

The part of Rotoiti most familiar to visitors, but by no means the most beautiful part, is the Taheke arm, at the western end, where the overflow of the lake cascades out in the Okere Falls. In the northern corner of this arm once stood the largest village on the lake, Major Fox's old home, Taheke, celebrated at one time for its richly-carved houses. (One of these beautifully carved wharves is now in the Auckland Museum.) Taheke was an important place in the war-days of 1864-70, but it is a very much decayed kainga nowadays. Close to the high picturesque peak of Te Atua-rere-atu, near Taheke, where there is a Maori burial ground, is the last rest-

the steep hillside to the wahi-tapu, and there, amidst lamentations and the firing of volleys of musketry, the soldier-schoolmaster was buried. No Europeans could have more tenderly and lovingly laid their dead to rest than did the Ngati-Pikiao their good old White Chief. On the shores of the lake are many caves, of which the Maoris of past generations made use as burial places. Some of these dark cemeteries penetrate a considerable distance into the sides of the hills. In one, on the southern shore, near Ngarehu, a European exploring party discovered, besides the bones of long-gone tribesmen, a mouldering canoe, which had been sawn in half to admit it into the cave, a plough, some wood-carvings, and an old gun-barrel, so old

lected on his cruises, but most of the tales of the times of old have gone to the Reinga with the people who once paddled their war canoes on these fair waters and built their stockaded villages on every commanding headland. One tale we hear from old Poihipi concerns a brisk little battle with war-axe and spear that made the red blood flow on the silver sands just by yon woody point called Paehinahina, facing Puteko Island. In the stockade that once stood on that hill there lived Ngati-Te-Rangimunora, near akin to the Tuhourangi, and on that pretty beach they hauled up their long canoes and spread their crayfish nets to dry, just as you may see them drying in the sun to-day at some of these tiny lakeside settle-

the warriors of the pa. A fishing-net was valuable property in those days, and to give additional vigour to the avenging hands of the net-proprietors there was the hatred born of old vendettas, "bequeathed from bleeding sire to son." Ngati-Te-Rangimunora fell hammer and tongs on Tauwhitu and his men, who landed on the beach and there set to. There was sharp work for a few minutes, as stone mere crashed on skull. Spear-men lunged at each other with harp-ko-i of manuka wood, and on the white sands and in the shallow water groups of naked brown warriors fought desperately and to the death. The scrimmage did not last long. Tauwhitu was fatally speared through the body, and a number of his men were killed. The survivors took to their canoes, and made off for their lives, leaving behind them the net that had been the cause of all the trouble, and the bodies of their chiefs to fill the ovens of the Paehinahina man-eaters.

A Story of Cannibal Politeness.

Here is a vignette of savage life in the final chapter of Tuhourangi's history on Rotoiti shores, as told by old Rawiri Manuariki in the Native Land Court. After the expulsion of the Tuhourangi tribe from the Taheke side of the lake, the head war-chief of the conquering tribes, Te Takinga (of Ngati-Pikiao and Waitaha), made an expedition to the Tuhourangi's refuge-pa, the fort on the prominent peninsula of Motutawa, for the purpose of making peace. The chief of the Tuhourangi was Te Rangipuwhe (from whom the members of the present head-family of the Whakarewarewa people are descended). Landing at the Motutawa beach, Te Takinga and his men climbed the steep and narrow track that led to the marae of the palisaded village on the level brow of the castle-hill. Here they found the grim old Rangipuwhe seated in front of his house, enjoying a meal of human flesh. It was, in fact, the flesh of one of Te Takinga's warriors, killed owing to recent fighting.

As Te Takinga was on a ceremonious friendly visit, the position was rather delicate, for though each chief hated the other with a deadly hatred, neither desired to give needless offence to the other, and then, in all probability, both were heartily tired of the almost continual state of war that had existed for some years. Te Rangipuwhe's embarrassment at being discovered feasting on the flesh of his visitor's clansman was noticed by Te Takinga, who, with the politeness of the true Maori rangatira, said: "E Rang! Do not cease eating." For, as old Manuariki explained, the flesh which the Tuhourangi chief was eating was not "murdered food," but man slain in fair fight. So Te Rangipuwhe was much relieved, and in his gratitude for Te Takinga's consideration he said:

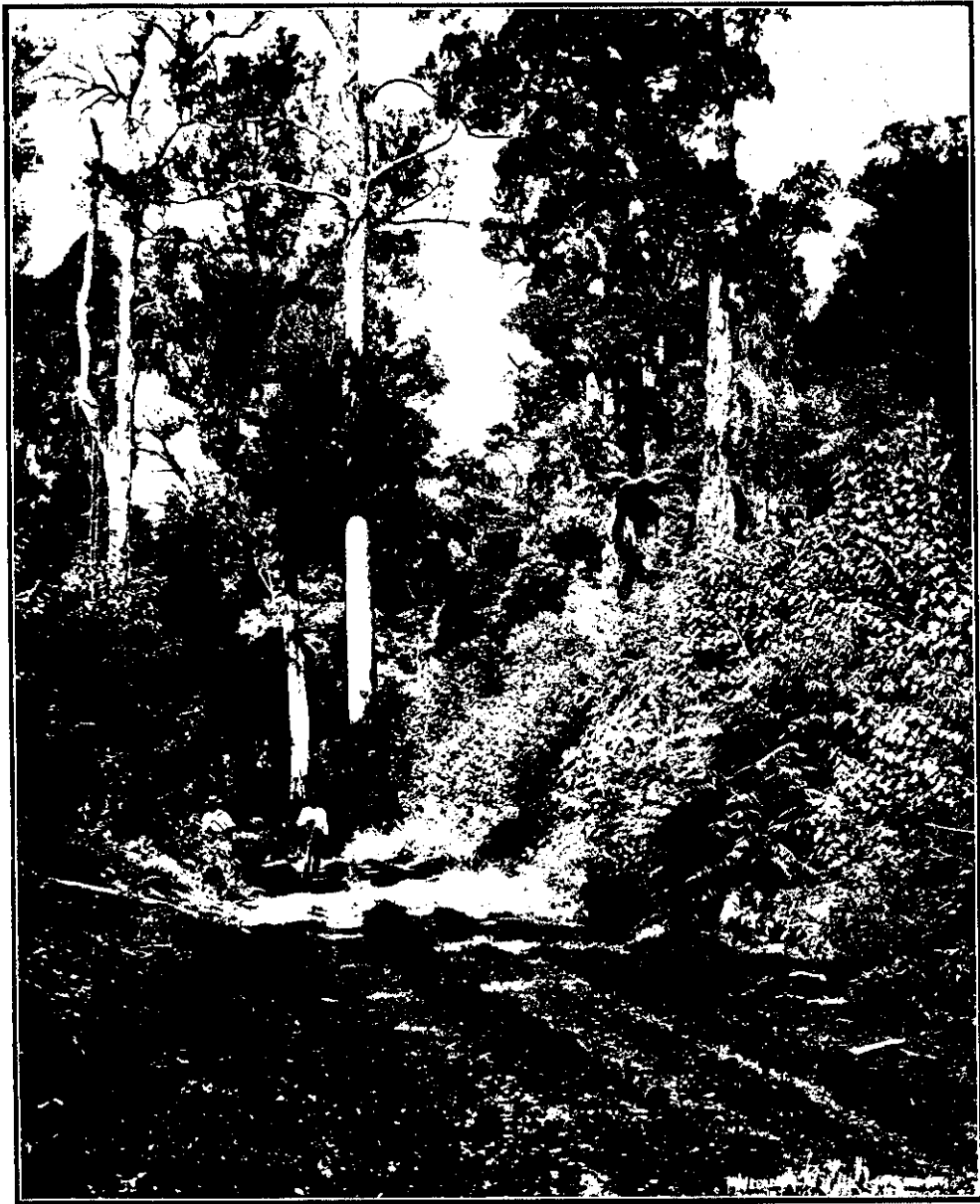
"Te Takinga, listen! I have no payment to give you for the death of your child (tribesman) whom I have been eating, no payment but one thing, and that is the land. You may have this land for your own; come and live upon it. I shall leave it and go elsewhere."

And so Te Rangipuwhe and his tribe left Motutawa, their last stronghold on the shores of Rotoiti; left it to the warriors of Ngati-Pikiao. Their grief at abandoning the village and the hunting and fishing-grounds of their ancestors was tempered with something of relief, for their position there had become practically untenable. Te Takinga and his people occupied Motutawa and all the other pas on the shores of the beautiful lake, and Tuhourangi migrated in their canoes, lures and penates, ancestral bones and aboriginal baggage, pet dogs and birds, and slaves and all. They settled for a while at Te Pukeroa pa, overlooking the boiling springs at Ohinemutu, but eventually went to Lake Tarawera and Roto-kakahi, built their stockaded villages on the shores of those water-sheets, and there made their permanent homes. They were living at Tarawera, Rotomahana, Roto-kakahi and Tikitapu when the first white men settled in the Lakeside district, and after the Tarawera eruption they shifted to Whakarewarewa.

From the chief Te Takinga, who was the son of Pikiao, the founder and great progenitor of the Pikiao tribe, to the present time is nine generations of men, or about 225 years.

A War-canoe Expedition.

The feuds between Ngati-Pikiao and Tuhourangi were revived in quite modern times. In 1853, when the tribes fought with pakaha firearms and steel



THE WELL-KNOWN HONGO'S TRACK, AT THE UPPER END OF LAKE ROTOITI, WHICH LEADS THROUGH BEAUTIFUL BUSH TO LAKE ROTOPUHI.

ing place of Major Wood, an old Imperial officer, who once belonged to the 42nd Highlanders. The Major lived with the Atawas at Taheke for over twenty years, as master of the native school, and died amongst them, mourned by the whole tribe. The natives entertained deep love and respect for the old officer, and the burial in October, 1888, was a most remarkable scene. The Maoris laid the remains of their white friend out in state for the tangi, covered with beautiful mats, the head docketed with hula and albatross feathers, and rare greenstone jewels on the breast. Then the tribesmen, after mourning ceremonies were over, bore the body on

that it crumbled at the touch. On the point above here, Ngarehu, there once stood a strong pa, and sundry fights took place round its palisaded walls in the head-hunting days. On the northern shores of the lake, too, there are some remarkable burial caves, in one of which, a gloomy rock recess, a party some time back found an ancient canoe full of bones, some of which were of such unusual size as to indicate that "there were giants on the earth in those days."

Some Tales of Old Rotoiti.

All these curving, white-beached shores of Rotoiti are rich with song and legend and historic tale. Some of these folk-poems and traditions the writer has col-

lected—but very few, these days. One day, the story goes, an armed party of Rotorna Maoris, bound on a visit by canoe to Te Takinga, the chief of the Ngati-Pikiao living at the eastern end of Rotoiti, were paddling by Paehinahina Point, when some of the "young bloods" on board thought themselves that it would be an excellent prank to steal a large net belonging to Ngati-Te-Rangimunora, which they saw hanging on its drying-posts on the beach. This suggestion was speedily acted upon, and the net was hauled on board one of the canoes. Some of the owners, however, were on the watch and raised the alarm, and very quickly the Rotorna canoe-men found themselves furiously assailed by