

John Morrison delivers Highland Chief costume to Maori Chief Hunia

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Nearly twelve months ago, when Dr Featherston, at Parewanui, formally completed the purchase of the Manawatu-Rangitikei block and paid the purchase-money, a very interesting incident took place which is worthy of being revived in the minds of our readers. One of the gentlemen who accompanied Dr Featherston to Rangitikei was Howard Kennard, Esq., who had only recently arrived from Europe. Mr Kennard was present at the final meeting which took place in Hunia's own house. In bidding the Ngatiapa chief good-bye, Mr Kennard addressed him to the following effect:- "Governor Hunia, - I cannot leave this place without expressing to you the gratification I have derived from my visit to Parewanui. I have had an opportunity of studying the manners, habits, and characteristics of your race. I have listened to the oratory of your chiefs - I have heard their chants and songs - I have witnessed their hakas and other amusements; I was not here on the opening day, when the ceremony of the war dance was performed, but you were good enough, at the close of the meeting, to get up a grand war dance for the special entertainment of myself and friends. I beg to thank you for this attention, and I beg that you will also convey my thanks to your people. I shall carry home with me lively and very pleasing recollections of the Parewanui meeting, and in order to show you that I have not forgotten the leading chief of the Ngatiapa tribe, I shall immediately, on my return home, send out to you the fullest costume of a Scottish Highland chief. I shall select that of which the Queen herself is the nominal head, and I shall ask you to wear it on future occasions of this kind in remembrance of our short but friendly intercourse."

Mr Kennard has not been forgetful of his promise to the Maori chief. By the last mail Mr Morrison, the agent of this province, brought out a case containing the full costume of a Highland chief for Governor Hunia, which we had the opportunity of seeing last week. Everything is complete and of the very best kind. The coat, the kilt, the sporan, the dirk, the hose, the skene dhu, and the brogues are all complete. Speaking from our old recollections of Highland gatherings, where Scotia's noblest sons have appeared in the "garb of old Gaul", we have never seen a finer, a more expensive, or a more complete costume. Everything has been selected with admirable taste. The hose, the buckles, the frosted silver thistles which ornament the belt, and the real cairngorms which decorate the dirk, are all of the best that Scotland can produce. In making this gift Mr Howard Kennard has done a graceful act, which its recipient will fully appreciate; and when Governor Hunia appears before the Duke of Edinburgh in the costume of the clan of which his royal mother is the nominal head, the compliment conveyed will be alike delicate and appropriate.