

be seriously impeded by more minute questions amongst a people always jealous of inquiries into their numerical strength, and whose minds are now full of suspicion and distrust of the Pakeha and sore from fancied injuries. Nor could personal observation do much in the absence of inquiry. At almost every kainga I came to, I found the people or a considerable part of them away; away to Hawke's Bay to work for the Pakeha and get money; to the coast to trade, or visit friends; to the woods to get birds; or to distant cultivations. I had then to wait a day till such of them as were within reach could be summoned to hear the Governor's message; and in most instances I secured the principal Chief. Their kaingas and whares afford but a vague criterion, as one man may have more than one kainga; but the extreme smallness of their kaingas is very remarkable, except at Ahikereru, seldom exceeding seven or eight whares; and Ahikereru, returned in the census of 1851 at 132 souls, we found absolutely empty, although after a day's delay we contrived to get about 40 men and women mustered.

In social condition the Urewera are somewhat backward, as might be expected from their local position with no port, no roads, and no resident Pakeha except a respectable trader at Ruatoki. There is a perceptible difference between those who live in the open country of Waimana, Ruatoki and Rangitaiki, and those who live in the wooded mountains of Ruatahuna. The former plough their land, have sledges and drays and grow a little wheat, and have generally a steel mill at the kainga, and are dressed nearly up to the average Maori style. The latter have a few horses and a very few head of cattle, but no ploughs or wheat. At the wildest kainga you see the unfailing iron pot, and almost always an iron kettle; but camp ovens, pails, pannikins, knives, forks, spoons, and plates, of which a few specimens are generally to be found in a coast kainga, are well nigh unknown in Ruatahuna. Soap appears to be quite unknown, judging by their appearance. The children generally run about naked; and blankets and roundabouts, shirts and trowsers, are much scarcer than amongst the coast tribes; here you may still see both men and women clad solely in one or two *kokas* (shaggy flax mats). Saddles are almost unknown, and I have seen a young hero come galloping up to the kainga in very showy style with a slip of flax knotted round his horse's lower jaw for sole caparison of his steed, and a dirty sheet knotted on the left shoulder for himself. A little pig-trading with Whakatane and Opotiki is almost the only way they have found to get European goods. Pigeon and kaka-killing has become quite a branch of industry in Ruatahuna. The former are killed in two ways, either by spearing or by setting a *waka*, i.e., trough of water in a tree in the forest; after the pigeons have become accustomed to drink from this *waka* snares are set in a row so as to hang over it, and the pigeons going to drink as usual, stick their heads in, get caught and strangled. So intensely stupid is this bird that even when a row of the dead bodies of his kind leaves but a single gap where a bird can come to drink, to that gap he goes! The kaka is killed with the help of a decoy bird. The man concealed under some branches makes his decoy scream; down comes a kaka and pitches on the slanting stick at the bottom of which is the decoy, and sidles down closer and closer till the concealed Maori can knock him over. We were a little too early in the season to witness this sport (?) or partake of its fruits. But in the month of June the Maoris kill immense numbers of birds in this way, pot them down in their own fat, and sometimes sell these *huahuas* for perfectly astounding quantities of blankets, axes, pots, &c., to Natives whose open country debars them from such luxury. In every kainga we came to, we saw two or three or more decoy-kakas fast to stands, each in front of his owner's hut.

As an instance of the hold which their old superstitions still have on this people, it was curious to see what a lion they made of one of my men who came from Muriwhenua, near the Reinga, near North Cape. This always got wind, and every evening little Paoriui might be seen squatted in the midst of a group of admiring hearers, scratching plans on the ground and setting up bits of stick, the better to describe the "Rerengawairua" (departing point of spirits), and describing the different appearances of spirits, young and old, Maori and Pakeha.

The following story shows the hold which their old feuds still have upon them. Above thirty years ago, a Maori Chief of the Rangihouwhiri (part of the Ngatiawa living at Matata) named Te Tai, was murdered by an Urewera Chief now living. Some time ago some correspondence took place about the murder, and the Urewera said that if the Rangihouwhiri wanted satisfaction for this murder, "they had better come and take it." This murder had been in revenge for two or three Urewera Chiefs who had been killed by the Rangihouwhiri. Very recently, Wepiha (Chief of Whakatane) and his relations wished to find a wife for a cousin of theirs called Karanema, and proposed for the niece of Te Hura, the Chief of the Rangihouwhiri. Te Hura refused, casting in Wepiha's teeth the murder of his papa, Te Tai, by the Urewera, and demanded instead that Wepiha and Karamea, who are closely connected by blood with the Urewera, should be killed as "utu" for Te Tai. This word found favour with the Rangihouwhiri, and thereupon Wepiha wrote a letter to all the men of Urewera to ask if they were willing that this should be so. I was present when this letter was read aloud to a public meeting at Ruatoki. Naturally enough some rather excited speeches followed; they agreed to go down to fight the Rangihouwhiri. Afterwards, in consequence of speeches from Mr. Fulloon, who is related to Wepiha, they agreed only to send word to Wepiha that they would go and fight the Rangihouwhiri, as "words did not kill." And Wepiha's letter was to be forwarded to all the men of the Urewera. I afterwards learnt that Wepiha, having first satisfied himself that the Rangihouwhiri had been well frightened by this threat, wrote to his friends not to come, and probably Karanema will get the girl.

During the time I was travelling on the coast, a young Chief of Rangitaiki, Paora Kingi, married a girl, Maori fashion, and lived with her for a week; her relatives came to visit her, and under pretence of speaking to her apart, carried her away with them. However, I afterwards learnt that the girl managed some time afterwards to escape and rejoin her husband. It is to be hoped that the new Runangas, if established amongst the Natives, will induce them to abstain from