



Geo. H. White, CAVES AT MOHAKATINO RIVER (NEW PLYMOUTH—AUCKLAND ROAD). New Plymouth.

along the banks of the Mokau is seldom to be seen. It would almost appear as if the Creator had difficulty in finding room for all the vegetation, with such prodigality is it heaped on every spur and crowded into every ravine. Wherever the eye turns is endless variety of shade in green, relieved here and there by a bunch of red rata flowers and the yellow berry of the karaka. Timber of good quality is found in large quantities. Totara, rimu, kahikatea, and birch abound. Here and there is to be seen a fine puriri. Already several sawmills have started operations, and unless steps are taken promptly, the beauty of the river will be greatly marred by felling the timber on the water's edge.

One cannot speak of Mokau without mentioning its coal deposits. I am told that for fifty miles along its northern bank the mining rights are taken up, and that throughout the whole of that land coal abounds. At present the only mine working regularly is that owned by the syndicate which took over the property of the first Mokau Coal Company in which the late Sir Harry Atkinson, the late Mr. H. R. Richmond

(once superintendent of Taranaki Province), and Mr. B. M. Smith, the present M.H.R. for Taranaki, were interested some twenty years ago. Persons capable of judging say that for a lignite, it is a very fine coal, and equal to any of that class, found in the colony.

At Owen's Clearing we stayed about a couple of hours, during which we had lunch, and then started on our return. As his task neared completion, our "boatman" evidently felt freer of responsibility, and became quite loquacious. He informed us very gravely that with "this boat you must get on plenty of *memento* to keep her going easily." This remark of his we determined to keep as a *momentum*.

Each time he spoke, he stopped rowing altogether, and naturally it was no easy task to keep a straight course. On one occasion the boat slewed right round on to a sandbank. In a moment the old fellow's arms and legs were in every part of the boat at one and the same time, and in his haste he made confusion worse confounded. He turned to me in great disgust, as it was I who had been vainly trying to steer to his spasmodic pulling, and wanted to know if I couldn't