

ART. XIII.—*Notes on the Birds of the Little Barrier Island.* By Captain F. W. HUTTON, F.G.S.

[Read before the Auckland Institute, July 6, 1868.]

DURING last December I spent four days on the eastern side of the Little Barrier Island, and noticed the following birds.*

Another bird also lives on the island, apparently in the cliffs, and comes out only in the evenings. Its cry is a peculiar kind of laugh, in a descending scale, and is very ridiculous to hear. I saw it twice by the light of a fire. It appeared to be rather larger than a More-pork, (*Athene Novæ Zelandiæ*), with rounded wings, and soft flight like an owl or a parrot. It was light-coloured underneath; I did not see the back; what kind of bird it was I cannot even conjecture.

It will be noticed that the Kiwi (*Apteryx Mantelli*) does not appear in this list; and, notwithstanding current reports, I am inclined to think that it is either very rare, or else does not exist on the island. I was accompanied by a very good dog, but we neither heard nor saw a Kiwi, during the whole time we were on the island. I am also informed by Mr. Barstow, of the Bay of Islands, that in 1842, Captain Wood, of H.M.S. "Tortoise," spent three or four days on the Little Barrier with the express object of catching Kiwis, but did not see one. Sir George Grey told me, that he also spent a day or two on the south-west side of the island, looking for Kiwis, but found none.

ART. XIV.—*Notes on the Basin of Te Tarata, Rotomahana.* By Captain F. W. HUTTON, F.G.S.

[Read before the Auckland Institute, July 6, 1868.]

ON the 3rd of March last, in company with Colonel Hautain, Mr. H. Clarke and Mr. Traile, I visited the celebrated hot spring of Te Tarata at Rotomahana. As we crossed Lake Tarawera, in a canoe, large volumes of steam were seen issuing from the crater, but on reaching it, about an hour afterwards, it was much quieter, very little steam ascending, and the water only half filling the basin, and evidently sinking. In about an hour's time the basin was empty, and in half an hour more, the water had receded about 10 feet down the central pipe, where it remained during the rest of our stay. The wind was light and westerly.

This phenomenon appears to be of not very frequent occurrence, as Mrs. Spencer, of Tarawera, informed me that, although she had visited the spring some fifty times, she had only once seen it empty; a few notes, therefore, on the shape and dimensions of the basin will not be uninteresting.

After the water had descended into the pipe we were enabled with safety to go down into the basin, and approach close to the edge of the pipe, and walk all round it. Unfortunately I had no means of measuring it accurately, and the following dimensions are partly from paces, and partly estimated. (See Section.)

* See names of 22 species, marked with an asterisk, in the list of birds found on the Great Barrier Island: pages 160 and 161.