

must often have caused the besieged party to suffer great torture, and possibly to capitulate or surrender, in which case the conquered warriors would be mostly killed and eaten, and the women and children be carried away as slaves to the victors.

The site of this pa is near a track known as Marshall's Crossing, named after the first European owner of Rakamoana—the Rev. Mr. Marshall, who actually kept a school for boys in this out-of-the-way place.

On questioning some Maori shearers at a later date as to the history of this pa they referred the question to an old man who was employed at the wool-table. He replied in Maori, which was interpreted by one of the others to me in English. The story was this: The dwellers in this pa were relatives of Maoris living at Moteo—a distance of some ten miles. Another tribe of Maoris came one day from the north, by way of Titiokura and Pohui, and, taking the dwellers in the pa by surprise, killed them all or otherwise disposed of them. Shortly after the people from Moteo started on a journey to visit the pa, being unaware of the fate of their friends. As the land in those days was covered with a dense growth of fern, tutu, and manuka scrub, the stony bed of the river was, especially during the warmer months of the year, the easier line to travel. As is the Maori custom, when these travellers neared the pa they commenced to search the likely places for eels, so that they might arrive with a present of acceptable food; and presently they were horrified by seeing the water blood-stained, and further on they came across the dead bodies of some of the people of the pa, which had been thrown over the cliff. Upon this the visiting party fled in the greatest terror.

ART. XLIX.—*A Maori Earthwork Fortification.*

By TAYLOR WHITE.

[*Read before the Hawke's Bay Philosophical Institute.*]

THE site of this remarkable work is close to the small township of Herbertville, and to the south side of the Wainui River. A small but deep and sluggish stream here joins the river, and together they enclose a considerable semicircular space. This partly enclosed piece of ground would seem to have been selected by a party of Maoris as a place of refuge in times of danger, in case of an assault from others of their race with whom they had a blood-feud or vendetta.

It is quite a novelty, I believe, to find that the Maori has defended a position by earthworks the present height of which would seem to indicate that they could never have been surmounted by a palisade of woodwork. As it now stands there is a double wall of earth, having an interval of about 12 ft. between the two walls, and also a broad dry ditch. The outer wall is almost or entirely perpendicular on both faces; it stands 5 ft. in height, and shows signs of a ditch along its outer face. It is now 45 yards in length. The inner and parallel wall is similar, but is 6 ft. in height and 39 yards in length. Neither wall shows much sign of decay, although they leave a considerable space (some 18 ft.) unprotected—from the ends of the walls to the encircling streams. It is possible the walls may have been here eroded in times of great floods, but it is difficult to understand how this could leave the ends of the walls so perfect in condition.

Parallel with the inner wall is a dry ditch, and beyond, but parallel to the ditch, are signs of small square holes, mostly at equal distances one from the other, the object of which I am unable to determine, although they are evidently a particular part of the plan of defence. Is it possible that they represented small pitfalls, by means of which the assaulting party, after negotiating the two walls, might lose their equilibrium? In the event of a warrior, say, landing with one foot on the level surface, the other foot would find no resting-place, and he would fall prone to the earth, and one of the besieged party would then without danger be in a position to crack his skull with a *mere*.

Within the enclosed space are no visible signs of habitation, but there are three small ill-defined pits, which may have been excavated to supply material wherewith to build a portion of the walls. At present the walls have a passage cut through their centre some $2\frac{1}{2}$ ft. in width. I asked an old resident as to this, and he was confident that when first he saw the walls, years ago, there was no such passage. However, I doubt if this be not the original entrance left by the builders, so as to enable cattle to pass, as they could not climb over a 6 ft. wall. At present men and animals can pass at either end of the walls, so that we may suppose this was a wicket-gate for entrance or exit, as the case might be. I was also told that this, and all round, was grown over by *ngaio* and *karaka* trees, some of which were 2 ft. in diameter; but nothing of any size can have grown on the walls or they would have been spoiled or broken down.