

remind readers for their comfort that N. colensoi has developed the hybridization habit and hybridizes merrily with arboreum and simplex. As regards N. colensoi X arboreum, Cockayne and Allan remark "An important feature of this hybrid group is the transition in length of petiolules (leaf stalks) from the sessile (colensoi) to the well stalked (arboreum) condition".

Mr. McKenzie also has observations to make on Clematis hexa sepala. He points out that the number of sepals is not what one would expect from the name. Strictly speaking hexasepala means six sepalled. Cheeseman gives the number as 6 - 8, but apparently it varies. Mr. McKenzie remarks: "In Te Whaiti in November 1944, I saw a great deal of this (C. hexasepala) and I found it at Miranda in October. Here again I was completely puzzled. Cheeseman says the flower is white --- the flowers were a rich cream in every case." The sepal number was also not what he expected. "Had it not been for the kindly and ready help of Miss Molesworth I should also have remained in the dark in this case too."

The variety in the number of sepals and in colour may be due to the fact that C. hexasepala hybridizes with indivisa, foetida and (possibly) with colensoi. As regards the foetidax hexasepala cross, Cockayne and Allan remark, "But few examples have been observed but these show clearly the results of the combination of the small yellow flowers of foetida with the larger white ones of hexasepala".

Years ago the editor remembers noting a beautiful specimen of C. hexasepala growing in a private garden. It flowered profusely and the flowers were of a beautiful greenish cream, certainly far from being white.

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Another interested country member, Mr. G. Fanand of Kumeu, expresses his desire to understand the use of the word "birch" as applied to our native trees.

We are not surprised that our correspondent finds the name birch puzzling, when used in regard to New Zealand trees. Actually it ought never to have been applied to any plant, since we have no true birches (i.e. members of the genus Betulus) in New Zealand. The name "birch" was originally applied by the early settlers to the

New Zealand beeches. Actually the small leaved native beeches (species of Nothofagus) bear little superficial resemblance to the large leaved English beech (Fagus sylvatica). Members will realise this for themselves if they compare any find specimen of the English beech with the native beeches, (N. truncata) growing at Birkdale or Chelsea (or with any of our Southern Beeches) of which good examples are to be found in the University grounds. Actually birches and beeches are closely related botanically, both being members of the order Fagaceae. Not content, however, with naming beeches birches, the early pioneers added to the confusion by applying the names to members of the genus Pittosporum and genus Suttonia. It is to be concluded that they thought Suttonia urvillea (The "red birch" or mapau) and Pittosporum tenuifolium (the "black birch" or hohuhu) both resembled the southern birches. These species belong to widely separated families. The Pittosporum family is related to the rose family and the currant family, while the Myrsine family (of which Suttonia is a genus) connects with the primrose family, a much more advanced group.

In order to make the matter quite clear, I present line drawings of the flowers of the families concerned.

PITTOSPORUM sp.



Male Flower.
The female has a pistil
not stamens.

NOTHOFAGUS sp.



Male Flower



Female Flower



SUTTONIA Sp.