

wakaiho and up a spur to the summit. The route was a very difficult one, but in those days, with no tracks, the only one available.

The Provincial Government of Taranaki, about the year 1875-76, spent a considerable sum in making a bridle-track over the ranges to the swamp, between the Pouakai Ranges and the mountain. The track was *via* the Mangorei Road, a clearing being made at a suitable spot, about 800 ft. from top of ranges, for horses, and a camping-ground. There was also another camping-ground at Holly Flat, below Sinclair's Table, on south side of swamp, and for years this was the usual track to the mountain. The ascent was a hard one, the trip taking several days, though the scenery was magnificent.

The present Egmont Track was made about 1890, and is a continuation of the Egmont Road.

Then follow the Stratford Track, *via* the Pembroke Road, which was cut out, and due to the energy of Messrs. Curtis and Penn of that town. Later on the Manaia Track, *via* Dawson's Falls, was located by the residents of Manaia and surrounding districts.

The Surrey Road Track was cut out in the first instance by Mr. Speck and his boys.

The Rahotu Track, *via* Kahui Road, of recent date, is not quite finished. From that side the early settlers followed up Stony River to a spur, and on that way to the summit.

These make in all six tracks to the mountain; on each considerable sums of money have been spent, and on three of the tracks houses have been built, and, provided ordinary care is taken, the mountain can be ascended from any side now without serious difficulty.

The Egmont Route from New Plymouth.

This is a good driving-road, metalled to the radius-line, a distance of sixteen miles, occupying two to three hours.

From Inglewood Railway it is eight miles by good metalled road to the same point. For two miles inside the radius-line the road has been formed for vehicle traffic, another mile is in progress, and the further mile to the mountain house (3,200 ft. high) is a good bridle-track. From the mountain house it is a walking-track to the summit, taking from three to five hours to make the ascent.

From the house for the first mile and a quarter it is through bush and scrub, then it is moss, and on to the bare rock and scoria, presenting no serious difficulty till the summit is reached.

The scenery on this line is of an ever-changing nature. The fine gorge of Ngatoro near the house, with the forest on each side of it; then the isolated rocks called Humphries Castle; further off the ranges of Pouakai; and, when once on the moss, diversions can be made with ease to both sides of the mountain to view the fine old lava gorges and the many high cliffs of solid rock. At whatever season of the year, in the sheltered gulches ice is always obtainable on this route. The gorge of the Waiwakaiho is a favourite detour, and trips can be extended in other directions to Stratford and Falls houses, occupying three and four hours respectively to travel.

The Next Track from Stratford, via the Pembroke Road.

This is a good metalled road for seven miles, for another mile and a quarter it is an ordinary road, then on to the house, a distance of four miles further on, it is simply a horse-track. From the house horses can be taken for another mile and a quarter to an elevation of 5,200 ft., though the last 1,000 ft. of this distance is very steep.

From Stratford house excursions can be made to the Manganui Gorge and down the Kapuni to the Falls house, also on to the Egmont house. A beautiful waterfall on Manganui River and one on Waingongoro River are specially attractive side features of this route.

The ascent to the summit of the mountain will take from three to five hours from the house, the last part near the top being very steep. From railway-station at Stratford to the house the journey can be accomplished in three hours, or the entire trip to summit can be done in, say, seven hours.

The Next Route, via the Manaia Road.

To the Falls house, at an elevation of 3,070 ft., the road is a good metalled one to within half a mile of the radius-line, then through the bush for three miles and three-quarters it is a horse-track, in fair order. From Falls house to summit the track is *via* Panitahi Peak, and takes from four to six hours from the house. Should the tourist not wish to make the whole ascent, a magnificent view can be had from Panitahi, at an elevation of 6,438 ft.

From this house many excursions can be taken, first of importance being that to the Dawsons' Falls, near at hand; next the Cascades, on Kapuni, Hastie's Hill; and, by following up the mountain track to the moss-line, skirting round Panitahi, and descending to Lake Dive, is another trip that will require three hours each way. The scenery, however, to Lake Dive is very beautiful; the wild gorge of Punehu and the abrupt cliffs of Bobs Bluff well repay the exertions of the tourist.

Another New Route from Rahotu.

Due west of the mountain and thirty miles from New Plymouth is the track *via* the Kahui Road. For a distance of seven miles and three-quarters it is by a good metalled road, then by one mile of cleared road to radius-line. From radius-line to moss-line four miles and a half is only a rough walking-track; the work of opening this out for a bridle-track was started, but owing to shortness of funds was not finished. A small clearing has been felled for a paddock and a site chosen for house. The scenery on this track is in many respects different from the others; it embraces the long mossy slopes at the head-waters of Stony River, the Pouakai Ranges, the Gorge of Okahu with its high cliffs, this latter being one of the finest views of the mountain, which can be easily explored from the track. In addition to this, trips can be taken to Bell's and Brame Falls, involving three hours' walk, however, to each, but they are well worth the exertion.