

has a temperature of from 50° to 110°, according to the set of the wind and proximity to the hot springs by which it is fed. These exist chiefly at the neck of the promontory on which the village stands, where they bubble, hiss, gush, and run into the cooler water of the lake. Others emerge through the soft siliceous bottom of the lake itself, and the bather is not unfrequently made aware of their presence by the sudden sting of a boiling jet when he sets down his foot. This, however, is not attended with any bad consequences, if he catches up his foot instantly, as he is pretty sure to do. This bay is the daily resort, morning and evening, of the whole population of the neighbouring village, and it is capable of accommodating regiments of soldiers at one time. It affords the finest conceivable opportunity of establishing a great sanatorium for Indian regiments.

There are isolated hot springs in other places near to the village, which could be easily adapted for bathing purposes. At a distance of a couple of miles is a group of most remarkable *puias*, the principal of which, Whakarewarewa, occasionally throws up a column of hot water to a height of 50 or 60 feet. Several others sputter, hiss, and heave in the same neighbourhood. These might, I think, be all utilized by a little hydraulic skill. At any rate, Ohinemutu and its surroundings can hardly fail to become one of the principal bathing-places in the country.

Leaving Ohinemutu by a new road which the Government of the colony is at present constructing, and passing by Tikitapu Lake, with its waters of sapphire blue, and the more homely shores of Rotokakahi, Wairoa, at the head of Lake Tarawera, is reached. From this spot guides and canoes are taken for the trip to Rotomahana and the celebrated White and Pink Terraces. After a sail or paddle across the very picturesque Tarawera of six or eight miles, and a walk of a couple of miles, or a pull up a narrow creek for the same distance, the foot of the great Tarata is reached.

It is not my intention to dilate on the wonderful and beautiful which abound in connection with Rotomahana and its terraces. I wish rather to draw attention to the different groups of springs, with a view to their sanitary use. At the same time, the idea that these majestic scenes may one day be desecrated by all the constituents of a common watering-place, has something in it bordering on profanity. I would not suggest that their healing waters should be withheld from the weary invalid or feeble valetudinarian. Doubtless their sanitary properties were given them for the good of suffering humanity, and that they should become the Bethesda of New Zealand would detract nothing from the sanctity and grandeur. But that they should be surrounded with pretentious hotels and scarcely less offensive tea-gardens; that they should be strewn with orange-peel, with walnut shells, and the capsules of bitter beer bottles (as the Great Pyramid and even the summit of Mount Sinai are), is a consummation from the very idea of which the soul of every lover of nature must recoil. The Government of the United States had hardly become acquainted with the fact that they possessed a territory comprising similar volcanic wonders at the forks of the Yellow River and Missouri, than an Act of Congress was passed reserving a block of land of sixty miles square, within which the geysers and hot springs are, as public parks, to be for ever under the protection of the States; and it will doubtless take care that they shall not become the prey of private speculators, or of men to whom a few dollars may present more charms than all the finest works of creation.

I beg to suggest to the Government of New Zealand that as soon as the Native title may be extinguished, some such step should be taken with regard to Rotomahana, its terraces, and other volcanic wonders. It is to the credit of the Maoris that they have hitherto done all in their power to protect them, and express no measured indignation at the sacrilegious act of some European barbarians who, impelled by scientific zeal or vulgar curiosity, have chipped of several hand's breadth of the lovely salmon-coloured surface of the Pink Terrace.

I will endeavour, as briefly as possible, to describe the principal features of Rotomahana, premising, however, that no description can convey a correct idea of what they are. A day spent among them is a new sensation, and must be felt to be understood.

The Tarata, or White Terrace, rises by a succession of chiselled steps, varying in height from one to six or eight feet each, till it attains an elevation of about eighty feet above the lake. Here, backed up by a semicircular wall of red rock, on the level plateau of the uppermost terrace, is the great boiling *puia*, the downward flow of whose waters, impregnated with impalpable white silicious sediment, has, in the course of centuries, deposited the "tattooed" rockwork of which the Tarata is composed, and from which it has its name. This great boiling *puia* at the top is intermittent, and dependent, it is said, in that respect, on the direction of the wind, which, however, may be doubted. At times it sinks into its perpendicular funnel, leaving its rocky sides bare for hours. At other times it throws its water up to a height of 10 or 15 feet, till it gradually fills up its crater, and overflowing its beautifully rounded lip glides down in endless broken ripples over the faces of the descending terraces till it reaches the lake below. In the course of its descent it fills a great number of cisterns between the different walls of the terraces. The water deposited in these is of the most exquisite turquoise blue, or something more beautiful than that, and there it lies semi-transparent and still, surrounded in every instance by a beautifully defined and often sculptured rim of the nearly snow-white rock of which the terrace is composed. I say nearly snow white, because it appears so in the bright sun and at a little distance, but when close at hand and looked down upon, it is seen to have a delicate, almost imperceptible, rose colour, which spreads over it like a blush on the human face, or still more resembles the tinted marble of some modern sculptors.

The temperature of the various cisterns in the terrace depends partly on that of the surrounding atmosphere, but chiefly on the length of time which may have elapsed since the overflow of the boiling *puia*. When it overflows, the cistern next to it and on the same level, which is only separated from it by 5 or 6 yards of snowy rock, is nearly as hot as itself, and far too hot for the bather, who must then resort to cisterns lower down, and of less size and depth. But when the upper *puia* has not overflowed for some hours, the cistern next to it attains a temperature just cool enough to be pleasantly borne, and perhaps, of all the baths in the world, affords to the swimmer the most glorious "header." It is about 10 or 12 yards in diameter, a perfect circle, with a rounded lip overhanging inwards, and its exquisite pale blue depth (unlike the colour of any other pool) cannot, I believe, be fathomed by any plunge, however energetic. But its greatest charm is that instead of the sharp shock which goes through one like a knife on diving into a cold pool or the open sea, and which makes