

ART. XXXI.—*Further Notes on Maori Skeletons and Relics brought to Light at Karaka Bay, Wellington.*

By H. N. MCLEOD.

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SINCE the opening-up of Karaka Bay for residential purposes, which took place about two years ago, the excavation and removal of soil incidental to building and improvements has brought to light not a few interesting relics of the aboriginals who, at an earlier date, made this bay their habitat; and, judging from the number of bones unearthed in the different places, it must have been regarded by them as an attractive place. It may be that the facilities for fishing were great, and that the supplies of karaka-berries were abundant in their season.

Last year the Society had placed before it three or four small relics—a small stone chisel, a whale-tooth, a tattoo-scraper, as well as certain human bones, which, from their proximity to the buried remains of a fireplace and bones of birds and fish, seemed to suggest a cannibal feast. With the exception of the chisel and tooth, these were found at the entrance to a cave which is situated three hundred yards to the north of Taepakupaku Point.

Some two months ago, while some sandy soil was being moved in order to make a level surface, the bones of some eight skeletons were uncovered at a spot four hundred yards south of the point mentioned. They were found buried together, and not in the usual custom. The distance of the spot from the beach is a chain and a half, and the depth below the surface was about 1 ft.

Shortly after this, at the end of June last, while holes were being made for the planting of trees on part of the Harbour Board's reserves adjacent to the old pilot-station, a skull upright in the ground was uncovered. The crown was but 6 in. from the surface. The upper jaw was *minus* two front teeth, the rest being fairly sound. The rest of the body had been laid in the ground in a horizontal position, resting on its side. It had been treated in the usual Maori way, in that the legs were brought up close to the body.

Not far away was found a stone club of moderate size. Some days later the fine stone *mere* shown to-night was discovered near the same spot. A piece of greenstone, weighing  $5\frac{1}{4}$  lb., which was undergoing the process of grinding, apparently for the purpose of forming a *mere*, is also shown. This was found at Karaka Bay, near the old pilot-station.