

on it, like all the rest—two nice little boat-harbours, a tiny creek and pool of fresh water, fern-tree groves, and open bush, but, above all, no sandflies. I saw the sites of very old Maori camping-places, I am almost sure; but I did not stay long, for it was fine and calm, and I wanted to make the most of it. At all events, this would be the most likely place, from its freedom from flies; and a nicer place they could not find. There are a great number of small islets south of Anchor Island. I do not think half of them are marked on my map. Noman's Island is high, and steep-sided. I have not been round it, but it looks as if there was no landing on it. Indian Island has plenty of boat-harbours on its west and north sides, and in the centre it rises as high as Flagstaff, with many cliffs and stony faces, otherwise all bush.

In all this place a level piece of ground is such a rarity that, if ever I met a piece the size of a room, I carefully examined it to see if it is not the site of an old camp, and it generally turns out to be such. I saw such places about the middle of the north side, near a creek. Here we saw a very old but sound log that had been used for a raft. We went into all the harbours, to get acquainted with them in case we should ever need them. It was evening when we got to Cascade Cove, which is opposite, on the mainland, and I was looking for a camping-place in the bush when I stumbled on an old iron chimney, and the last remnants of a hut, 8ft. by 10ft. by 5ft. high. At the back was a box, containing a few tools and a lot of sundries. It had been roofed with a few pieces of board, which are now decayed, and everything was destroyed with the wet. There were saplings growing on the floor 3in. thick, so that the place must have been many years deserted. Probably whoever lived there intended to return, but got lost or wrecked.

Cascade Cove is a long, straight inlet, running south-west, with a big stream coming in at the end, where there is a fine sloping valley—the most likely place for a settler in Dusky Sound. The hills around are low, and pleasant-looking, but all are covered with everlasting bush, so that there is not room for a tent. Further to the south-west, and near the coast, there are downs with tussock, which I will visit some day.

Next morning, on the west end of Long Island, we saw a wretched old camping-place under an overhanging cliff, where there was a midden of shells, mostly black mussels and limpets—the poorest of food and the poorest shelter—so that whoever camped there had hard times for a while.

I am, &c.,

RICHARD HENRY.

APPENDIX No. 9.—EXPLORATIONS.

REPORTS ON EXPLORATIONS: ASCENT OF MOUNT RUAPEHU; SOME PLEASANT SPOTS IN TARANAKI; ROUTE FROM WESTLAND TO CANTERBURY, VIA WHITCOMBE'S PASS; KARANGAROA RIVER AND PASSES TO CANTERBURY.

AN ASCENT OF MOUNT RUAPEHU.

I LEFT Raetihi on the 4th April in fine weather, and camped under the mountain that night. The 5th was fortunately a fine, bright day on the mountain, though heavy clouds lay below us, and it was a dull, cloudy day in the surrounding district. We started at 6.30 a.m. under favourable circumstances, being well equipped for the ascent. Keeping to the eastward of the precipitous southern peak, we reached the snow at 9 o'clock; and, as the recent fall of snow had not melted below 6,500ft., we had from here a snow ascent. A large "field" lay in front of us, nearly two miles in extent, and reaching right to the lip of the upper crater on the south-east of the mountain. The first half-mile was good walking, but then the snow got harder and the ascent steeper, and we had to cut footsteps from a little over 7,000ft.; but, as the snow was not very hard, our task was not a tedious one, and it was not necessary to "rope up."

We reached the top at 11.15 a.m., and the crater lake lay below us—rather a different scene from what was presented a year previously. Last Easter the lake was of a beautiful green colour, apparently cold, with a sulphurous deposit on the surface here and there, its snow-clad walls presenting a scene of frigid grandeur. Now the lake was of a milky colour, with steam rising from its surface, and surrounded on all sides but the east by a beach from half a chain to a chain in width. The lake is 10ft. or 12ft. lower than I have ever seen it. I took two "shots" with the camera. The cold was not severe, the thermometer only going down to 36° in the shade, and 40° in the sun. Lunch over, we were eager to reach the lake itself, and, ascending along the brink of the upper crater to some rocks, we got an easy descent to the great snow-field filling in the southern part of the crater-basin, and extending to the lake or inner crater. The snow being in splendid order, and the slope easy, we went down with a run. The snow-field ends precipitously at the lake in glaciers some hundred feet high, and much rent with crevasses, presenting a grand and impressive sight. I first tried to descend down a crevasse on the south, but it was impracticable, and I fell through the snow into a narrow hidden crevasse, but was not in difficulties, as I kept to my pole. We then tried the place to the south-east that I recommended in my report of last year, and here we had better success. Before descending I took the precaution to "rope up," my two men holding on while I went forward. This was done as a precaution, but I found no great difficulty, and soon all three of us were on the margin of the lake, after making the rope fast to the rocks above to help us up. With a little care the crater may be descended at this place without the aid of a rope, and it appears far the best place to get down. Only two other places seem practical for a descent—on the north-east and north-west sides, but at either a rope would probably be required.

I tried the temperature in the main body of the lake, and it registered 128°. The margin of the water was covered with blocks of very friable scoria, among which were innumerable small boiling springs, causing a dull weird sound. I could not obtain the temperature of these springs, as