

LECTURES AND EXCURSIONS

On Saturday, August 7th, our "outing" took the form of a herbarium afternoon at the Museum organised by the Museum Botanist, Mr. Cooper. Herbarium specimens were on display in the library and the librarian, Miss Evans, kindly exhibited collections of books dealing with matters botanical and horticultural. After viewing the displays, members were fortunate in having an illustrated lecture by Mr. Jollie on the Kew Herbarium. Mr. Jollie, who was himself trained at Kew, was able to give us a precise account of this world famous herbarium (which at present numbers material of over two million species) and following his talk was able to answer questions fired by interested members on problems concerned with the care and arrangement of this colossal collection. Mr. Jollie received a hearty vote of thanks, and then Mr. Cooper took members down and showed them the Museum Herbarium. This includes the famous Cheeseman Herbarium, and also many other important collections of foreign plants both introduced and from overseas. The Museum kindly provided us with afternoon tea, and from every point of view our afternoon was voted a great success.

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During the excursions held on July 17th and August 28th the accent was on horticulture.

The first visit was to Mt. N. Spencer's beautiful garden on Remuera Road. The garden is notable for its many species of rare and beautiful trees and shrubs. It was not, as Mr. Spencer remarked, the best flowering season of the year, but even so there was much to delight. The numerous species of wattle were in flower, Acacia polylyriaefolia with its lovely silvery podalyria-like leaves being particularly attractive, with the unusual Garrya elliptica showing its twelve inch long tresses to advantage in July. Of considerable interest was the collection of small conifers, noteworthy among which was the Japanese parasol pine (Sciadopitys verticillata) so common round Japanese temples, with its queer "fused" needles. Unfortunately, this fascinating pine is very slow growing. A beautiful shrubby variety of the Chinese juniper (Juniperus chinensis var aurea) showed rich and varied colouring. Beautiful roses, climbers and various specimen trees trained to a weeping habit were also a feature of the garden, which in addition provided a water garden, a small cactus garden and also a fine collection of flowers. The members concluded the afternoon by admiring the garden from the sun porch to the

accompaniment of the very extensive afternoon tea provided by Mr. and Mrs. Spencer. A hearty vote of thanks to our host and hostess brought to an end an extremely pleasant afternoon.

In complete contrast to that of Mr. Spencer's was Mr. Kealy's garden, which members visited on August 28th. While it is delightful as a whole, its special interest lies in its scree garden, Here we saw acclimatised on cunningly constructed artificial screens, rock plants from the four corners of the earth. Campanulas, primulas, saxifrages, daphnes, hypericums, and other favourites were represented by rare and interesting species. Raoulias and whip cord hebes also flourish with Mr. Kealy. One or two interesting new comers from Australia have been imported recently by him and his experience will probably result in additional species for our gardens.

Mr. Kealy's garden is appreciated best by the specialist in rock gardens. However, our host went to very considerable trouble to temper the wind to the shorn lamb by providing not only typed labels for his species, but also copious extracts from Ferrar's diverting work on rock garden plants, wherein information is well salted with humour. After a pleasant afternoon tea, the meeting concluded with a very hearty vote of thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Kealy.

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ARBOR DAY

As on previous occasions, the Society took an active part in Arbor Day celebrations. In the morning an interesting ceremony was organised by the City Council at the Pasadena School. Here a very unattractive area, a waste of weeds and blackberry, ran between the school playing grounds and the stream. This was cleared, and on Arbor Day some eighty odd splendidly grown specimens of native trees were planted by various organisations. One was planted on behalf of the Botanical Society by Miss Crookes. At the conclusion of the ceremony the children of the school were made honorary curators of the area. This has been the Mayor's policy for some years and has always been followed with excellent results. The offer of a prize by Mr. Paterson, ex-chairman of the Parks Committee for an appropriate essay added zest to the children's interest.

In the afternoon a particularly interesting ceremony was organised by the Otahuhu Borough Council and the tree planting took place in the local memorial Park. All the local Schools were present, and the local Council offers generous prizes for winning