

Tikawe's Swan-song

A Folk-tale of Rotoiti

Specially Written for the "Weekly Graphic," by James Cowan.

ON the southern coast line of Rotoiti, the Thermal Country's loveliest lake, and not far from its western end, where it receives the overflow of Rotomā, you will see as you sail a motor-boat down the lake, a steep white-faced peninsula, island-like in its conformation, rising from the blue waters. The seaward side of the headland is precipitous and shines like chalk in the sun. The hill is flat-topped and fern-covered; at the rear it drops steeply to a low and narrow spit connecting the peninsula with the mainland. Such an eligible pa site as this would not be passed over by the ancient Maori in his search for his waterside strong-holds, and so we find that it was once upon a time a celebrated fortress of the Rotoiti people, and a populous hill-town. Its name is Motu-tawa; it was anciently occupied by the Tuhourangi tribe (whose few descendants now live in the geyser valley Whakarewareware) until Ngati-Pikiao of the strong arm clubbed and ate them out.

Sailing down past Motu-tawa one morning, with a soft westerly breeze just

of the Ngati-Pikiao tribe, the lords of all this lake and its green and curving shores. Here she lived happily in the palisaded village of her warrior clan, until it came upon a day that her husband left her on a visit to a distant tribe. He travelled down the East Coast until he reached the downs of Heretaunga which the white man calls Hawke's Bay. There he found friends in a village which stood near where the town of Napier stands today, and there he stayed, forgetful of his wife in the faraway Lakeland. And Tikawe was lonely here in Motu-tawa. Every day she would sit for hours on the edge of the cliff yonder, and gaze out across the lake at the ferny hills where the track came in from the sea and she would sing little "waitas" of love to herself, and say:—"But a little while and he will return—he will return to me."

But the days passed on, and the absent one came not. And presently the news reached Motu-tawa that Tikawe's husband had taken another wife, a young woman of the Ngati-Kahungunu,

chanted there in the midst of the silent and sorrowful tribe. This is the song she chanted; it is often sung to this day in the villages of the Arawa people:

"No tidings came of thee,
O husband, well-beloved!
I tarried long and wearily,
And then the evil word there came,
The evil word that, travelled slow—
On the shores of the Rising Sun thou dwellest,
By the waters of the Whanganui-a-Roto,
In Aitu's home,
My house-pillar has fallen, fallen;
My staff is torn away!

And now I go to death,
In my hair the Huia's plume,
Around me these soft flaxen cloaks;
Fair is the land I look upon,
Fair are the waters of Rotoiti,
The wide waters of the Koko-Hangama,
Spread out before me,
But now I gaze my fast,
No more will man approach me,
No more my body's charms entice;
Desolate am I as the forests of Tabeke;
Bitterness is within me,
I—i—e—e!

"And so," says Tamarahi, "she ended her song and she raised her head and stood erect, and she walked to the edge of yon pari, the cliff edge, and there she paused a moment, and looked her last look at Rotoiti. And then, folding her garments close about her, she jumped out off the verge of the cliff and fell and was killed on the hard rocks below! That was the way of the Maori; she could not live without her husband's love. She sang her farewell song—she leaped—she fell—she died!"

The Most Expensive House.

A house with a rental value of £60,000 a year has just been erected in the exclusive society quarters of Fifth-avenue, near Mr. Andrew Carnegie's mansion, and it is believed to be the most expensive residential building in the world (says a New York correspondent). It is an apartment house, the first one to be built in the upper Fifth-avenue district, facing Central Park, and the enormous rental will be borne by eighteen tenants, all the building will

house. Each room in the house will average £204 a year rent. The building has only just been finished, but nearly all the apartments have been taken. Among the tenants are Levi P. Murton, ex-vice-president of the United States, United States Senator Root, and United States Senator Guggenheim. Only millionaires will be able to afford the luxury of living in the apartments. Senator Root pays the highest rental—£5000 a year. The building is divided into simple and duplex apartments, the former being apartments of one floor only, and the latter occupying two floors connected by private stairways. The house has all the features of a modern private dwelling, with fine marble and wood lavishly used in all the apartments. Each kitchen is provided with a waste incinerator, which makes handling of refuse unnecessary, and in every laundry are electric drying and ironing equipments. Refrigeration is supplied by a plant in the basement of the building, ice being made on the premises. The rental, it is announced, includes the washing of windows and the cleaning of all rooms by the vacuum process.

The Largest Cheque Ever Paid.

The largest single cheque ever paid by one shipping company in London was handed over one morning in April in the board-room of the Union-Castle line in Fenchurch-street, in connection with the transfer of the Union-Castle from Messrs. Donald Currie and Co. to the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company. The cheque for £5,173,572 10s. drawn on the Bank of England by the latter company, was handed over by Sir Owen Phillips, chairman, to Sir Frederick Mirrielees and his son, partners in Messrs. Donald Currie. In exchange Sir Owen Phillips was handed a certificate for the bulk of the shares in the Union-Castle Company, numbering nearly 140,000. The cheque was paid into Messrs. Donald Currie's account at the Union Bank of Scotland, and it will be drawn by the shareholders at their convenience. The previous largest cheque in a shipping transaction in London was that of £1,347,000 paid by the Royal Mail Steam Navigation Company in September 1910.



NOT GUILTY.

"My friend, you have been sowing taro."
"No, boss, I can't thread a needle. I use safety pins and court plaster."

fanning our little sixteen-footer along, my old cruising-mate Tamarahi, told me something of its history. Not only was Motu-tawa a strong and secure retreat in time of war, but it was famous in other ways. That white lakeward precipice, sheer and unclimbable, was a suicide-cliff of much celebrity. Many Maori women, ended their lives by hurling themselves from such a height as this; and several chieftainesses took the last leap of "Whakamomori," or desperation, from Motu-tawa's cruel cliff-edge. Many primitive people, such as the American Indians, adopted the same way of ridding themselves of the burden of life, throwing themselves over the most terrible precipices in an agony of remorse or jealousy, or disappointed love. And as I listened to the touching story of the death-leap of Tikawe, sailing slowly by the story-place, I remembered that other story of an Old World white cliff from which "burning Sappho" threw herself to death in her hopeless love for Phaon. For was it not a bold precipice like unto Motu-tawa—if old Strabo's "Geography" and other classic tomes are any guide—the peninsula of Leucadia where the white cliff-face glittered in the sun, whom the great poetess of the Isles of Greece sang her swan song before she took the leap that ended all her sorrows? But listen to the legend of poor Tikawe.

Three generations ago or somewhat more in the early part of the last century there lived here on breezy Mata-tawa a young chieftainess whose name was Tikawe. She was married to a man

of the Hawke's Bay tribe, and that he declared he would never return to Rotoiti. When the poor deserted wahine learned this, she was like to die in the grief of her wounded love. She lay on the soft-matted floor of her whare, refusing all food and speaking no word.

And in the morning, when the night mists had lifted from the sleeping lake, and the sun came up over lofty Mata-whaura yonder, revealing all the soft blue beauties of lake and its green islands and forests and hill, over which the tad and the makomako gurgled, and chimed their bell-notes in the thickets on Motu-tawa's southern slope, in the morning Tikawe came forth to die. Resolved to die she was, because of the shame that had been put upon her. The people were gathering in the "marae," the village square, for their morning meal as she walked out of her house. She was arrayed as if for a festival. Around her tall and beautiful form she wore a long and handsome flaxen cloak a "korowai," of softest finest texture. On her bosom lay a green-stone "tiki," a treasured heirloom, and green-stone pendants were in her ears, and in her long and shining hair were fastened three feathers of the huia bird. With bowed head Tikawe walked slowly into the centre of the "marae," and there listened to in death-like silence by the assembled people; she chanted her pitiful "Waiata-aroha," her "Kopu poroporo-aki," her parting words of love and sorrow. It was her own dirge that she

The Rabbit's Terror!

The remarkably cheap and effective

"New Climax" Cartridge

is put forward honestly as the best everyday cartridge for everybody.

especially for rabbit-shooting. Its cost is excessively low, having regard to its genuine value. IT IS SAFE, SURE, FRESH AND QUICK. For folk with small means and for boys about the country districts, it exactly fills requirements. There is simply nothing better for rabbit-shooting.

C. A. C. "New Climax"