

boiling mud, which require to be approached with great caution, for the soft soil, not being covered by any mixture of tufa, yields upon the slightest pressure. The largest of these muddy basins is of an elliptical form, fourteen feet long by eight broad, and as many deep. The mud boiling within is an oxide of iron of a bright red, and viscous bubbles of slime, rising to the surface, burst, and emit a fetid sulphurous stench: the scene is described as "truly infernal." Woe to him whose foot slips in this dread locality! It is certain death, and a death of terrible agony.

On the opposite bank is the *pina* of Tuhi-Tarata. The azure blue water flowing from its basin descends, in a cloud of vapour, a succession of terraces of tufa, which shine with the most various colours—white, yellow, and red. The same spectacle is reproduced at different points, accompanied by periodical jets at longer or shorter intervals.

Our enterprising traveller next proceeded to visit Rorotua, a volcanic lake fed by these thermal springs, and recommended by an ancient legend to the reverence of every devout Maori. Most of the principal families of North Island trace back their ancestry to Hine-Moa, the virgin of Rorotua. We have no space to reproduce here the story of this New Zealand beauty; but our readers will find it narrated in the "Polynesian Mythology" of Sir George Grey.

In the vicinity of this lake lies a small basin, the Rotomahana, which measures about 1500 yards in length by 600 in breadth. It is a real crater of explosion, deep in the centre, bounded by marshes on the north and south, and hemmed in by rocks on the east and west. It is justly entitled a *thermal* lake: the quantity of boiling water flowing from the contiguous springs is so considerable, that the whole lake is heated by it.

To the north is situated the Té-ta-Rata, a boiling spring, which, descending from terrace to terrace down to the lake, is the greatest marvel of this marvellous region.

On a ferny hill-side, about eighty feet above the Rotomahana, occurs the principal basin, whose sides of reddish clay are from thirty