

It was Kupe who told Turi about this land of New Zealand. The anchor of Matahourua is lying at Paremata, at Porirua. It is a large stone of singular form, with a hole through one end.

THE LEGEND OF AOKEHU, THE TANIWHA SLAYER.

This person, Aokehu, belonged to Whanganui. He crossed the sacred sea of Raukawa (Cook Strait) to the Isle of Aropawa, where he found a tribe living, who were known as the Tini-o-Ngongotaha. He took a wife from that people, one Takanga-matua by name, and there dwelt for a long time. One day he asked his wife to re-dress his hair, which was tied up in bunches, after the manner of the ancient Maori. She did so, and as she handled his long hair, she said: "What a fine thing to cover our food with." Then the heart of Aokehu became dark within him, for this was an evil saying to a chief, indeed, it was equal to a curse. But he kept his anger in check, lest it should be observed by those people, and that he might obtain revenge in the days that lay before.

Then the thought grew that he would return to Whanganui, in order to greet his old home once more, and also, that his tribe might consent to assist him in avenging the insult received by him.

Then was he heard sighing for the foods of his native land, of Whanganui-a-Rua. "Maybe the food of my own place is seen upon the beach at Kokohuia (at Whanganui)."

And the men of the multitude of Ngongotaha asked him: "What are the foods of your home?" "The foods are the *kahawai* (fish) and dried *kumara*." They asked: "At what time should we visit your home?" "When the bloom of the *rata* is seen red from the ocean," replied Aokehu. "It is then that the land breeze will bear to you the fragrance of the *kao kumara*." So it was that those people resolved to visit the home of Aokehu.

It was then that Aokehu began to hew out a large wooden *kumete* (bowl) large enough to contain himself. He made also a cover for it, and carved both in an elaborate manner. And he saw that it was good. In

the sixth moon of the Maori year, the canoes were launched and the people of Ngongotaha entered them and went forth upon the Sea of Raukawa. As they passed Raungi-tikei and Turakina, the fragrance of the dried *kumara* was perceived. Of Whanga-ehu it was very strong, and the people asked of Aokehu, "What is this that has so fragrant an odour?" He replied, "It is the food of which I spoke. Observe the bloom of the *rata* how it gleams upon the water. That is the sign."

The tide was flowing when they reached the entrance to the Whanganui River. Aokehu said to the people of his canoe: "Place me in the *kumete* and put the cover thereon, carefully caulking all apertures with the first bloom of the *raupo*. Let the vessel containing me drift up the river ahead of your canoe, and you shall see how I hold your safety, how the river shall greet you. Even so, Aokehu entered the *kumete*, the lid was placed on it and all interstices were stopped. Then he was thrown overboard, and drifted up the river in his tub. And the Nanakia, the dread *taniwha* Tutae-poro-poro, scents his prey from afar, and his tongue licks the waters of the Awa-nui-a-Rua in anticipation of a feast. So he made for the scent of man, and the waters of the river rose around him in great waves, like unto those of the ocean. And the men of Ngongotaha gazed upon the sight with wonder and great fear.

Meanwhile, Aokehu was drifting up stream and repeating his incantations to enable him to overcome this dread monster. When Tutae-poro-poro encountered the wooden tub containing the would-be dragon slayer, he simply swallowed it, and bold Aokehu was engulfed in the stomach of the monster. But the *taniwha* rushed in pursuit of the canoes, he seized them and the Multitude of Ngongotaha have gone from the World of Life and know death. Never again shall they appear in the Ao Marama.

So Aokehu lay within his *kumete* and busied himself in cutting the lashings thereof, and emerged therefrom and took out his weapon, the blade studded with sharp teeth