Maoris did not get their ransom of £20, Mr. Collie and Mr. Lys having managed to leave very early the next morning for Napier; consequently they took possession of all they found at the camp where they had discovered the two Europeans.—W.C.


By W. Colenso, F.R.S., F.L.S. (Lond.), &c.

[Read before the Wellington Philosophical Society, 18th December, 1899.]

Every kind of evidence is made to tell by writers who have a theory to defend.


It very frequently happens that he who defends the truth does not gain the victory, since the hearers are either prejudiced, or have no great interest in the better cause.


A generous friendship no cold medium knows,
Burns with one love, with one resentment grows.


It was with no small amount of surprise that I saw in vol. xxv., Trans. N.Z. Inst. (lately to hand), that old and long paper of M. A. de Quatrefages on the Moa (Dinornis species) again served up, and that, too, in a brand-new translation. That paper having already appeared in full in an English translation, in such a respectable, old-established, and well-known first-class scientific serial as “The Annals and Magazine of Natural History” nearly ten years ago, surely there was no necessity for (I might truly enough say, no benefit to arise from) it being republished in the Transactions, especially as it contains many errors which, possibly, were not fully known to the writer at the time, but which are almost sure to accompany all such heterogeneous and voluminous compilations, particularly when strung together by one who does not fairly grasp his subject; and still more so when he has a former and pet theory, or “fad,” of his own to supplement and defend. And, as the one eminent man against whom that paper is particularly levelled is no longer among us to reply to it—which, however, I well knew he fully intended to do—and as I am in full possession of

* Which, moreover, was highly eulogized by Mr. Maskell as being a “good translation,” in his paper on it: “Review of a Paper on the Moa by M. A. de Quatrefages,” read before the Wellington Philosophical Society, 3rd September, 1884. (Trans. N.Z. Inst., vol. xvii., p. 448.)
this knowledge, as I shall show, I deem it a duty incumbent on me to write this paper on behalf of my deceased friend, to do his memory scant justice in this matter. Indeed, in my adducing his own *ipsissima verba* on this subject, it may be said of him, as of others before him; "*per ilam defunctus adhuc loquitur.*"

And here I cannot refrain from observing that this fresh and uncalled-for move seems somewhat ungenerous on the part of its promoters, as the gist of M. de Quatrefages' paper was well known to be levelled against Sir Julius von Haast, now no longer among us—a man who had so faithfully and zealously served science, even beyond his natural powers; and so, like many others who have preceded him, in New Zealand and in the South Pacific, given his life to her cause and to the colony.

The late Sir Julius von Haast and myself had long been correspondents on very friendly terms, and in the early part of the year 1885 he wrote to me respecting this very paper of M. de Quatrefages', then lately republished in its English translation in the August and September numbers (1884) of the serial mentioned,* informing me of it, and asking me to assist him in his replying to it, which I promised to do. Unfortunately, this was not carried out, through Sir Julius being appointed the Commissioner for the New Zealand Exhibition in London, and consequently having to leave New Zealand soon after, for which duty, too, he had to make extensive preparation prior to his leaving New Zealand; and then his sudden premature death at Christchurch so very soon after his return to the colony.† I shall give verbatim copies of the notes and memoranda that passed between us, so far as they relate to this subject. Fortunately I kept copies of my replies to him:

Christchurch, 23rd March, 1885.

MY DEAR MR. COLENSO,—

... As I told you, Professor Quatrefages rather handles me roughly about the Moa age. However, as I know I am on the right track, I intend to answer his paper fully; but, in order to do so, I want the help of my friends. Enclosed I send you a few questions, to which I wish an answer at your earliest convenience. It is only to strengthen my hands—to show that all are not unanimous in believing that the Moa became only extinct in the last hundred years, as I told you verbally.

Ever faithfully yours,

   JULIUS VON HAAST.

The questions referred to:—

1. Do you know any reliable Maori traditions about the Moa?
2. Do not all, or at least some, of these traditions appear to have

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*I cannot understand how this paper, then first published in an English translation, could be known to Mr. Maskell so early as 3rd September in that same year.

† Returned to the colony 17th July, 1887, and died on the 16th August.
been brought by the Hawaiki immigrants from their former home, as, for instance, the accounts of the great lizard (crocodile)?
3. If the traditions of the Moa are applicable to New Zealand, when, according to them, became the Moa extinct?
4. Are there any reliable traditions that when the immigration or immigrations from Hawaiki took place, another autochthonous population was inhabiting New Zealand?
5. To what race did it belong?
6. Had the Hawaiki immigrants, or their predecessors, a frugivorous dog? When did it become extinct or alter its habits? Are there any traditions about it?
7. Are there any traditions when greenstone was first used by the natives?

Julius Von Haast.
Christchurch, 19th March, 1885.

Napier, 31st March, 1885.

My dear Professor Von Haast,—

Thanks for your kind note of the 23rd inst. . . . I have endeavoured to answer your questions, but, I fear, not satisfactorily, either to you or to myself; but if you will patiently look into those old papers of mine, as noted, you will, I think, gain some information.

I feel at times not a little vexed with the powers that be, when I reflect how much, how greatly, I have been hindered and thwarted in my two principal works—the Māori lexicon, and my papers on old Māori lore and matters. They (or their successors) will be also vexed hereafter, but that is no solace to me. They ought to have given even every encouragement, but . . .

I am, my dear Professor, yours faithfully,

W. Colenso.

P.S.—I may also add, and that for two reasons, that the thought has crossed my mind that you had forgotten (?) what I had written on the Moa in the paper referred to: perhaps, when you had looked at it, you supposed it to be only my old original paper, reprinted from "The Annals of Natural History," with which it does begin, but a great deal of freshly-obtained information was added. My two reasons are: Buller made a similar mistake last year, in his presidential address at Wellington, mainly, too, on the Māoris, when he said that "no one had yet written a paper on the subject of their poetry," &c. I was ashamed on reading this, and pointed out to him my long paper on that subject, with translations of songs, &c., in vol. xiii., Transactions. In reply, Buller said he had "quite overlooked it." (2) When Rēnoenzi was with me last Sunday we were on this subject (Māori poetry), and I lent him that volume to read the said paper, and my so doing has brought Buller's omission fresh to memory; hence also this.—W. C.

1st April, 1885.

Answers to Professor Von Haast's questions re the Moa, &c.:
2. No; I don't believe in that myth of Hawaiki immigration as containing anything real (material, objective)—i.e., appertaining to the Sandwich or to any other islands. (See legend of a saurian pet, Trans. N.Z. Inst., vol. xi., p. 100.)
3. See answer to question No. 1.
4. I don't believe in that objective migration; there are such stories, however, re autochthons—strange, quaint, simple, and contradictory—showing their antiquity, but of no value [save to show their utter ignorance].
5. This question cannot be answered in one word or sentence, as you
would like, simply because all New Zealand, from the very night of their history, was occupied tribally—that is, as deadly foes—after the manner of Cain and Abel; the tribes, too, being numerous, and often changing their names, and becoming extinct through warfare.

6. I scarcely clearly understand this. (1.) I don’t believe in that objective Hawaiki; yet a tradition says a dog came with them, and swam to shore before their canoe touched land, through smelling a dead whale stranded on the shore (Trans. N.Z. Inst., vol. x., p. 154). (2.) The ancient Maori dog was certainly not frugivorous in a country sans fruit; rather omnivorous (see my paper on their dog, Transactions, vol. x., pp. 139-150). It was pretty numerous in Cook’s time, and after, as I have shown. Cook’s people bought them for food, being a domestic animal, and never too plentiful owing to the great demand for it—for its flesh and hairy skin—for feasts and for chiefs’ garments; and always following the fate of its masters in their frequent wars, it gradually became lost; partly, too, owing to the early introduction of the foreign breeds of dogs, which became more and more requisite to enable the Maoris to catch their wild pigs for barter, &c. There are traditions about the dog, some queer and strange (vol. x., p. 154).

7. There are also traditions about the greenstone and its early use, but very short and casual (e.g., see Trans. N.Z. Inst., vol. xii., pp. 80, 81).

Christchurch, 11th April, 1885.

MY DEAR MR. COLENZO,—

Your welcome letter of the 31st and 1st April came to hand, together with the answers to my questions, for which my best thanks. This, together with your papers, will help me a great deal. I would at once have sent you the two numbers with Quatrefages’ papers, but they were out. I have sent them with this mail, together with Buller’s pamphlet, in which the tradition about the pet Moa is given. You will see that he makes light of it. Now, will you do me this great kindness, and read Quatrefages’ paper carefully, and give me some notes on it; also mark with pencil numbers where you wish to draw my attention. Any point you can throw light on is of great value to me in my answer. Please show the paper also to our mutual friend Locke, with my kindest greetings, and ask him to give me his views upon the same, as well as on Buller’s. The pet Moa must have been very small or it could not have been retained by a man with a broken leg. Nobody regrets more than I do that by stupidity and want of interest your valuable labours upon the Maoris have been retarded; but I have still great hopes that you will take them up again with great vigour. What I have seen of you has shown me that there is still any amount of vitality and “go” in you, and so I have not yet given up all hopes. I have, unfortunately, no specimen of Hoheria flexicollis, or I would send it with great pleasure.

Ever faithfully yours,

JULIUS VON HAAST.

P.S.—The pamphlet sent was also very welcome. However, I have not yet found the time to read it cos amore, as the lectures have just begun, and I have my hands full with work.

This last letter was followed by a telegram:

Please return books. Urgently wanted.

Christchurch, 16th May.

JULIUS VON HAAST.

Napier, 18th May, 1885.

MY DEAR PROFESSOR VON HAAST,—

Your telegram of this morning, requesting instant return of books you kindly lent me, I have received, and respond at once. I would
that I had got it on Saturday morning last, then your books could have gone by mail-steamer; now, I suppose, they must crawl thither by overland mail to Wellington.

I regret to say that I have not yet thoroughly read Quarefages, while Buller's pamphlet I have not looked into. When your packet of books arrived here, about one month back, I was absent in the Seventy-mile Bush, whence I have only recently returned to Napier. Your kind letter was sent thither to me, but not the books; and, as you did not say in it that you wanted the books returned earliest—not, in the contrary, that "your lectures had just begun, and your hands were full of work," and that I was "to lend the books to our mutual friend Locke" (who is still absent at Gisborne, and expected here, I believe, next Saturday).—I was in no hurry, having, too, lots to do after my month's absence in the bush.

However, I have detected two or three small things which I note. There are more, no doubt. I do not admire Quarefages' style; he, too, evidently fully believes in the legendary migration (indeed, like others, gives the islands whence they came), and therefore does all he can in support of that story. One thing, however: I notice that Quarefages never once refers, or in any way alludes, to my second and exhaustive paper on the Moa (in Trans. N.Z. Inst., vol. xii.), while he does to others (e.g., Travers', Stack's, and John White's) whose erroneous statements I had in that paper refuted. He also (in a note, p. 168) calls the attention of writers and authors to my later papers in vols. xiii. and xiv. Transactions, but that one volume he entirely overlooks; can it be designedly, or had he not got a copy of that volume to refer to? He also, I think, ignores my paper on the New Zealand dog (vol. x., Transactions), where, too, he would have found something—or all that is known—respecting that animal. Another thing that Quarefages has done (which I greatly dislike) is the making-up with everything—every strange story, no matter by whom written or stated—by "the man in the street," or (as I told M. Bastian when here) "by a mere low billiard-room markman—a fellow of only a short time in the country"—and then putting all together as of equal authority! hence I withheld mine.

I regret you must have your books right off. I shall write to London by this week's San Francisco mail for copies of Quarefages' paper. As I said to you before, look closely into my papers on the Moa (second part), the dog, &c., &c. Even the stories (legends) will yield you much. In vol. xi., pp. 95–100, you will have a full account of the monster pet saurian, while another worthy had a pet whale on which he rode through the deep; others, too, performed similar feats on albatrosses; why not a legendary pet Moa? In haste I close. Beware of trusting to second-rate authorities in Maori matters.

Believe me, ever yours faithfully,

W. COLENSO.

[Enclosure.]

Brief and rough memoranda and notes of remarks (unfinished):—

P. 184. Mr. Travers and J. White: "35 years."—See my paper on Moa, vol. xii., p. 103 et seq.


P. 184. "Two against two, like the Moas." (J. White again.) See p. 95, loc.

"Tautauamo—a dispute about a piece of land (moa = bed) in a cultivation; a quarrel between a few of the same tribe or village; a private quarrel." Nearly all this paragraph of M. Quarefages' is most strange to me.

P. 160. (Speaking of me). "I find no one but Mr. Colenso who has accepted [sic] this doctrine as absolute."
Compare with p. 161 (speaking of you): "In his 'Geology of Province of Canterbury' he formally adopts Mr. Colenso's views."

P. 161. Mr. Stack and his Moa-feathers. So Mr. Locke, and so J. White (all nursery tales). See pp. 82, 98, 99, &c., where I worked out Mr. Locke's relation.

P. 162. "Hair purely Melanesian." What?

P. 164. "Dog brown or yellowish colour, with long ears." &c. Our earliest voyagers say, "Black, and also white, and particoloured, with straight prick ears."

P. 164. Note*. The whole of this note is not in the original Maori text, as published by Sir G. Grey. I copy correctly that portion:

"Ka u mai hoki te Porua waka a te Ririno, na, ka patua nga kuri e rua, kotahi i taona, kotahi i haemataitia, ko Whakapatapuka i taona, ko Tangakakariki i haemataitia, a ka puareare ka whakaturia nga tana haere ki nohoto, i whakaturia hoki nga toko o te atua, kia ngarea putua ai, ko te maro o te atua, ka takapauria, ka whakataara te atua ka mea, 'Nau mai e te atua, ekore an e whiti ki rawahi, nau mai ka whiti ai au." Katahi ka moa te kuri ra, ka poipoia, ka mama tama i te riri, ka haere ka whakaturia nga urutoko, Te pou kei runga te pou e Rangi, kei a Ataahuhamahua."

N.B.—Nothing said about "other dogs," neither of "spirits," nor of "gods" (plural); nor of a "sacrifice"; nor of "wearying spirits"; nor of calling on them for some omen; and their (the Maori's) call, or word, is simply, "Draw hither, O the demon; I cannot cross over to 'other side; draw hither (and) I shall cross over," instead of the long sentence (of six lines), and nothing more implied. And such is not infrequently the case in that translation—passim, the plain, good Maori is often added to, dressed, and garnished.


P. 167. J. White's (!) and Mr. Travers's story of the origin of the name of a hill on the East Coast, from a chief receiving a kick from a Moa; and M. Quatrefages naturally remarks, "We see how all these popular reminiscences agree." (Bien bon!) This strongly reminds me of Taylor's (and others') mistakes re Tongariro, Puarenga, Rangitoto, &c., &c.; but J. Wh. and T. forgot (?) to say that such was in the olden time, and that, on his being kicked down the hill by the Moa, his foot striking a rock split it in sunder, and hence the outlet of the present river through it. (Jamsatis.) For the "kick" and its probable origin, see Trans., vol. xii., p. 105.

P. 168. Re "mists of hills and fat of moas" and M. Quatrefages' long note thereon! J. White's usual magnifying and embellishing. First paragraph, all from the short, common, ancient saying, vol. xii., pp. 84, 85.

N.B.—Sir D. McLean's testimony thereto, after long and general inquiry throughout the Island extending throughout years, which he kindly undertook for me.

In a week after my last letter to Professor Von Haast I received the following telegram from him, sent from Wellington:

Rev. W. Colenso, Napier.

Thanks for notes. Will return Buller and Quatrefages in a fortnight.

Julius Von Haast.

My dear Dr. Von Haast,—

Imprints: I wished to say, at once, Don't send those books here to me, but, as Locke is going to Wellington (to the Parliament), let him see them first. I have talked with Locke about both dog and

* Copied in full from Grey's P.M., that you may get it rendered by Rev. Mr. Stack, there with you.
Moa, and he thinks (with me) that you would find all that we know in my two papers in Transactions.

I find that you are going to England anon. I wish to ask, if I send you a few Moa-bones whether you would name them for me. I have not many, and, with the exception of one bird, all single bones. I would not send you all—you are far too busy—but only a few, and in good condition—say, of three or four species; and perhaps those (8) of one leg of another from Poverty Bay. Of course, I pay all expenses up and down.

Believe me, yours very truly,

W. COLENSO.

MY DEAR MR. COLENSO,—

Christchurch, 9th June, 1885.

Since I have accepted the Commissionership of the London Exhibition I have been several times to Wellington making the necessary arrangements. Now everything is settled, and the circulars are going all over New Zealand. I was much obliged to you for returning me the two books. Quaretens was wanted by the secretary, but I can soon get it back, and shall, according to your wish, first send it to our mutual friend Locke. I need scarcely assure you that I am very grateful to you for the most interesting notes and hints you have given me, which, no doubt, will materially assist me in my task to give Quaretens the proper answer.

I hope you will allow me to take the bronze bell with me for exhibition to the London [Exhibition (word omitted in note)], because I am sure it will create a great deal of interest, and of course I shall take the greatest care of it.

Concerning your Moa-bones, please send me the whole lot; I shall name them for you with the greatest pleasure, and, if you like, make up your collection with that; you have at least the principal species all represented.

Ever faithfully yours,

JULIUS VON HAAST.

MY DEAR DR. VON HAAST,—

Napier, 6th August, 1885.

. . . In your note you say, for me to send on my (few) Moa-bones to you to be named. I thank you for this; but may I do so now, and to Christchurch, or are you too busy? A single word by "wire" will do.

Then, you ask for the bronze bell to take to your Exhibition. Would not a cast serve? Dr. Hector got several made, and he kindly sent us one here for our Museum. I mention this, as Dr. Hector positively refused to run the risk of taking it to the Melbourne Exhibition, saying, "It ought not to go out of the colony." . . . I suppose you have seen Locke, and perhaps given him the "Annals" containing Quaretens' paper.

Believe me, yours faithfully,

W. COLENSO.

Dr. Von Haast's reply, dated "Christchurch, 14th August," referred wholly to specimens for the London Exhibition, merely adding at the close, "Locke has got the 'Annals' now." To that letter I replied on the 28th August. In his following and last letter Professor Von Haast mainly writes on the specimens of Moa-bones I had sent him, and that on his returning them to me. I omit all that, and merely copy from his letter what he says about his preparations for leaving New Zealand, and also concerning the antique bronze bell, this article having been frequently mentioned in our former letters.
MY DEAR MR. COLENZO,—

Your welcome letter of the 28th August came to hand in due time. I think I wrote to you that the box with the Moa-bones had arrived, but I have been so overwhelmed with work that I have hitherto not found the time, but will now in the first free moment proceed at once to business. I have examined your bones at various opportunities and found them extremely difficult, as I have no material from the North Island for comparison, and Owen having only described but one type-specimen of each of his so-called species; consequently I only can give you my own personal views. . . . [Here follow his descriptions, &c., of the bones.] As our court will be so crowded with industrial exhibits, my space for other scientific things will be much curtailed. Moreover, I do not like to take the responsibility about the bronze bell; but I should like the early prints, and some specimen sheets of the Maori dictionary. I hope and trust you will enjoy good health, so that this grand work will be finished by you in comfort. Your case with the Moa-bones will be returned by the first steamer.

Yours faithfully,

JULIUS VON HAAST.

The sequel to my self-imposed task and long paper is soon told. In due time I received from London the copy of M. De Quatrefages’ paper, but on its arrival, Dr. Von Haast being in England, and I otherwise engaged, I did not again take it up, and so it has been down to the present day, for I had written largely and (as I thought) exhaustively on the Moa in my paper in vol. xii., Transactions, and, having done so, I had done with it. Further, I awaited the return of Sir Julius von Haast, and then when he did return to Christchurch he so shortly after unexpectedly died.

Before, however, I quit this subject (of the Moa), as I am never likely to write it over again, and as I have shown how translations from Maori have been amplified, and more than once mentioned Mr. John White and his manner of florid translating Maori into English, I would leave on record a notable instance of his dealing in this important matter of the earliest and only mention of the Moa in Maori legendary narrations.

In my paper on the Moa. (l.c., Transactions, vol. xii.) I had particularly referred to the short ancient legend of Ngahue, and the casual mention there of the Moa in the original Maori,* and the grave omission of the main (?) portion of it relative to the Moa in the English translation.† I give in a note below the simple Maori sentence containing these words in English.‡

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‡ “A, haere ana.” (a Ngahue), “noho rawa atu i Arahu, ka tuturu te noho i reira, katahi ka kowhakina mai e ia tetehi wahi o tana ika, ka mauria atu e ia ka hoki atu ka tae a Ngahue ki te Wairere ka patua te Moa, ka haere Tauranga, Whangaparaa, ka hoki ki Hawaiki, ka korero kua kite ia i te whenua tona kai he pounumu, he Moa.”
"Ngahue proceeded onwards, dwelt far off at Arahura, fixing his abode there (or, *stronger still*, permanently dwelling there). He broke off a portion of that fish (greenstone), and, carrying it with him, returned. Ngahue arriving at Te Wairere killed (or beat, or struck) the Moa; then (he) went (to) Tauranga (to) Whangaparaoa (and) returned to Hawaiki, and told he had seen the land whose riches (chief productions, or principal things) were greenstone and Moa."

I now give John White's rendering of that same story *:—

"Ngahue, at Te Wairere, saw the bird Moa, and killed one, and went back to Hawaiki and told the inhabitants of that land that he had discovered a country without human inhabitants, but where there was greenstone to be found."

And yet again (another version): "Ngahue returned to Arahura, where he found the bird Moa near the Wairere waterfall, and killed one and carried it in a taha or ipu (calabash), and went back to Hawaiki, and informed the people of that land of a fine land called Aotearoa which he had discovered."

And these two versions of that same story J. White gives as from two tribes—Ngatiawa and Ngatihau. Note the differences; premising that Grey's Maori version was old and early (before 1854), and, as Sir George says in his preface, obtained from the best Maori authorities.

In Grey's English translation little notice is taken of the Moa (just as in the original Maori); even its "‘killing'" is omitted, although the only instance of the Moa being mentioned in any old story or legend: in J. White's (1887, nearly forty years after) the peculiar amplification—(a) the words "saw the bird Moa, and killed one"; and, again, (b) "found the bird Moa, and killed one, and carried it off in a calabash," &c.

It may be observed, "But J. White's English rendering is that of the Maori relations from two tribes" (pp. 170, 171, part ii., *l.c.*). Yes; but note in that of Ngatiawa:—

1. "Ka kite" (a Ngahue) "i te Wairere, i reira te manu nei te Moa e tu ana ka patua e Ngahue," &c. = Ngahue saw (or visited) Te Wairere (some high cliff), and *there a single Moa standing*. How closely this relation resembles that statement of the East Cape Maoris to me (January, 1838), of the one Moa standing on the top of the mountain Whakapunake; and

*"Ancient History of the Maori,"* vol. ii., p. 197. As I have not yet read (nor even looked into) this work of J. White, now extended to six volumes—save only this second volume, and that by chance—I should perhaps briefly state how I came to look into this volume: through John White having kindly presented me this copy of vol. ii., on account of his republishing in it two of my old historical Maori legends (pp. 167 and 173), which he acknowledges in the preface. There may be more respecting this same very old story of Ngahue in the other volumes.
also that of the West Coast Maoris to Dieffenbach (1841), of the one Moa on Mount Egmont.*

2. And so in that of Ngatihau, with the addition that the Moa (flesh, I suppose) was collected into a calabash by Ngahue (evidently knowing nothing of the size of the Moa).

3. And in both traditions the word "manu = bird" is given, a modern addition, which is not in the older one of Grey's. The syntax of these two Maori statements is not that of an old Maori, but of a pakeha = foreigner, stranger, and I believe to be John White's own peculiar diction.

4. Be that as it may, two things are clear—(1) The casual brief notice of the Moa as a thing of no importance in the older Maori version; and (2) the growth of the legend in the two later Maori versions of the same story.

5. And then the period (before the so-called migration from Hawaiki) and also the place where the Moa was killed (in the South Island) are the same in all three versions, from which (their united narration) we may clearly gather—(1) the great antiquity of the story, and (2) the one solitary mountain Moa being only then met with in the South Island together with the greenstone; although Ngahue had also travelled largely in the North one, both in going and in returning.

Again, note the peculiar use of this word "kai" in the older version quoted. (See note, p. 505.)

In a paper read before the Hawke's Bay Philosophical Institute† in July, 1883, in giving several meanings of the word "kai," I have among them the following:

"A very old meaning of 'kai' as a noun is movable property, possessions, goods, treasures, chattels—valuables in the estimation of the ancient Maoris" (i.e., p. 97). And here we have a good example of it.

In comparing the two translations of M. de Quatrefages' paper I find very little difference between them; only to this modern one there is a long concluding narration tacked on and made a postscript to the older paper, written in May, 1889, and supplied, as M. Quatrefages states, by Sir Walter Buller, who had sent him a copy of the New Zealand Times of November, 1888, containing that peculiar story of comparatively modern Moa-hunting communicated by Colonel McDonnell. Strange that only such additional information ("fresh evidence," as it is called) should have become known to M. de Quatrefages after all those years, and just as strange that Sir Walter Buller should not have known of any other.

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† Entitled "Three Literary Papers." A copy I had sent to Professor J. von Haast with my letter of 31st March.
Transactions.—Miscellaneous.

My task is done. I did not intend to write another line on this subject of the Moa age, but in this same volume (xxv.), in the Proceedings of the Wellington Philosophical Society, are many observations made at different meetings of the Society by the members present on this theme. Some of them I am really sorry to find recorded there, because they are merely the old, old stories and tales which have long ago been answered, and shown to be untenable, and refuted, and therefore such should not be again resurrected. Indeed, in so doing, the truth—the "true facts"—will never be arrived at; and that true and proper remark of Max Müller (in his late lectures at Glasgow, as brought forward by me in a paper in this same volume, p. 496) is very applicable here: "What is of immense importance in all scientific discussions is the spirit of truth. To make light of a fact that has been established, to ignore intentionally an argument which we cannot refute, to throw out guesses which we know we cannot prove—nay, which we do not even attempt to prove—is simply wrong, and poisons the air in which true science can breathe and live" ("Gifford Lectures," 1891, p. 81). And as I have read of those remarks having been made before (both in the back volumes of Transactions as well as in the Wellington papers of the day), I would, as a member of the Society, beg to be permitted to call the attention of some of our prominent speakers at those meetings to what they have said on this subject.

Mr. Travers, for instance, says, "We could not judge of this matter from the Maoris of the present day, but fifty years ago they were familiar with the existence of this bird." (I.c., p. 531). Now, it seems very hard that such a statement (oft repeated too) should pass unnoticed. It was in January, 1838, that I myself first moved in this matter (as I have fully and clearly shown in my long paper in vol. xii., Transactions), and I left no stone unturned to glean something tangible about it—in travelling throughout much of the North Island, from Poverty Bay to Cape Maria Van Diemen (a zigzag course to all Maori villages as ordered), during which I now and then fell in with chiefs who had seen Cook and also been on board of his ship, which would take back to another fifty years; by friends and acquaintances among Europeans settled and trading in various parts; by rewards; by young Maori chiefs returning to their homes and tribes from our head mission-station in the Bay of Islands; by letters to our Maori Christian teachers and catechists—and the result was Nzl. And there were others succeeding me, fifty years ago, who also travelled much throughout this North Island (Dr. Diefenbach, for instance), and their united report is exactly
the same—NIL. Why, then (may I not ask Mr. Travers) are we not believed? Why every year repeatedly bring up that old, old, and wretched remark, “that fifty years ago the Maoris were familiar with the existence of this bird,” when the very ancient legend of Ngahue alone (above related) goes far to prove its incorrectness? (I feel this the more in its coming from Mr. Travers, who professionally knows well the difference between true and false facts, and how easy it is to adduce charges, however insignificant and erroneous, when defendant is out of Court.)

And just so, again, with Mr. Maskell. I really feel ashamed when I read (both on these and on former occasions) his illogical remarks, his strong affirmations, respecting not only the Moa age, but also the Maori legends and the very language itself, of all which, I beg to tell him, he really knows nothing. Surely Mr. Maskell must know full well the difference between legends and legends! Indeed, he says he does; and that, “whilst he thought little of Maori legends, he did value European traditions”—no doubt!—“and he well remembered hearing the late Sir F. Weld state often that when he started from Nelson, somewhere about 1848, to make the first journey overland to what is now Canterbury, the Maoris warned him to be very careful of the large birds which he would meet with in the mountains, and which would kick him to death if they could. That was a tradition worth any number of Maori legends” (l.c., p. 531; and again repeated p. 535). Now, I have already, nearly twenty years ago, shown the probable origin of much of that talk—at all events, of its modern and foreign embellishments. But, I would ask, where is the “European tradition” here? Is not the simple relation by Sir F. Weld of what the Maoris had told him their legend? And where is the radical difference between this legend of theirs and that given by them to Dr. Dieffenbach on the same subject nearly ten years before?—namely, “The Maoris could not understand what induced me to seek to ascend Mount Egmont; they tried much to dissuade me from the attempt, by saying that the mountain was tapu—that there were ngarara (crocodiles) on it, which would undoubtedly eat me. The mysterious bird ‘Moa’ (of which I shall say more hereafter) was also said to exist there. But I answered that I was not afraid of these creatures of their lively imagination” (vol. i., p. 140).

No one would stand up more strongly for the true position of an expert in his own peculiar line as a successful describer of Coccydids (and of Mr. Maskell in that capacity we have good reason to be proud); but what would Mr. Maskell say,

or think (say) of me, were I, on any occasion when one of his favourite papers was being read, to speak of such in his own way, using his own language which he so frequently uses towards us—myself and other Maori philologists—who, if not equally experts, must certainly be allowed to know something more than Mr. Maskell of those Maori matters, to which we have given many years of time and research and study? I confess to feeling both ashamed and sorry when I read Mr. Maskell’s statement re this paper of M. de Quatrefages (bearing in mind, as I have shown, the grave omission of many true facts from its pages), who said that “he was proud of having been the first to bring that paper under the notice of this colony several years ago in the pages of the ‘New Zealand Journal of Science’.”* and now, with all its errors, omissions, and suppressions, actually bringing it forward again.

I trust that both Mr. Travers and Mr. Maskell, for whom I have great respect, will forgive me in my thus writing warmly on a matter in which I am so deeply interested, as, from my age, &c., I may never write again. The old Latin proverb is applicable here both to them and to me—“Ne sutor ultra crepidam” : may we all be enabled to observe it.

And here I would communicate the very excellent and apposite remarks lately made by Professor Rudolph Virchow, in his Croonian lecture delivered before the Royal Society: “Who of us is not in need of friendly encouragement in the changing events of life? True happiness is not based on the appreciation of others, but on the consciousness of one’s own honest labour. How otherwise should we preserve the hope of progress and of final victory in face of the attacks of opponents and the insults which are spared to nobody who comes before the public? He who during a long and busy life is exposed to public opinion certainly learns to bear unjust criticism with equanimity, but this comes only through the confidence that his cause is just, and that some day it must triumph. Such is our hope in our wrestlings for progress in science and art. . . . Happy is he who has courage enough to keep up or regain his relations with other men, and to take part in the common work. Thrice happy is he who does not lack in this work the flattering commendation of esteemed colleagues.”†

In fine, the prolific root or cause of error with M. de Quatrefages, and with most of those who have written or spoken on this matter of the Moa—i.e., of the Moa age—arises from their believing in the myth of Hawaiki and the migration therefrom, and in fixing that period at 500 years ago. To

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me, having long and carefully considered the whole matter in its various phases and bearings, and having no pet theory of my own to support or vamp up, both are alike preposterous and void of true literal foundation. At the same time, there is concealed within them a deep esoteric meaning hidden and masked; not dissimilar, however, to, and possibly more reasonable than, what has obtained among other ancient and highly-civilised people concerning their origins. Much as Max Müller has truly and eloquently expressed it: "Language threw its web of metaphors around the truths of which it spoke, and by a natural mistake men came to take the metaphors for facts." But on this deep recondite subject I cannot at present enter.

Lastly, I may observe that, in my long and exhaustive article on the Moa (so often referred to by me in this paper), I concluded it with the words of the celebrated Roman historian Tacitus, when writing on the *Phoenix*, a bird of great antiquity, which had given him, and other philosophers before him, an immense amount of labour. Tacitus, after recounting the many old stories respecting it, including recent tales, says, "The accounts of antiquity concerning this bird are enveloped in doubt and obscurity. . . . These accounts are not entitled to unqualified credit, and their uncertainty is increased by the admixture of matter palpably fabulous; but that this bird has been at some time seen in Egypt is not questioned." That conclusion, made nearly 2,000 years ago, still recommends itself to us as a fair and a rational one. And yet I find, on lately reading in an ancient Roman author of note contemporary with Tacitus, just the very opposite remarks and conclusions respecting this same fabulous bird. And as such may be little known to this audience, the work containing it being scarce, and the subject somewhat analogous to this one of the extinct Moa and its age, I will briefly quote it:

"There is a certain bird called a Phoenix. Of this there is never but one at a time, and that lives 500 years. And when the time of its dissolution draws near that it must die, it makes itself a nest of frankincense and myrrh and other spices, into which, when its time is fulfilled, it enters and dies; but its flesh putrifying breeds a certain worm, which, being nourished with the juice of the dead bird, brings forth feathers; and when it is grown to a perfect state it takes up the nest in which the bones of its parent lie and carries it from Arabia into Egypt, to a city called Heliopolis; and, flying in open day in the sight of all men, lays it upon the

altar of the sun, and so returns from whence it came. The
priests then search into the records of the time, and find that
it returned precisely at the end of 500 years." And then the
author goes on to say, "Let us consider this wonderful type
(or sign) of the Resurrection, when even by a bird the Lord of
all shows us his power to fulfil his promise," &c. * Thus,
again, proving to a demonstration how easy it is to swallow
everything related, however strange, as veritable facts, and so
jump to the desired conclusion.

Of course, my only reason for bringing these two notions
together here is to show the very great disparity of opinion
then existing respecting the Phanix, much the same as now,
unfortunately, appertain to the Moa age.

P.S.—Since closing my paper I have received a copy of
the "Report of the Fourth Meeting of the Australasian Asso-
ciation for the Advancement of Science" (just published), and
I find in the address of the Rev. Lorrimer Fison, M.A., the
president of the anthropological section, such very appropriate
statements—the very counterpart of my own thoughts and
ideas—that I hesitate not to copy a portion of them. The
president, too, evidently writes as a practical man well ac-
quainted with his subject.

"... In these investigations"—anthropological—
"two things mainly are required: first, a patient continuance
in the collecting of facts; and secondly, the faculty of seeing
in them what is seen by the natives themselves. We must
ever remember that our mind-world is very different from
theirs. ... As to the former of these two requisites,
one's natural tendency, especially in the beginning of the
work, is to form a theory as soon as one has got hold of a fact;
and as to the latter, we are too apt to look at the facts in
savagery from the mental standpoint of the civilised man.
Both of these are extremely mischievous. They lead investi-
gators into fatal mistakes, and bring upon them much painful
experience, for the pang attending the extraction of an aching
double-tooth is sweetest bliss when compared with the tearing
up by the roots of a cherished theory. I speak feelingly here,
because I can hold myself up as an awful warning against
theory-making."—[An instance given.]—"Even more mis-
chievous is the habit of looking at the facts in savagery from
our own standpoint. Some of our modern anthropologists'
books are full of errors arising from this evil habit—errors
which are 'gross and palpable' to any one who has lived
long among savages, and taken the pains to learn to see with
their eyes. 'You can feel the mistakes with a stick,' said a
good Lutheran missionary (one of Mr. Howitt's correspond-

* Clement, Ep. ad Corinth., c. xcv.
ents) who had been reading the statements about the Australian blacks in a work which is generally considered to be of great authority, and has passed through many editions. To get at the real meaning of the facts we must learn to see in them what the savage sees, and in order to do this we must get out of our own mind-world and into his. We must unlearn before we can begin to learn. It is the lack of this which makes the evidence—or, rather, the opinions—of the mere passing traveller so extremely untrustworthy. As long as he confines himself to telling what he has actually seen, his statements, if he be a truthful man, are of value; but as soon as he begins to talk about what is in the facts, in nine cases out of ten he is sure to go astray.

"The best way of getting at the meaning of the facts is to go and live with the natives long enough to learn their language, and to thoroughly gain their confidence—say, from ten to twenty years; but, as this is impossible to all but a very few, the next best way is to get information from the men who are living among them."—(I.e., pp. 150, 151.)

Art. LVIII.—A Maori Pa at Lake Te Anau.

By Taylor White.

[Read before the Hawke's Bay Philosophical Institute, 12th June, 1893.]

As I am unaware that any record has been made showing that in comparatively recent times certain Maoris were living on the eastern shores of this lake, and knowing that any signs of Maori habits or customs in the olden time are increasing in value as time rolls on, no matter how seemingly trivial these signs may be, I will attempt a description of what I saw at the latter end of the year 1859, or early in 1860—after a lapse of thirty-three years, or thereabouts.

When visiting my friend, the late Donald Hankinson, Esq., who then had a large cattle-station between the Mararoa River and Lake Te Anau, he took me to the shore of this magnificent lake, the eastern boundary of which consists of rolling downs, at that time covered with fern, and in one place a large flat close to the lake densely covered by manuka scrub, in which already a small herd of his cattle had become feral, taking to this cover immediately a horseman came in view. Mr. Hankinson told me of the remains of an old Maori village on the south side of the Upukarora River at the junction of the lake, but said that a fire had of late years passed over it and