

islets placed in the middle of its bed, and penetrate with a thunderous roar into the valley. On its banks float white clouds of vapour, created by the leaping springs which flow towards the river. Here mounts a fountain of vapour, to re-descend in rain; there another rises, and suddenly stops; at the same moment a third and fourth begin to play; thus the game is varied and renewed, as if art had here constructed a Versailles on a colossal scale. Even when all the fountains open simultaneously, enough water remains for the cascades. Our traveller set himself to work to count the different places where

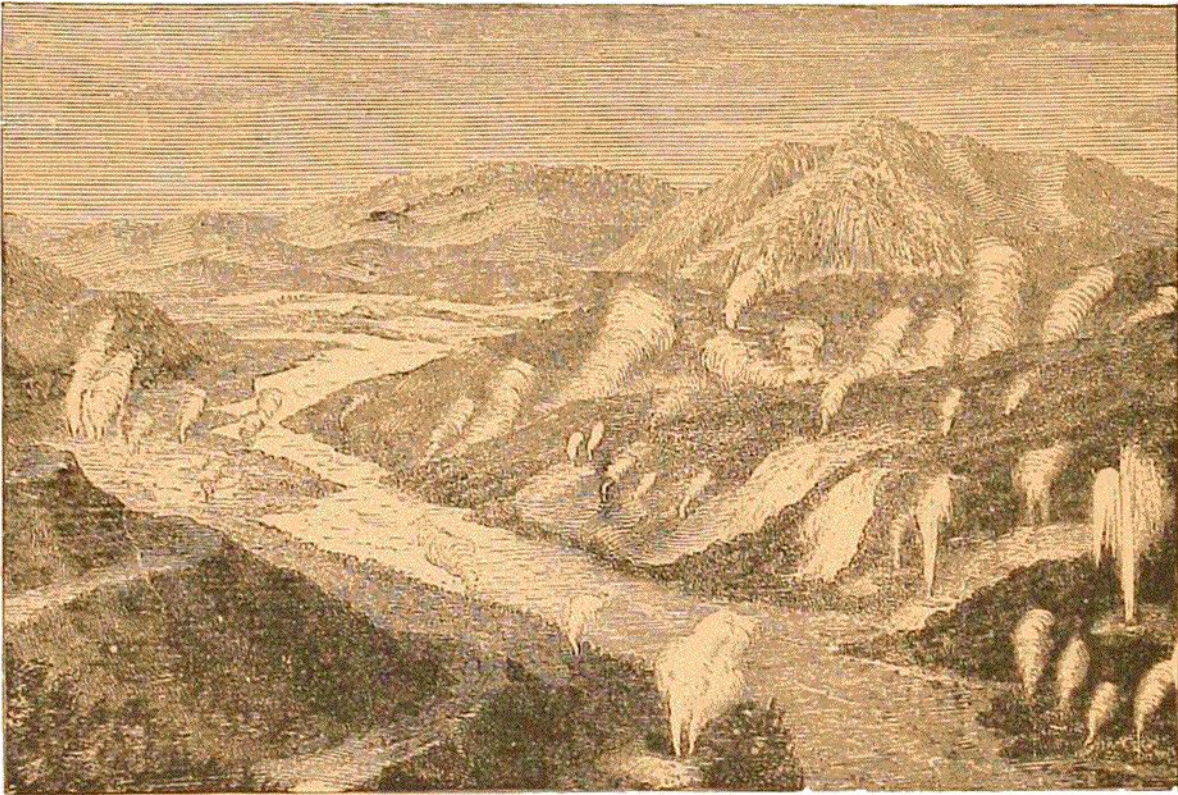


FIG. 153.—GEYSERS AND THERMAL SPRINGS IN THE WAIKATO VALLEY.

a basin of boiling water was visible, or a vapour-cloud resulting from the same cause. He numbered sixty-six, without, however, being able to include the whole in his survey; and, moreover, many springs break out after long intervals of rest, like the geysers of Iceland.

The basin of these springs extends along the Waikato for about a mile, from the steep cone of Whakapapataringa, on the south, to the wooded mountain of Tutukan on the north. The greater number are found on the right bank, but are not easily accessible, for it is impossible to traverse the rapid current right opposite the springs; the