

ART. VI.—*On Dusky Sound.*

By RICHARD HENRY, Government Resident in charge of Resolution Island Reserve.

Communicated by Sir James Hector.

[*Read before the Wellington Philosophical Society, 17th July, 1895.*]

REMEMBERING the interest you take in such things, I venture to send you the following about Dusky Sound. I have been nearly all through it now, and its islands; also up Acheron Passage, into Breaksea, and into Wet Jacket as far as the island.

Boat-harbours are everywhere, and altogether it is a safe place for boating, when we have camping outfit on board. I have a young fellow with me, and intend to keep him as long as I can. We have been often on Resolution, in many places; all-round it, except on Five Fingers; and we have cut tracks upon two mountains on this side of it, which we have been up on six different occasions, but saw no signs of life above the bush except parrakeets and the tracks of rats. There is a good deal of tussock above the bush on Mount Phillips, and it is a grand mountain to climb, the peak is so sharp and lonely—800ft. above the bush—whence can be seen nearly all the sound with its many islands, and the greater part of Resolution. The latter appears to have high, rough mountains all round it, with lower and smoother land in the centre, the outlets being Duck and Cormorant Creeks; but there is nothing like a flat anywhere, and just one little lake south of Useless Harbour. Roas and woodhens are plentiful in the bush, with nearly all the small birds, including crows and thrushes; but there are no kakapos nor grey kiwis. The kakapos on the mainland are breeding this year, so I did not like to disturb their curious arrangements by removing them, especially when I found that there were plenty in favourite places; but there are long stretches of coast without any. On the south side of Dusky, east of Cooper Island, there are two great landslips, some hundreds of acres, covered with green scrub, where we heard them drumming in dozens in January. And in February, under Mount Foster, at the mouth of Wet Jacket, I found three nests in about an hour; also further up, at our camp opposite the island, I found several nests, each with two little young ones. I never found a male near a nest, and I think they know nothing about it. The mother tramps away and carries home food so industriously that she is all draggled and worn, and near the end of her task she becomes

so exceedingly poor that sometimes I thought she would die; yet her young ones are just balls of fat until about the end of May, when many of them are as heavy as the largest old males. But soon after she ceases to feed them they rapidly become poor. The fruit that they have been fed on is nearly all done, and I think that many of them die before they learn to forage for themselves. All this time the old males are very fat, which shows that they did not exert themselves to feed the young—more likely they took the best of everything for themselves. Resolution as a whole is not a good place for kakapos, because tutu and fuchsia are scarce; but there are many places on it where colonies will do well, where fig-trees are plentiful. I noticed that there were no "gages" where the kakapos were; in fact, I have seen none on the mainland, but plenty on all the islands, where there are no kakapos; and if the birds eat them they will have plenty on Resolution. I will have most trouble to get grey kiwi, for I have heard very few in all this place. When camped on Cooper Island we heard grey kiwi there—and it is a big island, perhaps eight square miles in extent; and, though it comes near the mainland at its eastern end, there is mostly a swift tide running there that will disturb the calculations of a swimmer. In November, kakas, tuis, and mokos were here in great numbers feeding on the honey of the rata-blossoms, but no pigeons until lately, when they have come for the berries, and the kakas are nearly all away. There was a kaka's nest, with two young ones, near our house on Pigeon Island. When we came here, in July, there were colonies of crested penguins at nearly every easy landing, and sometimes in caves, all busy nesting. They all went away for a while with their young, but came back in January and February for their moulting, and then cleared out again, and I do not think there is one left in Dusky. But many of the little penguins seem to remain here, and are always out fishing in the daytime, coming ashore at night and sleeping in holes under rocks and trees. We never saw one per cent. of the crested penguins out either day or night, and I do not understand them at all. Woodhens are on all the islands, and attend closely on the penguins when the young are just hatched, so that may have something to do with the penguins staying at home so much. Grey ducks are numerous at the head of Dusky, where they have a splendid breeding-place among creeks and swampy islands in the mouth of a great valley coming in from the north, and there are no swamp-hawks.

There is a fine river coming in from the east to Supper Cove. I went up it about three miles to a gorge, where I was stopped by a dangerous but passable place. There are

three rapids, but the portages are easy, and I intend to take a canoe up there next summer, for I could see a kindly-looking valley turning to the north-east, and I may be able to go a long way up it.

Paradise-ducks are very scarce here, because there is no grass for them. Even at Goose Cove—which may have got its name from them—where there is some level land, there is no grass, as it is all grown over with scrub; and there are neither ducks nor geese there now, only a few redbills and swans. Up in Wet Jacket it was quite pitiful to see a pair of paradise trying to rear a family on a few square yards of grass. If I had a few pairs of goats I think I could provide the ducks with grass-plots in suitable places at the ends of bays. It is not a heavy task to dispose of some of this scrub; and surface-sown rye-grass grows here more quickly and richer than I ever saw, but there are hundreds of seedling forest-trees and shrubs growing up among it, so that some animal is required to keep them in check that the grass may continue. In old England, Darwin mentions how pines and other forest-trees sprang up when the animals were excluded, and so it may be in any country as it is here. The scrub follows down the alluvial land at the mouths of creeks, covering every foot, and even reaching out over the tide, so that nothing else has a chance under present circumstances. There are often little natural clearings at landslips and uprooted trees, which seem insignificant, but great changes are often wrought by long-continued trifles. This mountain-bush, being of great extent and unknown resources, may contain room for another Switzerland, with its hardy mountaineers. But now, with its superfluity of damp and sandflies, it is about the most miserable and useless place that man ever set his foot in, and he cannot have the heart to start reclaiming it from its present state; but the quadrupeds may be the pioneers, as they have been in nearly every other country, and then the men can take it up. We often see where the sealers have rolled aside the stones on the beach to land their boats, and perhaps a level place with a grove of young trees on the site of their old camp, but not a yard of open ground; yet two of those parties lived here for about a year. And two vessels were built in Dusky Sound, but we have not yet found where their shipyards were, for perhaps not a trace remains. When we came into the little harbour on Pigeon Island the stones were rolled aside on the beach, but there was not room above high water to land our stores until we made a clearing. We thought that no one ever lived there before until we cleared and dug the ground; when we found it nearly paved with Maori ovens. In Cascade Harbour there is the site of a hut with an iron chimney which may have been ten or twelve years deserted, yet the floor of

the hut and its surroundings were covered with a tall grove of koromikos, some of them 3in. thick. Now, I think that if a hardy race of goats existed here they would have altered all this for the better; they would have kept many grassy openings, and made pathways in the bush, to the advantage of the explorer and prospector, and also to the advantage of the ground-birds—because those birds were plentiful at Te Anau for forty miles along the lake, but the best place for them was near grassy openings under Mount Luxmore. There on a quiet evening in 1880 there used to be a perfect din of their various calls, and the individuals were the best of their sort. However, the birds may only be temporary residents here on the mainland; but one would think that it is the duty of this generation to liberate some suitable animals in this bush. Deer might do, but I think they are too wild and shy, and that a well-clad, hardy race of goats would be best, to pave the way for more useful stock, and, in the meantime, to provide food and sport for the future pioneers. We have often seen goat-skins used as hearth-rugs; they would make good jackets for this climate, and would be valuable. Some people will object to goats or anything else, for fear of encouraging wild dogs; but the native dog died out here (though it could have lived well on kakapos), because every cave and den is damp and mouldy, and it would require a special breed of dogs to live here in a wild state.

We saw the king-fish up the sound. Three big fellows swam round our boat within arm's length, and I knew them. The same day we saw a great company of them right at the head of the sound: that was on the 5th February. The horse-mackerel and mullet were here all the summer in shoals; also another little fish, which I could not find in either of the books on fishes. They are of some importance, because they have been very plentiful all the time we have been here, and are very good to eat. I call them "latris" for want of a name.* They will not take bait, but come into the shallow water at our door every evening, and just at the last of the light they are easily speared, so that I often get half a dozen in a few minutes; but with a suitable net they could be caught in thousands. But we only see them round Pigeon Island. Moki are very plentiful, but we only get a few trumpeter now and then. Of course, the cod and groper are plentiful, also butter-fish and barracouta. We were in want of a name for the little prawns like shrimps, and called them "squid." All the fish are after them, and it is wonderful how they can stand it. When we see the mackerel splashing along we know they are after squid; the mullet, latris, and parrot-fish are

* *Mendesoma lineata.*

always after them, and even the moki and butter-fish join in the hunt. We saw the gulls pecking at something in calm water, also the terns and little white gulls, and found it was squid they were eating. I thought the barracouta only hunted little fish, but found them full of squid. Though they continually hunt the shoals of fish they seem to catch very few, for we found none in those we caught for our dogs, so it seems likely that they only take the laggards and leave the main body flourishing. The squid are lively little fellows, and flit about so quickly that the smartest of their enemies have some trouble to catch them. On calm warm afternoons they are all at the surface, and then there are acres of water that seem alive with fish. Surely the squid that survives all this must be the best of his race, or, at least, the most artful and active. We first saw them in Useless Harbour in September, when they were tiny creatures only a quarter of an inch long. At Christmas the main body were about an inch long; but since then small ones were numerous, so that I think there may be several crops in a season. In April they have almost disappeared.

ART. VII.—*The Ceremony of Rahui.*

By TAYLOR WHITE.

[Read before the Hawke's Bay Philosophical Institute, 12th August, 1895.]

I HAVE made several attempts to gain information on this now obsolete custom of *rahui*—one time practised by the Polynesian peoples—both privately and also by a short article published some time back in the Magazine of the Polynesian Society, but have been unsuccessful in persuading any person to take the subject in hand. This being the case, I am left to work out a theory of my own, which is the subject of this paper. It is a thousand pities that no person having time and opportunity to investigate and work out the history of this remarkable custom should have inquired thereon some years ago, previous to the death of the witness Noa Huke, whose evidence is quoted herein:—

Rahui.—In the case *Airini Donnelly v. Broughton*, published in the supplement of the *Hawke's Bay Herald*, Napier, 26th March, 1892, the witness Noa Huke says, "The whole of this block [of land] from Te Whanga to Puketitiri and Titiokura, at Mohaka, was affected. That land was given to Te Rangika-mangungu and Tutura. They went and put up *rahuis* all