

# The White Ribbon

For God, and Home, and Humanity.

## Thought for the Month.

"Ah! Your roots are deep in England, in your dear old mother England—

Your roots are deep in England, but your heart's in Maoriland!"  
—Gloria Rawlinson.

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## MAORI DAY

OCTOBER 25th, 1947

It was on the "Tamahine," crossing to Picton, that the little English bride just one day in New Zealand, and setting forth on the perilous sea of married life in a new land, filled with delight and wonder at the beauty of the strange and glorious harbour surroundings, saw for the first time, a Maori woman. Puzzled, she sought to "place" the brown, softly ruddy complexion, the long, shining braids of black hair, the magnificent eyes, and the free graceful movements of the young, smiling, friendly girl who passed in and out of the saloon. Accustomed to European "foreigners" of colour very similar, but of manner sophisticated and indifferent to those about them, she found something quite unlike them here. Perfect poise, utter lack of self-consciousness, beauty, courtesy, were all evinced in the happy, yet dignified bearing of this girl. She spoke, in passing, a few words to the stewardess. A voice of flutelike quality, and English of an impeccable purity added to the mystery. As a matter of fact, she herself, entirely intent on the fact that New Zealand was to be her home, the land of her adoption, had not grasped the fact that the Maori was part of its life, inseparable and indispensable. While the books and pictures she had seen showed wonderful scenes in which Maori women and men moved among clouds of steam, or grouped themselves picturesquely before strangely beautiful houses, decorated with rather terrifying carved work; where little brown children played on the banks of rushing streams from which white puffs of steam arose, it had not occurred to her that these people lived also a normal, or what seemed to her to be normal, life among the English, Scotch, Irish and Welsh inhabitants of the land that once was theirs alone. And so, it was not till years after when she recalled her

honeymoon trip to Picton, that she realised that it was a Maori girl who had so intrigued and puzzled her.

Many, many contacts she had with these people of an ancient race in the years that followed. Deep and real was the love that grew up in her English heart. Kind, friendly, understanding, they came to her door sometimes with gifts of woven bags, containing the "kumara." "You don't like them?" asked one old woman. "You will like them soon." And she did. Such kind smiles, such desire to help the little stranger, won her heart.

She walked one day down a side street of the little town where she lived, and saw a young Maori man lying by the grassy border. Stooping, she found that he was in a drunken sleep. Afraid of danger for him because of his position, she tried to awaken him, but nothing she could do had any effect. Impossible to leave him there—what was to be done? A pakeha man came along, and seeing the state of things, said: "He'll be all right. Don't worry." She passed on her way.

"Don't worry?" Oh the pity of it! That was the attitude of those who were responsible for this handsome lad's dreadful condition. "All right" he would be. So easy it was to dismiss any thought of responsibility. What is the attitude now? Do WE say, "Don't worry?" Or do we pray in that spirit which leads to effort, to sacrifice, to loving concern for our brothers and sisters of the great race of the Maori?

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### PURPOSE

Hold high the steady lantern of your faith,  
And bank love's fire securely in the night;  
For there are those, far off, who look with hope  
And strength renewed because of this same light.

Think it not unimportant how you clear  
The trail ahead, or hold the guiding flame;  
For always someone follows where you go  
And always some one comes because you came.

Not for yourself alone, O Pioneer,  
Were ways made safe and shining, and the Stone  
Rolled from the path; but to prepare a way  
For countless journeys other than your own.

Not for yourself alone, O Pioneer,  
The inner light and faith inspired of God,  
But that all nations may be led to seek  
The clean-swept places that your feet have trod.

—R. H. Grenville.