

Whangarei Heads, that they decided to denote a special prize for it, to be used for the purchase of books or equipment at the discretion of its enthusiastic headmaster, Mr. Francis.

The growing public interest in the Show is a matter for congratulation. This year, the attendance was 7000 as against 6000 last year although then the Show was open for a day longer. At the same time if any members have any suggestions to be made in regard to future shows, the Committee would be very pleased if they would make them while the present show is fresh in everyone's mind.

In conclusion, I would like to quote a very charming message sent by Dr. Archey to the Botanical Society in a letter to its President: "I am very happy too, to acknowledge the tremendous help that the Botanical Society members gave. In effect I should like to feel that the Show is the Botanical Society's own Flower Show and that the Museum is as it were just the place in which you hold it."

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#### LECTURES AND EXCURSIONS

On Wednesday, August 6th at 8 p.m. members listened to a highly instructive lecture on Ecology, by Professor Chapman. The lecture was practical in intent, Dr. Chapman giving precise details as to how various simple types of ecological investigation could be carried through. It is hoped that it may be possible in the future for the society to undertake some form of research in regard to one of our local native plant communities. Certainly with the many and varied associations in the vicinity of Auckland, there should be no shortages of material! Professor Chapman has kindly agreed to publish the substance of his lecture in Bulletin form. Members of the Society will thus be suitably equipped when they decide to commence making their records.

On Saturday, August 16th, our "outing" took the form of an afternoon at the Museum Library to become acquainted with the Museum's very valuable collection of Botanical works. The exhibition was organised by Miss Molesworth, assisted by the Museum Librarian, Miss E. Evans. Books were set out according to subject matter in an attractive manner. Of particular interest to members were some of the old historical works, and accounts of early botanical exploration. These included:

Accounts of the 3 voyages of Captain Cook.

Banks and Solander's Manuscript of New Zealand plants and Illustrations

John Evelyn - Silva. 1664 (Original edition)

J.E. Forster - Characteres Generum Plantarum. 1776.

L'Obel - Plantarum seu Stirpium Historia (Herbal) 1576.  
2nd ed.

Facsimile of Tasman's Journal, 1642.

On Wednesday, October 5th, a lecture was given by Miss M. Crookes on "Some Recent Developments in the Fern World". The lecturer pointed out that since the publications of Cheeseman's Manual (1925) there had been many developments in fern classification. Cheeseman gave the number of fern species in the world as about 5500. Christensen in 1938 made it about 9000 and since then still more species have been added. It is not surprising then, that with additional discovery and research, many changes in fern names have arisen.

Some of the changes are of the nature of corrections, i.e. species may have been wrongly named or earlier names which according to the International Rules, have priority, have been overlooked. For example, Marattia fraxinea Smith should rightly be Marattia salicina Smith, Asplenium adianticoides (Lin.). Christensen goes back to its old name of Asplenium falcatum, since the name A. adiantoides is now applied to A. praemorsum. In some cases varieties have been shown to be genuine species. Thus Asplenium hookerianum var. colensoi, Moore is once again Asplenium colensoi Colenso. Blechnum capense var. minor Hook. f. becomes again Blechnum minor R. Br. In some cases diagnostic characters once thought sound have proved unreliable and genera are no longer considered valid. For instance the genus Diplazium is now merged in the genus Athyrium, consequently Diplazium japonicum (Thunberg) Bedd. now becomes Athyrium japonicum (Thunberg) Copeland. Of particular interest in this connection are the tree ferns. The three genera Cyathea, Alsophila and Hemitelia are now included in the great genus Cyathea which includes about 770 odd species, hence Hemitelia smithii Hook. f. and Alsophila colensoi Hook. f. now become Cyathea smithii (Hook.f.) Domin and Cyathea colensoi (Hook. f.) Domin.

But while in some cases research has brought about the merging of genera, more often it has caused a genus to be split up into additional genera. The genus Dryopteris as previously represented in New Zealand now includes not only Dryopteris but also the genera Ctenitis, Lastrea and Cyclosorus, while Gleichenia species are divided among Gleichenia, Sticherus and Dicranopteris.

But it is among the Hymenophyllaceae that the most sweeping and alarming changes have been made. Christensen had divided this great family of over 600 species into four genera, nearly all of the species being included under Hymenophyllum or Trichmanes. Professor Copeland, our greatest authority on this fascinating family, has divided the family into thirty three genera, of which New Zealand has fourteen. The family is, he tells us "diversified beyond the belief of those who have not given it particular study." In addition to the shape and structure of the sorus the microscopic structure of the fern frond, the presence of false "veins" the nature of the hairy covering etc. are of diagnostic importance. It is noteworthy that Copeland's researches have increased the endemism among our N.Z. species. Several though widely distributed are now shown to be confined to New Zealand, while the widely distributed Hymenophyllum tunbridgense and Trichomanes humile are now believed not to be found in New Zealand at all - our ferns being Hymenophyllum revolutum Colenso (endemic) and Crepidopteris endlicheriana Presl (New Zealand to Norfolk, Fiji and Tahiti).

The lecture was illustrated by diagrams of fern structures important in classification, as the lecturer felt that these would be more helpful in clarifying points at issue than any lantern slides then available.

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#### NEWS OF MEMBERS

It is with regret that we learn that Miss Betty Molesworth, Museum Botanist, is leaving Auckland for Malay where she intends to study tropical vegetation. Miss Molesworth was the first secretary of the Botanical Society, holding the position till she left Auckland for Dunedin where she studied Botany under the late Doctor Holloway. Following her appointment to the Auckland Museum, Miss Molesworth again participated actively in the Society's work. Many of our members will possess her admirable little Bulletin on "Salt Marshes", and we regret that her departure will prevent a Bulletin on Mosses, a subject on which she has specialised. While at the Museum she did fine work on both the general and the Cheeseman herbarium, and during her sojourn she hopes to be able to provide the Museum collections with additional foreign material.

Our very best wishes to Miss Molesworth in her future journeyings, and our hopes that she will not lose touch with the Society that she has served so well.