

particular vocation. Hoani Nahe was good enough to inform these good gentlemen of the fact that I am a newspaper reporter. Then Hori Tauroare marked, in rather a sneering tone, "Then, perhaps he's the writer of that lying newspaper that came up here the other day?" Of course I carefully undeceived Hori by explaining that the newspaper to which he referred was your contemporary, and not that bright particular star which has cast such serene and pure rays over the benighted atmosphere of all Maoridom.

#### NGARUAWAHIA TO ALEXANDRA.

We reached Ngaruawahia at half-past 2 o'clock. Here the principal residents were assembled on the platform, and received Ministers with due respect. Mr. Hunt, the very popular and courteous manager of the Waikato Steam Navigation Company had the smart little steamer "Delta" in readiness to convey the party up the Waipa to Alexandra. It had been arranged that Ministers and their suite should proceed onwards by the special train to Hamilton, and thence by coach to Alexandra; but this plan was altered. Sir George Grey appeared to be so struck with the comfortable accommodation afforded by the "Delta" that he preferred to travel by her, leaving the train to convey the Cambridge Natives to Hamilton. The preparations for embarking occupied but a few minutes, and a start was effected at 3 o'clock. I think I need say little about Ngaruawahia, which some vandal of a surveyor, or some survey office functionary, with a fatal genius for innovation, has misnamed Newcastle. Your readers know it is historic ground. It was here that Te Wherowhero, or Potatau, lived in a raupo palace, with a small army wearing a sort of livery, said army only to be realized by witnessing John Jack's "Falstaff," with his attendant Bulcalf, Mouldy, and "rag-a-muffins." Potatau—or, as the illiterate pakeha euphonized it, "Potato"—lived here in great state, and was buried with equal state in a wooden sarcophagus, from which, after the lapse of many years, his old bones were disinterred, carefully scraped and polished, and conveyed to some mysterious hiding-place, after the custom of the Maori.

#### DIGGING ROUND THE "KING" TREE.

It was here, also, that Sir George Grey, when Governor of New Zealand, held that great meeting about Kingism of which so much that is true and, I believe, a good deal more that is very far from being true, has been said and written. I take leave to say that I think the phrase, "I will dig round the tree (meaning the King) until it shall fall," was caught at by Rewi with the captious sophistry and *ad captandum* reasoning of the Maori, and wholly twisted and perverted from its original meaning. I believe that the metaphorical "digging" was to be a peaceable operation, the operation of wise and calm reasoning, of gentle and philanthropic teaching of the Kingites of the folly of their way, and a final triumph of reason over prejudice and brute force. Of course it has suited the Maoris, and some poor specimens of Europeans, to purposely distort Sir George Grey's meaning, and to continue the fraud of reiteration of a lie; but in spite of this I firmly believe he will yet accomplish his task.

#### UP THE WAIPA.

This is the maiden trip of the "Delta" up the river, and, despite the rain, it is very pleasant and comfortable travelling. The "Delta" was built at Ngaruawahia for the Waikato S. N. Co., by Mr. Alexander Niccol. She is modelled on the American river boats. She cost £3,000, including fittings, was launched a little over twelve months ago, has engines 120 horse-power actual, draws only  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet of water when loaded, has excellent cabin accommodation, is ably commanded by the genial Captain Cellam (one of whose sons was initiated into the Caxtonian mysteries in the *Star* office, and is now a most efficient printer on the *Waikato Times*), can steer alongside the bank at almost any part of the river, worm herself round bends like a figure S, and is in every respect the *beau ideal* of a Waikato river steamer. But the thing that I admired most about the "Delta" was the lunch and dinner. I cannot tell you with what tender longings I contemplated that spread. "My language to describe the same do fail," as the song says. Only a sympathetic alderman could do justice to the viands, and to the *menu* of Mr. Thomas Blackmore, the providore.

The river scenery of the Waipa is very beautiful, and, you know, you can admire scenery after a good dinner. What sort of admiration for the picturesque can you expect from a hungry man or woman? Take a picnic, for example; see the lovely creatures make an onslaught on the baskets, "tuck in" the sandwiches, and the poultry, and the jelly, and delicately "swig" the champagne; and then, while their mouths are full, you try to draw them into conversation on the scenery. I'll back "grub" against æsthetics any day in a long journey. Michael Angelo, Murillo, Correggio, Titians, Landseer, Hoyte, (stick in a local man or two), and all the tribe of famous sculptors and painters grow hungry sometimes, and, ere now, people have been known to starve on the finest paintings when they couldn't convert 'em into digestible matter. You know what a "pot-boiler" is.

But really there are some fine bits of scenery up here—little nooks surprising you at every turn, sylvan groves, overhanging copses, mossy banks lapping the water, and many-hued tinted foliage, with light and shadow alternating, blending, and contrasting in that way which no human skill can ever copy.

#### WHATWAHATA.

We make a short stay here, and the whole population—about twenty—rush down to the river bank to bid us welcome. Here, at any rate, the two races dwell together in brotherly and sisterly love. Maori and half-caste *gamins* and "young colonials" mingle together on the sand of the river bank, and vie with each other in the exercise of sound lungs. There a *wahine* squats on the extreme verge of a precipice, with her *pickaninny* carried on her back in a blanket, watching her other "young barbarians all at play;" and, just far enough off to preserve pakeha feminine dignity, is a settler's wife, attired in something that really looks like silk, and sheltered under a parasol. Then there is a real bell-topper (not battered) close by. But the mere mention of the fact that Whatawhata boasts an "own correspondent," conveys a whole volume of testimony to its civilization. May the day be not remote when Whatawhata shall boast of its newspaper also.