRITY.

and as a lover of justice. While at the Cape he perhaps saved the Empire by his quick decision. At the outbreak of the Indian Mutiny he diverted a force of British troops, then on their way to China, and sent them to India. But strong, capable, and resourceful though he was, a born ruler of men, the Colonial Office regarded him as no favourer, and difficulties with the London authorities embittered his tenure of office.

From 1861 to 1867, during the Maori war, he once more governed New Zealand. It was a proof of his gracious and kindly qualities that he won the deep affection of the people he subdued, and was regarded by the Maoris as their father, with a love that was filial in its devotion.

Retiring on a governor's pension when the springs of life were yet fresh in him, he made New Zealand his home, and from 1877 to 1884 was Premier of that country. He retired from office, and betook himself, as the result of domestic sorrow, to the island paradise of Kawau, not far from Auckland.

In this heavenly retreat he spent most of his remaining years, living the simple and austere life of a patriarch, discoursing of the past without bitterness, and looking forward to

#### THE FUTURE OF THE EMPIRE

with hope.

He was visited in his seclusion by Mr. Froude, who has given an endearing and touching picture of him in "Oceana." Kawau he describes as one of the loveliest of islands, well wooded, with infinite variety of scenery; plain, parterre, woodland, and scrub alternating in one picture of surpassing beauty. Sir George Grey's home was a veritable museum of curiosities, and was filled with interesting books and manuscripts.

At the date of Mr. Froude's visit there was chaos in South Africa, and Sir George Grey was eager to be permitted once more to govern the Cape. But the British authorities passed him over, and he never went back to the field in which his labours might best have been exerted for the good of the Empire.

In 1896 an address signed by the chief of the far-away Cook Islands, Makea Atiki, was presented to him. This remote people wished to bid farewell, the address stated, of their old friend the veteran statesman. That such an address should be sent such a distance shows the regard which Sir George had inspired.

To him "Oliver Schreiner" in 1897 dedicated "Trooper Peter Hakket."

He was in the truest sense of the word a gentleman of the old school—polished, reserved, upright, and strong. He was a colonial statesman of the first rank, and lived, through the days when the Empire was neglected, to see it the object of passionate attachment on the part of the British people. He was a type of man such as our Indian Empire often produces, but his greatest gift was the capacity of attracting the affection of those he governed.