

centre of the plate, while the borders are decorated with arabesques in various shades of blue, sometimes heightened with touches of white and golden brown. The colour, found in Pesaro ware are manganese, green, yellow, black and cobalt blue, with a beautiful lustre which has a changing effect in colour. The majolica of Siena is often decorated with grotesques or scroll work in blue and white on a yellow orange or black ground. The majolica produced at Caffaggiolo usually has a decoration of green and purple or orange and Indian red on a cobalt blue ground, with a purely white glaze, and is very similar to that made at Forli. Urbino majolica, as a rule, has delicate arabesques, grotesque figures and floral scrolls in orange, green and blue on a white ground; the finest pieces are not listed.

Lustre ware is stoneware or crockery having surface ornamentation in metallic colours. The various kinds are gold lustre, silver lustre, platinum lustre, and copper lustre.

VISIT TO TAUPO TOTARA TIMBER CO.'S MILL AT MOKAI.

(By the "Graphic's" Special Photographer.)

The settlement or township of Mokaï is at present very little known to the outside world, and this is to be little wondered at, seeing that less than three years ago there was no such place in existence, and even now letters, unless legibly addressed, are apt to go astray, and find their way to Mokaï. Mokaï is situated about seventeen miles from Taupo, and seventeen from Putaruru, on the Rotorna-Auckland line, with which place it is connected by a private rail, and lies on the north-west of a vast totara bush, many thousand acres in extent.

The Taupo Totara Timber Company has acquired this large tract of country, and has established a sawmill on an extensive scale, with all the most approved and up-to-date labour-saving appliances, mostly of American design. Hence the origin of Mokaï. I took the opportunity of visiting this interesting spot recently in company with Mr Murdoch McLean, the contractor for the new railway, who very kindly piloted me through.

We left Putaruru about 10.30 a.m. one bright frosty morning, the train consisting of an engine, three trucks, and an Old Wellington horse tram car, labelled "Cuba-street." I cannot say that the country we passed through would evoke much admiration from a pictorial point of view; being for the most part pumice land, with stunted fern and tī-tree. Only once was the monotony broken by about half a mile or so of bush, and here we had to bid farewell to old "Cuba-street," and get on to an open truck, drawn by another engine, which took us round the side of hills with many a sharp bend, till at length we reached the Waikato River, over which we crossed on the largest single span wooden bridge in the colony. Here we disembarked, and as it was growing very cold, I remarked that I would be glad to get near the fire. "Devil a fire you'll get this night," rejoined my

companion, and alas, this only proved too true! I tramped myself over a "Perfectum" oil stove, which was cooking our evening repast, and by seven o'clock, I felt fairly comfortable. On retiring for the night a bed was made up for me on the floor, with plenty of sacks and rugs, but nothing would keep me warm. Verily, Captain Falwin was too severe on us.

The next morning all the country was white with a heavy frost. We were up at six o'clock, and after a hearty breakfast, made for the train. We all got on the engine for warmth, and I was given a seat alongside the boiler, where I inwardly rejoiced. Our course was very tortuous, as we wound round the hills, ever rising higher and higher, till at length we reached the rail-head, where two gangs of men were working hard, one pulling off the old wooden rails, and the other following them up with the iron rails. A short walk and we reached the old engine "Climax," which has drawn many and many a load of timber from the bush, and after a short ride of about three miles, we arrived at Mokaï, just in time for dinner.

With that utter disregard for the feelings of mankind in general and photographers in particular, which I have so often noticed, the weather showed signs of a change, and before two hours had passed, the sky, so blue ever since leaving Auckland, became overcast, and for the few days of my stay in the bush the weather was anything but photographic.

Mr Forsliek, the manager of the mill, proved an admirable host, and made me very comfortable. He also showed me over the mill, and explained the various pieces of machinery. One morning he took me up a tram-line for about three miles into the bush, where the timber was being felled. Four stalwart men were in the act of felling a fine totara. A "scarf," or wedge-shaped cut, is made in the tree on the side on which it is to fall, after which a cross-cut saw is put in behind, and when it has cut sufficiently deep iron wedges are driven in till the tree overbalances, and falls with a thundering roar. It is a fine sight to witness. The trunk is then cut into suitable lengths where it lies. The undergrowth is cleared away, and a strong wire rope (see photograph No. 3), attached to each log in turn, is connected with a powerful hauling engine situated at the tram rails. A portable electric communication is established between the engine and the workmen in the bush. All being ready, a pressure on the button gives the signal. The engine whistles in return and commences hauling. To get over the difficulty of guiding the log round the various bends in the track, an ingenious system of blocks has been devised, and by this means the log is kept in its proper course. On reaching a corner the electric bell signals "Stop!" The rope is then detached from the block and attached to one higher up. A press on the button sets the engine starting again—and so on till the tram-line is reached. And now another labour-saving appliance comes into use. Instead of employing the old and laborious method of jacking the logs on to the trucks, a pair of gigantic hooks (photograph No. 4), suspended from aloft, is lowered, and the points are driven into either side of the log, which is then hoisted by the engine, previously referred to, and lowered on to the trucks placed to receive them. Hey, presto! What was once

the work of hours now becomes a question of minutes! When three logs are lowered on to their respective trucks, and firmly secured and coupled together, a workman takes his position on the hindermost one, the engine sets them in motion, and away they go by gravitation right down to the mill, three miles away, in a space of six or seven minutes. By a clever contrivance a single movement of a lever applies a brake to eight of the wheels simultaneously, thus enabling the workman to regulate the speed to a nicety. Arrived at the mill, the logs are discharged by means of jacks, and broken down (that is, cut longitudinally through the centre by an upright saw), and thence conveyed into the mill. And here another contrivance, new to this country, and known at the mill as the "nigger," rolls the log into any desired position on the travelling bench, on which it is cut up into various sizes.

The empty trucks are in the mean-

time drawn up again into the bush by hoists; and the same process is repeated over and over again. Nearly all the available timber is either totara or matai, by far the greater proportion being totara.

To show the confidence the company has in this undertaking, in addition to the expense of making the railway already referred to, a township has been laid out, rows of workmen's cottages have been erected, a butcher's shop and large general store are in full swing, a football ground has been provided where matches are played weekly in the season, the building of a social hall is in contemplation, so that the comfort and entertainment of the community has not been overlooked by the company, which has been enterprising enough to start this important industry.

At the present time the output at the mill is about 20,000 feet per day, and when the company has all its machinery erected this quantity will be doubled.



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