

of them were taken to some of the European settlements and sold at prices ranging from 5s. upwards. Two evils affect these Natives, and both of them were referred to by Hiraka te Rango in his reply to the Premier's address. One is the Native love for *waipiro*, and the other is the contaminating influence of the low-caste Europeans who infest all these Native districts right through to Pipiriki. As to the first evil, we were assured that nearly every second Native is concerned, either directly or indirectly, in dispensing *waipiro*. The liquor is brought up from European settlements, and, after being adulterated with methylated spirit, is retailed to customers of both races.

The special reporter observes "We left Moawhango at 10.20 a.m. yesterday, and arrived at Karioi (29 miles) at 3 in the afternoon. Mr McDonald (manager for Mr Studholme) hospitably entertained the whole party. We set out this morning for Pipiriki (33 miles), and to-morrow go on to Taumarunui, through the Waimarino country, the river route having been abandoned. It was represented to the Premier that it would take five days to pole up the river to Taumarunui. So far, Captain Edwin has been singularly kind to us. We have every promise of lovely weather to-day. Karioi is worth some notice, but I must leave it to my next."

"KARIOI.

"The first stage of our journey to Karioi was on the backward track—that is to say, we had to return along our route of the previous day as far as the point from which the road to Taupo diverges from that to Karioi.

"The next five miles of our road was over broken country (the block being the Motukawa) with a gradual ascent until, on rising from the basin of the Moawhango, we had attained an elevation of 2,600ft. above the sea-level. We were keeping close company with the Central Railway route, which lay at a distance of a couple of miles or so to our left. Once out of the Moawhango basin, with its clumps of bush and green little hummocks, the road gradually descended for three miles. Eight miles from the Moawhango basin we enter upon a tract of level country which lies at an altitude of 400ft. above Karioi. At Turangarere, where Mr C. Mitchell (a squatter on Maori land) has his woolshed and residence, we part company with Mr Batley, his sister, and two of their lady friends, who had so far accompanied us.

"Up to this point all the way from Ohingaiti the land had been of excellent quality, so much so that Mr Carroll had been strongly impressed with it.

"At a distance of fourteen miles from the Moawhango basin we have risen to a height of 2,800ft. above the sea-level, and from this point we obtain our first glimpse of Ruapehu, mantled in snow. For the next forty-eight hours it remains within the line of vision.

"Ten miles from Karioi the road from that place to Taupo diverges to our right. We are traversing a silent uninteresting country, covered with a light growth of native grass, studded at intervals with boulders of limestone. Bush shuts in the distant horizon on either side. The road-cuttings display the all-pervading pumice at a depth of a few inches beneath the surface. The hill-tops and ridges show soil of a better quality. Still, there is nothing arid or dreary in the aspect of the landscape. The land, poor as it is, all carries sheep. But throughout the first twenty miles of the Murimotu country there is not a single habitation. Mr Studholme holds a lease from the Natives of two blocks of land, comprising between them 240,000 acres, upon which he has depastured eighty thousand sheep, whose wool was being carted to Huntville when we passed through the Awarua Block. Mr. Studholme has an excellent manager in Mr. McDonald, whose headquarters are at Karioi, where he has lived for the past twenty years. We were very hospitably entertained by Mr McDonald that night.

"We set out from Karioi at 9 a.m. on Saturday with a benediction from Ruapehu in the form of a shower. It did not last long, however, and we had glorious weather for the greater part of our day's journey. Two miles from Karioi we pass by the Native kainga of Waione, enter the bush, and note a marked improvement in the soil. From this point there is an unbroken forest all the way to Mount Egmont.

"Just beyond Waione we come across the last stretch of road which is in course of formation by the co-operative contractor. One man of a superior stamp we saw at work, and were told that he was a Dublin University man. He possessed Molesworth's Pocketbook and Chambers's Logarithms, and with their help he was accustomed to work out his quantities. Two miles further on we are pointed out a tract of land that is to become a small-farm settlement. Fifty sections had been taken up under the lease-in-perpetuity system about a year ago, but only two settlers have taken up residence on their land.

"Five miles still further on, nine miles from Karioi, we reach Ohakune, a Government reserve. This clearing was made three years ago. Several buildings have been erected upon it. Six more miles of travel and we arrive at a small Maori kainga called Toanui, the entire population of which—three generations of one family—come out and offer a hearty welcome. The principal man is Winiata, and, finding he has two Ministers before him, he acts on the motto '*Carpe diem*'. He is concerned for the preservation of the graves of the ancestors of his hapu, who lie buried on various hill-tops on the Waimarino Block, now belonging to the Government. Will the Premier reserve these sacred places?

"Mr. Seddon could not give any definite pledge on the subject. He would consult the Minister of Lands, and see what Mr. Baker, Commissioner of Crown Lands, had to say. He thought the simplest plan would be to exhume the bones interred in these various hill-tops, and bury them in the new cemeteries, where a stone might be raised to rescue from oblivion the names of those interred beneath. He felt pleased at finding amongst the Maoris such a reverential feeling for their dead.

"A short distance further on we chanced upon a free selector and his family, who had arrived from Sandon the previous day and pitched their tent by the hillside. The wife and mother