

31st Dec^r Tuesday - Pipiriki House -

The climate favours more richness of vegetation. Numerous Potentilla Kanaos were to be seen - their bloom nearly over. We walked over three miles, and got a good idea of all there was to be seen. With all its loveliness, there is a slight monotony in this class of scenery, but this was a beautiful highway by road, resembling in character the highway by river which we had traversed yesterday. In the afternoon we explored the place and saw a very pretty waterfall - Peparoa - which is illustrated in the guide book, also some Maori whares. The Haroi coach arrived at 4 o'clock bringing some tourists and a letter from Mary Anne - who is going to Tokaenu soon. One of the numerous Hamilton Brothers of Canterbury is schoolmaster there, and he has lent his house to Mr Grant. The next excitement was the arrival of the steamers of each line. Two came up crowded out - about a hundred and thirty in all, some people drove two yachts came - so we were about 180 at Pipiriki House altogether. A large tent remained standing from Christmas week in which thirty beds were made up, and we knew of twenty one

shattered rows besides. The New Year's holiday accounts for this rush. The verandah was lit in the evening by Chinese lanterns and fairy lights, the dining room and whole front of the house prettily decorated with palms and ferns, and the whole scene was most animated. All the village assembled outside the gates, and haka's were danced for some time by Maori women, headed by an energetic young man, whose shouts and gesticulations stimulated the others to a high pitch of vigour. As we have to get up before five to-morrow morning, we did not stay to see the old year out, but retired in good time to prepare for another long day in the open air.

New Year's Day 1902 - Surely a cinque ushering in of the New Year - may it be an omen of better things to come to us all. For I have been sadly short of my share of this world's pleasures and refreshments. We got up at five a.m., breakfast at 20 past - and off on board the "Aorere", a little oil launch which takes the Astoria passengers. The greater number of tourists went in Matricchi's boat, the "houa", much larger.