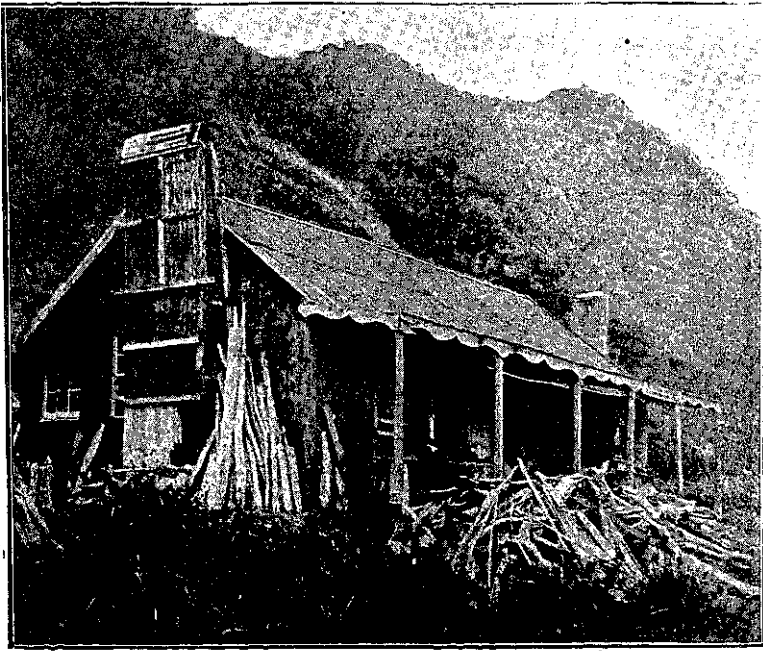


fully cut through this limestone barrier on their way to the sea.

We explored these rivers, and they are all beautiful, but Fox's is by far the most picturesque, and we spent several happy days wandering up and down its winding bed, admiring some new beauty at every bend. A track has been made for a mile or two up from the mouth of the river, and in places where it is over-arched by the low-spreading bush, the sunlight filters through the leaves, and beautifully dapples

quite overcome with the grandeur of the scene, for on either hand the great towering limestone walls rise sheer for hundreds of feet, their rugged faces draped and festooned with ferns and shrubs, whilst the scarlet rata blossoms, amongst which the kakas screech all day long, lend warmth, colour and tone to the picture. The crests of the ravine are fringed with bush, and there the pigeons can be seen sailing about on lazy wing, and looking quite diminutive from the river-



The St. Kilda Hotel. Landlord Billy sitting on the corner of the Bench.

the mossy stones with flecks of light and shade.

Where the track terminates there is nothing for it but to wade in, which at midsummer is no great hardship, as it is rather pleasant than otherwise negotiating the numerous fords with the crystalline water gurgling and bubbling about your knees. Most travellers ride through the gorge, but as we had plants to examine and collect, and butterflies to net, we preferred being on foot.

Mile after mile one walks along,

bed below. *Convolvulus* trails its snow-white flowers over the lower bushes, and later in the season the river's edge is adorned with daisy-like clusters of "*Linotea Hectori*," better known through the district as the "tobacco plant."

In places the cliff's face is frescoed with delicately-tinted designs in stalactite, and from overhanging cornices crystallized lime produces some grand decorative effects. Here and there a limestone bluff stands out white and dazzling in the radiant sunlight, thrown into bold re-