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Te Ika a Maui

Reverend Richard Taylor (1805–1873) was an English missionary, who wrote extensively on Maori culture and the plant and animal life of New Zealand. Taylor graduated from Queens' College, Cambridge in 1828 and was ordained as an Anglican priest the same year. After serving as a curate in the Isle of Ely, Taylor was appointed as a missionary to New Zealand for the Church Missionary Society. He arrived in Australia in 1836 and landed in New Zealand in 1839. Taylor quickly became a peacekeeper between the different Maori tribes in his district. This volume, first published in 1855, provides a detailed account of Maori mythology and culture with a description of the plant life, animal life and geology of the North Island. Taylor strongly condemns contemporary (nineteenth-century) attitudes to Maori culture and demonstrates the complexity of their society in this sympathetic book.

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Te Ika a Maui

*or, New Zealand and Its Inhabitants,
Illustrating the Origin, Manners, Customs,
Mythology, Religion, Rites, Songs, Proverbs,
Fables, and Language of the Natives*

RICHARD TAYLOR



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TE IKA A MAUI,

OR

NEW ZEALAND AND ITS INHABITANTS,

ILLUSTRATING THE

ORIGIN, MANNERS, CUSTOMS, MYTHOLOGY, RELIGION, RITES,

SONGS, PROVERBS, FABLES, AND LANGUAGE OF

THE NATIVES.

TOGETHER WITH THE

GEOLOGY, NATURAL HISTORY, PRODUCTIONS, AND CLIMATE

OF THE COUNTRY;

ITS STATE AS REGARDS CHRISTIANITY;

SKETCHES OF THE PRINCIPAL CHIEFS, AND THEIR PRESENT POSITION;

With a Map, and numerous Illustrations.

BY THE

REV. RICHARD TAYLOR, M.A., F.G.S.,

MANY YEARS A MISSIONARY IN NEW ZEALAND.

LONDON:

WERTHEIM AND MACINTOSH, 24, PATERNOSTER-RROW.

MDCCCLV.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE

THE EARL OF CHICHESTER,

PRESIDENT OF THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

ÆC., &c., &c.

MY LORD,

HAVING labored many years in New Zealand under the auspices of the Church Missionary Society, and there acquired the information here presented to the Public, I cannot more appropriately dedicate this Work to any one than to your Lordship, who has so long and worthily filled the high office of its President. With sentiments of great respect, therefore, I beg to do so, and subscribe myself,

YOUR LORDSHIP'S

Most humble and obedient Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

LONDON,
NOVEMBER, 1855.

PREFACE.

IN presenting TE IKA A MAUI to the Public, it will be necessary to commence with saying, that this was formerly the only name which the Natives had for the Island, and that it is nearly identical with that which Cook first received; being literally THE FISH OF MAUI, the Maori creator, who first drew up this second Britain “from out the azure main.”

The name of New Zealand has succeeded it; and it seems a pity that so noble an appendage of the British Crown, which has been gained, not by the power of our arms, but by the voluntary consent of its inhabitants, solely through the influence of the Gospel, should still retain so unmeaning a name, which was not even given by the first discoverer. The good taste of the present age has re-named the neighbouring Continent and its attendant Isle. Van

Diemen's Land and New Holland will soon be obsolete names, being supplanted by the more euphonious ones of Australia and Tasmania. Why should not New Zealand, also, be re-named?—why not call it Austral-Britain, Australbion, or something similar? The present name is about as appropriate as those given to the provinces into which the first Governor divided the country—Ulster, Munster, Leinster, and Connaught. They have been blotted out, so let this also. Thus much for the name.

Next, with regard to the Work itself. The Author's aim has been to rescue from that oblivion into which they were fast hastening, the Manners, Customs, Traditions, and Religion of a primitive race: already the remembrance of them is rapidly being forgotten; the rising generation being almost as unacquainted with them as our Settlers in general. The Traditions of the Creation are now first presented to the Public. The late Governor Sir G. GREY has published a valuable collection of general Traditions, but I am not aware that any one has previously collected any of those here given, and few, indeed, could have done so, unless intimately conversant with the language and people. The natural features of the Islands are also described, and the Author, being a resident before it became

an English Colony, was enabled to watch the various changes it has successively passed through. Its present position, and its eligibility as a home for intending Emigrants, are also described ; but, in pointing out its advantages, he has not wilfully concealed any of its contraries. The Colony is now rapidly increasing in population and stability ; it possesses a constitution, and though, perhaps, sufficient time has not yet elapsed to make all its benefits manifest, doubtless in a few years the economical management of the public revenue, and the disinterestedness of its officers, will win for them the esteem and admiration of their fellow-colonists, and succeeding ages will regard them as the patriot fathers of their country.

The Author would here acknowledge the obligation he is under in the Natural History department to Cunningham, Dr. Hooker, Dr. Grey, and his coadjutors in the British Museum. The Illustrations, he may state, are all from sketches taken by himself on the spot, and have at any rate the merit of being faithful drawings of the various objects they represent. And with the hope that TE IKA A MAUI will not prove altogether uninteresting to the Public, the Author takes his leave.

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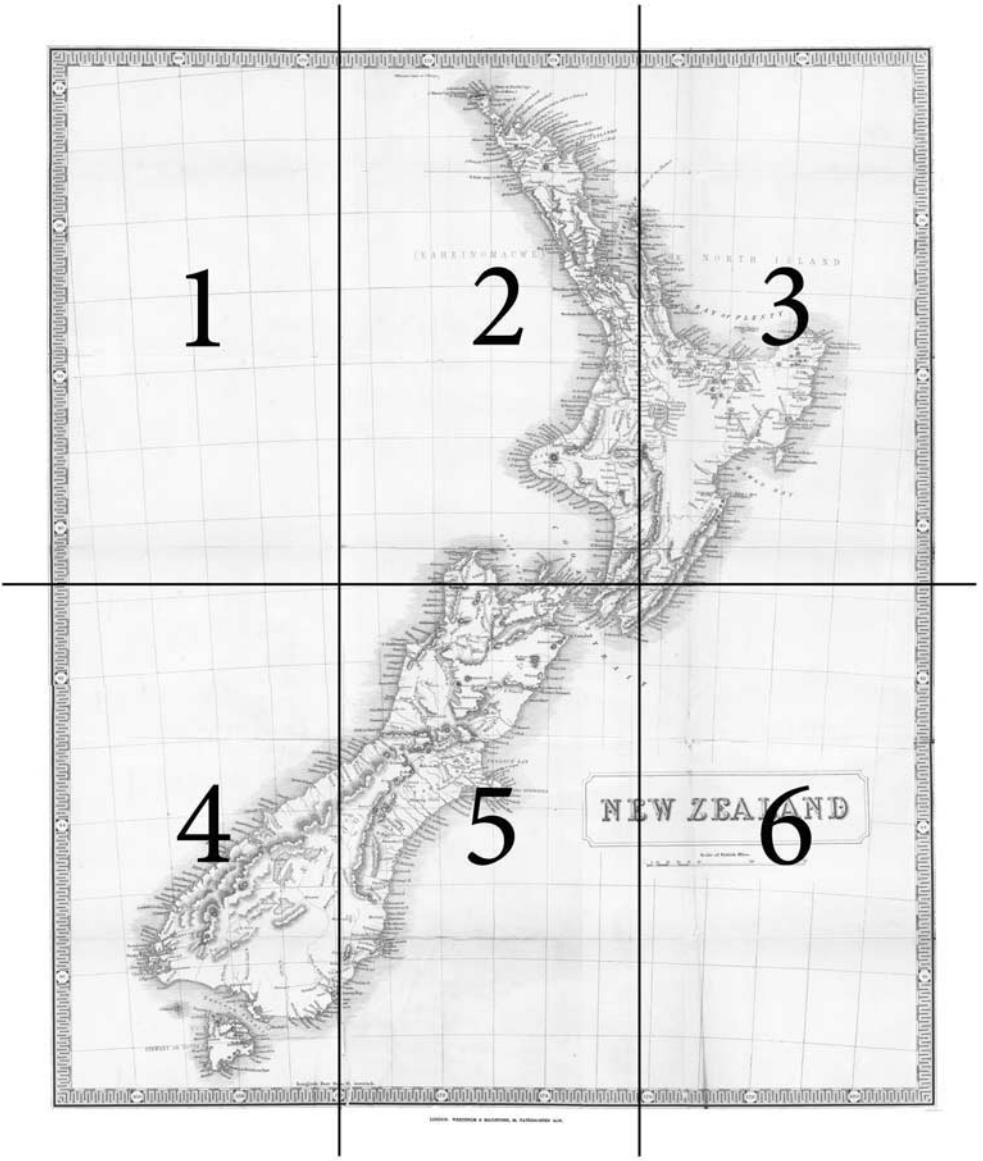
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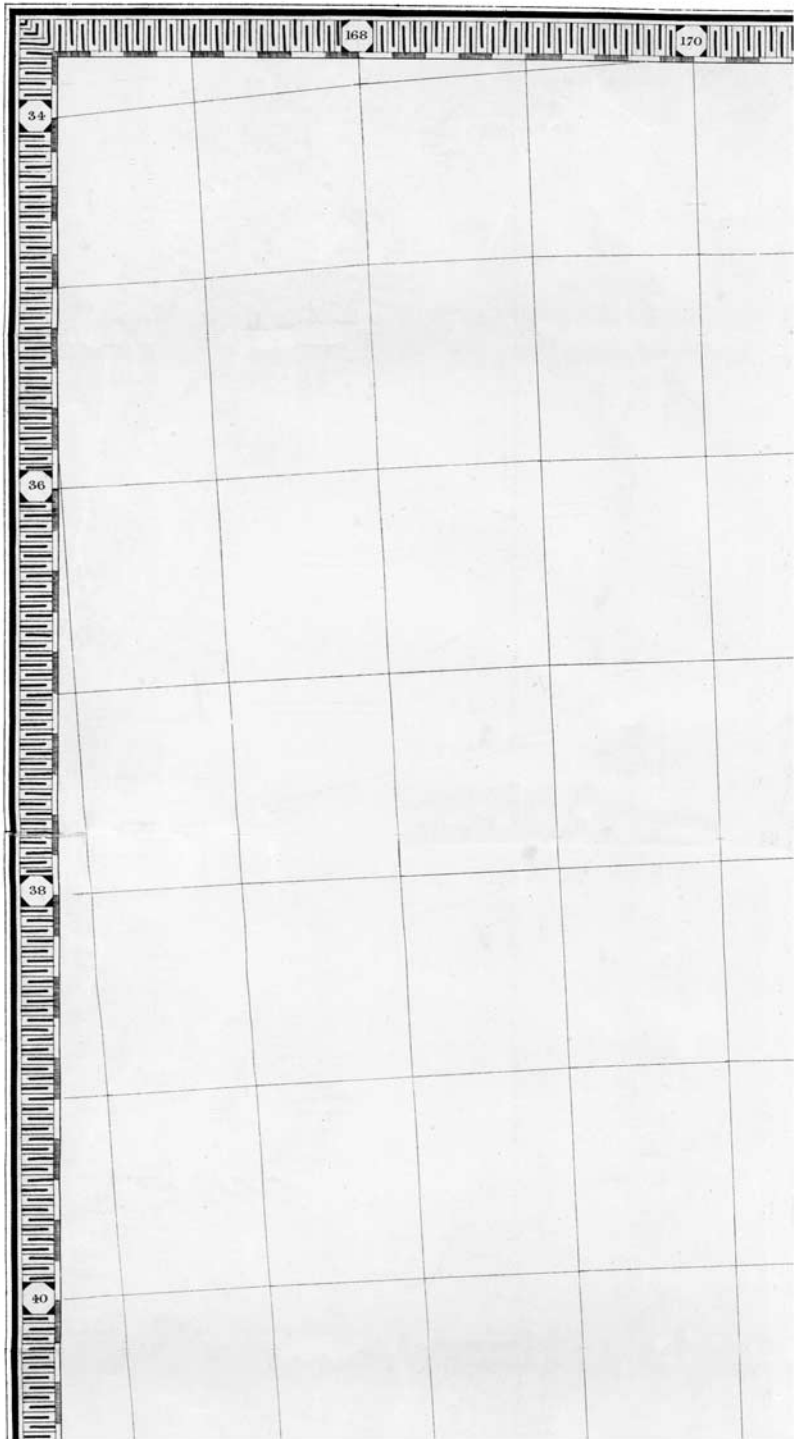
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