

river, and to the frequent canoe-capsizes and drowning accidents here in former times, when the Mokau was a much-used channel of Maori canoe traffic. At the head of the rapids is a small island, which is a convenient camping-ground for canoe-crews, unless the river is very high. The Panirau Creek enters the Mokau close to the island, flowing in through a narrow gorge between two lofty tree-shadowed banks. This stream in ancient days was the route taken by war-parties bound for the Ohura Valley and the upper Wanganui. The cliff and mountain scenery here is very wild and bold. On either side of the rapid-whitened Mokau the great ranges rise steeply for about a thousand feet, clothed with forest to the sky-line; and just above the rapids, in the bend, the river flows through a narrow gorge where every sign of rock and soil is hidden by densely growing timber, ancient trees covered with moss and kiekie, and every crevice is filled with beautiful ferns.

"Just above the great bend there is a splendid smooth reach, with the Ranga-a-Waitara forested range rising precipitously, a razor-backed wall, on the right-hand side. Then more rapids are breasted, the Otukihi, where the obstructions are rocks, not snags, and where the water curls in glassy curves and waves over slippery rounded boulders. These rapids bore a reputation of dread amongst the Maoris. Two of the children of the King-country chief Tawhana were drowned here by the capsize of a canoe. In this part the river is strewn with mossy boulders; on these rocks piharau, or lampreys, are often found after floods.

"About half a mile beyond Otukihi are the Mahuenui rapids, where the river pours down over rough boulders—a dangerous spot for canoes. Poling up this swift run, we soon come to another rapid, the Turanga-a-Pou, which was evidently caused by a heavy slip from the banks. A good deal of snagging is required here. The ranges on either side of the Mokau now lessen in height, but the river retains its gorgy character. Between the several rapids there are long, still, calm reaches, overhung by forest trees of large size, hung with creepers and mosses. Two more rapids, the Mahue-iti and Mangatakiora, are within half a mile of each other: both are swift glassy runs over rocky obstructions and sunken logs. The little Mangatakiora Stream comes in here on our left. Presently there are signs of civilisation again, a welcome break after the great solitudes of the forest. At the Matai bend we come upon a pioneer settler's home, Riddell's clearing, a very lovely spot. There is now a succession of rapids to be overcome—the Matai, the long run of the Tahu-mataroa, the boulder-strewn Aroarohaki, and the Mangaharakeke (Flax Creek), named after a small stream which here joins the river. The banks here are low and well wooded; tawa and miro are the predominating timber. Shrubs and fern bend over the banks beneath the large trees, and the reflections in the still clear reaches are marvellously beautiful. Bird-life is plentiful; wild pigeons and tui are frequently seen feeding on the miro and kowhai trees along the banks.

"At Whakapapa and Kawakawa, about forty miles from the sea, the forest gives place to manuka and high fern and shrubby vegetation; the soil here is evidently very rich, and should make the best of farming land. Several small rapids are encountered; Te Poko and Iwitu are the principal. Here we had to get out and haul our canoe up over the shallows. The runs are not swift, but in summer-time the depth of water is so small that launches would have considerable difficulty unless the methods of navigation adopted on the Wanganui are introduced here.

"At Kaiwaka, a short distance below Totoro, there are to be seen the remains of a very large *pa-tuna*, or eel-weir, built of stout manuka stakes driven into the river-bed. This *pa* was constructed about five years ago by Te Rangituataka, the highest chief of the Ngati-Maniapoto Tribe, and brother to the late celebrated Wetere to Rerenga, of Mokau Heads. Rangi had this *pa* erected in the expectation of making a big haul of the silvery eels which abound here in March and April for a great tribal feast; but a flood swept half of the weir away, and the old chief interpreted this as a *tohu-aitua* or omen of death or misfortune to himself, and not long afterwards he died at his home at Mahoenui.

"The European settlement at Mahoenui, on the Awakino—Te Kuiti Road, is about two miles from the canoe-landing at Kaiwaka, and no doubt this landing will be found a more convenient terminus for the river traffic than Totoro, a mile or so higher up the Mokau."

*Approximate Cost of Paper.*—Preparation, not given; printing, 1,500 copies (including maps and illustrations), £48 2s. 6d.

By Authority: JOHN MACKAY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1909.

*Price 1s. 3d.*