

known as Rochfort's Folly At Seaton's camp, in the heart of the bush, we stop for lunch, finding our dessert in konini berries, which we pluck from trees growing about the clearing. Our road abounds in bog-holes, and is thickly interlaced in places with the roots of trees, and occasionally the trunk of some large tree which had fallen right across the track obliged us to make a deviation by scrambling as best we could through dense bush. After traversing the forest for sixteen miles we enter with feelings of relief upon the Waimarino Plains, with Ruapehu glittering in its snowy mantle close to our left. A canter of six miles over the sandy undulating plains brings us at 4.30 p.m. to our resting-place for the night, an untenanted Government whare on the very margin of the forest. Our whare is a veritable lodge in the wilderness, and we feel more than ever out of the world, but wonderfully reconciled withal to our solitude. Every man has to prepare his own bed, and we are very soon busily at work cutting down wivi rushes and fern scrub to pile up on our wooden bunks. We breakfast before 8 next morning, and ten minutes afterwards are in the saddle, briskly picking our way across the plain towards the forest. After we were well into the bush we passed through a forest of totara fully five miles in length. It is said to be about the finest totara bush in the Island. It certainly introduces us to the most charming bush scenery we have yet passed through. We had travelled twenty-five miles, and the sun was fast waning when we emerged into the open scrub-clad country, and by a sharp descent reached the banks of the Wanganui. We were in Taumarunui district at last, and were not impressed by it. At the Native kainga a short halt was made while Natives welcomed the Premier and Mr Carroll. Early next morning the meeting with the Natives took place. Here we found Mr Hursthouse and Mr Tanner waiting to escort us onwards from that point.

"Next morning we parted company with many regrets from Mr G T Murray, who had piloted the party all the way from Ohingaiti. Nothing was omitted by him that could insure the comfort of the party, and no detail overlooked that was necessary to complete the programme laid down. Before 9 o'clock we were on horseback again, and off to Te Kuiti, in the King-country, fifty-two miles distant. There is a good graded road all the way, and rapid progress therefore was made. We journeyed through the valley of Ongarue, along the valley of Ohinemoa to Te Poro-o-Toroa Tunnel, and reached Mokau Railway-station at 6 o'clock. After waiting an hour for the train, we proceed down the line on jiggers to Te Kuiti, nine miles distant. Here Mr. C. Hudson, the District Manager of the Auckland Section, is in waiting to supervise the train arrangements right through to Auckland. At Te Kuiti, Mr. Lang, M.H.R. for Waipa, joined the party, and accompanied us right through the Waikato. He had just returned from a visit to Stratford, and went to the Awakino Settlement, and thence up Ohura Valley to Taumarunui. He was highly impressed with the fine quality of the land about Awakino and Ohura Valley.

"Next day was a busy one. A Native meeting was held at Te Kuiti in the morning, and another at Otorohanga in the afternoon, both immensely satisfactory, and in the evening we went on to Te Awamutu Township.

"A Visit to Rewi.

"We drove out beyond Kihikihi on Saturday morning on a visit to Rewi, the celebrated Ngatimaniapoto chief. The old man was stretched out on a mattress in front of the fire, his wife seated by his side. One glance sufficed to apprise us that he is not far from his end. He could only hear imperfectly, and could not articulate above a whisper, but all his mental faculties are apparently unimpaired.

"The Premier spoke to him through Mr Carroll, expressing his pleasure at meeting Rewi. He said he wanted to impress on his mind the fact that all the unpleasantness of the past was long forgotten. Mr Seddon inquired if it was Rewi's wish that the house and land given him by the Government should pass after his death to his stepson, as, if so, it might be necessary to vary the trust.

"Rewi signified that this was his wish.

"Mr Seddon promised that it should be done.

"The visit came to an end after Rewi requested that the Premier's remarks should be sent him in writing, so that he might read what he had not heard, and communicate it to his people.

"At Cambridge and Hamilton deputations were received.

"A special messenger was sent by Tawhiao to the Premier to explain that he would not be at Ruahanu meeting, as a relative was dying, but that he would see Mr. Seddon at Ngaruawahia.

A propos of the Premier's interview with Rewi, some reference to the celebrated affray at Orakau may not be without interest. The following poem is from the pen of Thomas Bracken, and the description given of the fight tends to illustrate that the Maoris are behind no other race in resolute valour and endurance:—

Three hundred swarthy braves at Orakau—
Savage warriors from Urewera,
And from the hills and gorges of Taupo—
Gathered together to defend the land
From the encroachments of the pakeha.
The Ngatimaniapoto were there,
Led on by Rewi Manga the fearless.
Te Paerata, famed in many fights,
Commanded the Ngatiraukawa tribe.
He was the warrior who cried aloud—
"Me mate au ki konei!" which means,
"Let us make the pa here; let us die here."
The dauntless chief Te Whenuanui,
And Hapurona of Urewera,
Headed their wild and savage warriors.
Te Waru was there with his East Coast braves,
And other chiefs famed in song and story,
Met on the spot to resist the spoilers