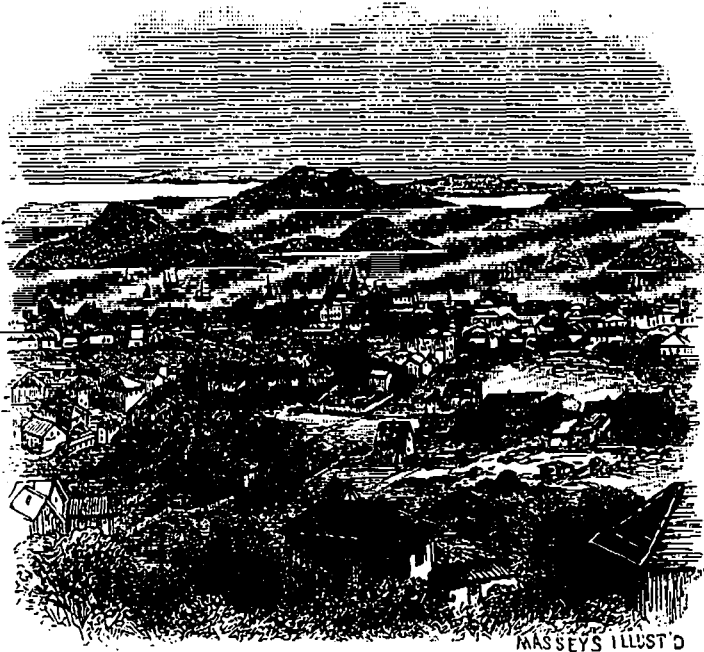


our attention, the show windows being full of all sorts of fresh vegetables and luscious strawberries—the finest and largest I ever saw. There were fine displays, too, of garden flowers in great variety—the immense size and excellence of the roses being especially noticeable.

The city of Auckland is decidedly English in its characteristics, as are most New Zealand cities. Its peculiar location, just at a very narrow neck of land connecting a large stretch of the North Island, extending to the northwest, gives the advantages of a double harbor—one on each side of the island. In going up and down its streets one cannot but admire the great variety of its sea views.



VIEW OF PART OF AUCKLAND, N. Z., AND ITS HARBOR.

New Zealand is very largely of volcanic formation, and within a radius of 10 miles of Auckland 63 extinct volcanic craters can be counted—there must have been a lively scene there at one time.

Including suburbs Auckland claims to number some 61,000 inhabitants. The natural attractions of the city are far greater than her public buildings and business blocks, which, with but few exceptions, are quite unpretentious. Her public library building, however, would grace any city. In this building is also a museum of most valuable relics in connection with the history of the colony, the district of Auckland having been the centre of the chief historical events of both the natives and whites. A Sunday in Auckland was "a rest" indeed after the lawless and immoral Sabbaths of the Pacific coast. There were no Sunday papers, no street cars, saloons were closed (back doors and front) and a general peacefulness and quiet prevailed.

We took our departure from the leading city of the North Island by the early morning train on the Wednesday after arrival, our aim being to pass through the island overland to Napier and on to Wellington, thus seeing as much of the country as possible and also embracing the opportunity of seeing the famous Hot Lake district.

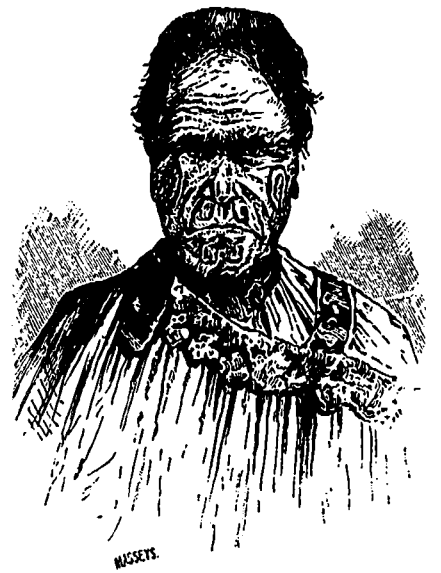
After a rather tedious ride of eight hours and a half, a continuous jolting on a "mixed accommodation" train, the cars of which were "mongrels" between the American and English styles (and the road narrow gauge), we arrived at Oxford, only a station—the terminus of the road—134 miles. The ride, however, was an interesting one. Occasional fields of new mown hay were passed and others were just being cut. In the way of scenery we were entertained by numerous views of extinct volcanoes, the distant mountain range, lovely bits of bush of elegant and stately trees, and an undergrowth of ferns, ranging in size from the beautiful New Zealand tree fern down—a perfect paradise for fern collectors. The point of view at which the road crosses the charming Waitapo river is the finest on the line. There was but little to see in the way of agricultural land.

We spent the night in Oxford and proceeded early next morning by coach to Ohinemutu, Lake Rotorua (34 miles). The road winds through and about a series of hills (extinct volcanoes), in the first and latter part barren and uninteresting, but

for a long distance through a bush and where the slopes were covered with vegetation. Besides the great variety of magnificent pine trees and other forest giants, of which New Zealanders are wont to boast, there was much that was beautiful in the undergrowth—particularly in the large numbers of different species of ferns and flowering shrubs. A New Zealand bush is a perfect fernery in itself—the great tree fern, which is indigenous to the country, winning the admiration of all tourists. The roadside was lined in places with sweet-briar, daisies, dandelions, sweet clover, and other flowering plants and shrubs with which I was unfamiliar. After leaving the bush the road again traverses a barren, hilly country for a few miles up to the pretty little lake of Rotorua, beside which is situated the little—very little—town of Ohinemutu, where we arrived in time for lunch, and were very glad of a bath and a good rest, for "coaching" in Maori-land is no better than "tagging" in California, and my remarks on the latter in a previous letter apply equally to the former—the vehicle and the character of the roads being quite similar.

Ohinemutu is the central point of the Hot Lake District, whence excursions are made, and is properly the name of a Maori village (*pah*) situated on a point of land running out into the lake, but is likewise applied to the small village of whites close by. The chief features of it are three or more small hotels for the accommodation of tourists; there is also a government sanatorium for invalids who go for the baths, there being scarcely a

limit to the various mineral, iodine, iron, and combination baths of every consistency from thick mud to the clearest water, and of any degree of heat from the boiling point down; for "in the Hot Lake District are geysers and springs as endless in variety as they are countless in number." No sooner had we finished a good lunch than we began exploring some of these springs near the hotel, our curiosity not allowing us much time to rest. It will be almost impossible, for me at least, to convey to you anything like a correct idea of these marvellous springs, as compared to which the hot springs at Banff, spoken of before, are as nothing. However, I will try to tell you something of them. As one stands in the doorway of the hotel steam may be seen rising in a score or more places, within a radius of half a mile. Naturally we proceeded to the



MAORI TATOOING.

nearest point, where the most vapor was rising, and found ourselves facing a pond of boiling sulphur water, some sixty or more feet across, and, as we neared it, we found the ground soft and pliable. Close at hand were other smaller boiling ponds—even the ground surface near to them being hot. All about us were springs and steam holes. Here, a gurgling sulphur spring boiling hot; there, a groaning mud spring; behind us, a hole from which came a seething noise and sulphurous smell, forcibly reminding one of the infernal. It is decidedly nervous work exploring these springs in places, and dangerous, too, for a mis-step or two might plunge one into a boiling cauldron, or let him through the soft surface into boiling mud. I was informed that many had thus been seriously scalded and some fatally.

From this group of springs we walked over to the *pah* (native village), passing several other springs on the way, the region about the town abounding in them. Near the entrance to the *pah* the natives had made artificial basins for some of the cooler springs, and here, morning and evening, the Maori men, women, and children enjoy the bath of which they are so fond.

As before stated, the Maori race is inferior to the Hawaiian in almost every particular, though, at the same time, there is a striking resemblance between the races. The Maori face, however, seems rather fiercer to me. The Maoris have not made the same progress, though they have had equal opportunity. As a class they do not dress as well—especially the men, the shawl-like costume sometimes worn being less civilized. The Maori, too, still clings to his grass hut (*whare*) which at best is inferior to the grass house of the Hawaiians. At



A BOILING MUD CRATER.