



UNITED WITH THE "TRIP HAMMER."

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ROUND THE WORLD,
*Run through the OCCIDENT, the ANTIPODES,
and the ORIENT.*

Extracts from a series of letters written to the employés of
Massey Manufacturing Co., by W. E. H. MASSEY, Esq.)

NEW ZEALAND.
*Fifth Letter, dated S.S. "Lusitania," March 1st,
1888.—Concluded.*

It was a cloudy morning when we started by coach for Napier and bade farewell to the region of countless springs and geyser wonders. The long and fatiguing drive across the high plateau—an extensive plain of waste and desert land—was rendered none the more enjoyable by a cold, chilly wind, which made all the coach passengers rejoice at the open hearth fire at the midway station. When a halt was made for lunch, though it was New Zealand summer time. The afternoon drive was, however, more pleasant and the latter part interesting in the extreme, the road winding in and out, up and down amongst the mountains, at times commanding fine views.

Our coach, though not a heavy one, was drawn by five horses, and it was a pleasure to see the dexterity with which the driver would make the sharp and often dangerous curves—the horses going on the trot almost continuously. On one of the highest and most dangerous curves one of the horses broke, but by prompt and skilful management the driver avoided accident.

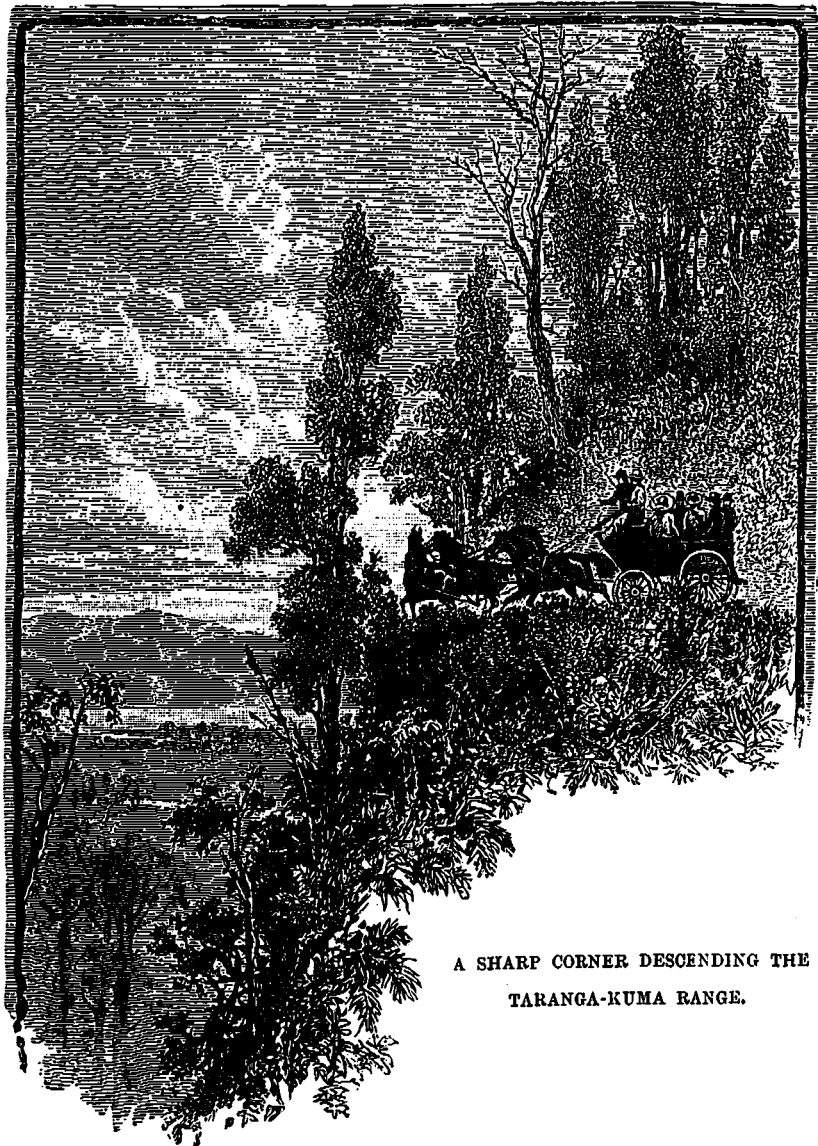
The end of the first day's journey was Tarawera* (2,600 feet), a small settlement in the mountains, where we put up for the night. Seven o'clock the next morning found us on the way again, and the next two miles of driving before us was destined to be of such varied interest as to cause one to forget fatigue—indeed so charming were the sights that one felt fully compensated for the previous tiring, and monotonous coach journey. I here remark, however, that there being no railway, "coaching" is the only way of going from Auckland to Napier, and no one will ask for a railway who is privileged to drive the last fifty or sixty miles. The road winds through a series of lovely valleys, over hills covered with an endless variety of ferns and patches of wild flax, now through a forest and then across or alongside a beautiful mountain stream.

The first long continuous climb was 1450 feet up the Taranga-kuma, at the summit of which my aneroid

barometer registered 2,600 feet. The road here was very zigzag, and at each successive ascent commanded a grander view; that from the top being superb. From this a rapid descent of 1700 feet is made by a round-about route with many sharp and unavoidably dangerous turns. Then again there was a long climb across the Titiokura Range (2300 feet). When near the summit a very heavy shower came on, which fortunately lasted but a short time, for it made it exceedingly dangerous, causing the horses to slip a great deal. The driver increased our comfort but little by pointing down a frightfully steep precipice and relating the fate of a coach which had gone over at that point. When we stopped at noon for lunch, the best part of the day's drive had been accomplished, the remainder of the road to be traversed, though fine,

being less interesting. For a long distance we followed the course of the River Esk through a narrow valley or gorge, finally actually fording the stream forty-seven times. The river so-called is a good-sized stream, averaging about twenty-five feet in width, the water frequently being up to and sometimes over the hubs. I need not say this fording process got monotonous. Once away from the Esk River, our route was over a most excellent gravel road through the broad and beautiful Petane Valley, lined with well-kept rural cottages and grounds. There were a few small farms, and in several fields barley was being harvested.

After leaving Petane the road followed the Napier harbour for a few miles, thence over the "shingle" and across the inlet of the harbour by a long bridge into the town of Napier.



A SHARP CORNER DESCENDING THE
TARANGA-KUMA RANGE.

* Another Tarawera, not the great volcano.