

—Publicity, photo.

given favourable conditions, and that not alone on the far-stretching high coast of New Zealand, but on the return voyages to small islands, is a fact that arouses a profound respect for the sailing genius of our Maori forefathers.

"It must have needed stout hearts and the true adventurous spirit to sail thus far out of the way of inter-island voyagings, keeping southward for a colder land and a land where the spontaneously growing foods of the tropics did not exist. Close-hauled to the strong roaring Trades, they held dauntlessly on their way across the vast expanse of blue, a two-thousand-miles voyage, keeping watch and watch like any pakeha crew of to-day. They saw many a wonderful sight of the deep—the phosphorescent sea, where everything seemed on fire; the play of lightning about them in the thunder-squalls;

menacing waterspouts that joined sea and cloud. They saw the creatures of the ocean as only the sailing-craft man sees them.

*The great whale went majestically by  
Plunging along his mighty  
course alone  
Into the watery waste unknown.*

Water and food were problems that required much forethought and preparation. Water was carried in taha or calabashes of the hue gourd. The seed of this vegetable was sown in New Zealand, and we have seen the taha, or kiaka, in use in back country villages even up to a few years ago. Coconuts in generous quantity were also stowed aboard for food as well as drink. Sometimes, when long spells of calms afflicted the voyagers, food ran short, and slaves were killed for the sustenance of their owners. But, as a rule, it may be taken that sufficient sea-stock was laid in to last the voyagers the usual duration of a voyage, about a month."

The migrants from the main fleet landed at different points and at widely different dates. Each band sought out an empty territory for itself and out of these grew the tribes and sub-tribes. They forgot much about Hawaiki, they changed. The food was different, they used the phormium tenax to make their clothes and so they dressed differently; there were no wild animals and they had to trap birds or catch fish, and they ate differently and grew different. In fact, they forgot from where they had come, but the chiefs told them they come from Hawaiki—but they forgot where Hawaiki was and now Hawaiki cannot be found. Because some of the genealogies that the inhabitants of Hawaii, Savaii and

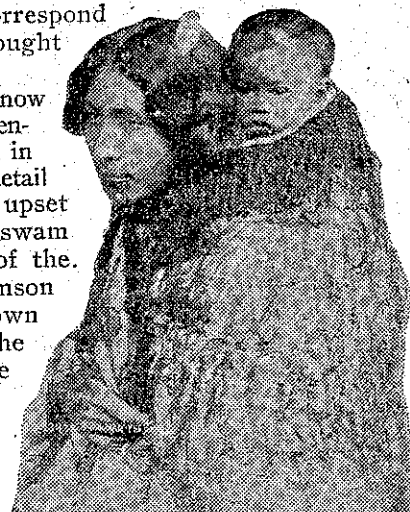
other islands in the vicinity correspond forty generations back, it is thought that Hawaii was Hawaiki.

Tradition dies hard. Even now the older Maoris, on being encouraged to talk of the past, tell in convincing and picturesque detail of the chief whose canoe was upset in the southern seas and who swam all the way to Ao-tea-roa; of the chief who, seeing the crimson rata in full bloom, cast his own coronet aside, saying that he would get a new crown in the new land; of another

who, dropping  
his axe over-  
board  
muttered

incantations

so strong that the waters divided and returned his axe. This is true, because the reef is there to-day!



—Photo, Dominion Museum.



THEY were sailors, fishermen and warriors, and although they will not again cross the Pacific—nor even the straits in their double canoes which they have forgotten how to make—and will never again pull a drag net a mile long, nor raid, kill and eat a neighbouring tribe, they have not lost their arts. Watch a native going down a flooded river in a frail canoe, see him eeling, or remember how he went over the top in 1918!

His wisdom and skill is traditional, but it showed signs of declining when civilisation reached him and its worst evils were more pleasurable than its good. Squalor, insanitation, bad food, the fire-arms and liquor of the white man sent him rapidly down hill. Disease, in particular galloping consumption, swept the ranks of the race that through sheer strength and ability, had conquered an ocean of eight thousand miles. The pas that had effectively resisted the pakeha, became empty and the timbers rotted. Their trophies were carried into the museums of the white man.

But the very agent that had caused this decline, was responsible for its rise. The learning of civilisation roused dormant wisdom and the Maori produced statesmen that the British Empire was honoured to call their own. The squalor was forbidden, the pas were cleaned. The Maori was properly clothed and he progressed and his numbers increased.

*"They are not lost  
Nor can annihilation  
Blight them all.  
As a noble war canoe  
Though broken, partly wrecked  
Can be renewed  
So, O my people, rise."—Maori Chant.*