

essays and projects. The work done by local schools in this respect has shown a notably high standard. The guest speaker was the President of the Botanical Society who devoutly hopes she provided material suitable for work on selected Native Trees! A pleasant feature of the tree planting ceremony was the planting of trees by old colonists, one being planted by a resident born and bred in Otahuhu when that notable suburb was still backblocks. A tree was also planted to the memory of a councillor who gave his life in the late war. Trees were planted also by Miss Crookes and Mr. Leonard. The town is spreading rapidly about Otahuhu and it is most encouraging to see such enthusiasm for tree planting shown by the local body.

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SCENERY PRESERVATION

Rangitoto. The government has agreed to provide huntsmen to eliminate the picturesque but destructive wallabies. The Society has, however, reminded the Domain Board that scores still remain to be settled with the few deer and the numerous opossums. Pines unfortunately still remain a problem.

Kirk's Bush: Attempts are being made to secure the services of a permanent ranger for the protection and preservation of Kirk's Bush. The Society was represented at a meeting of the Great South Road Beautifying Society, and its representative took the opportunity of emphasising the great dangers that inevitably threaten unprotected bush.

Te Arai Bush. The last remaining fragment of bush on the Ninety Mile beach is threatened with destruction. The Society has approached the Minister in regard to the matter and has received a sympathetic reply.

Le Roy's Bush. Attempts are now being made by the Birkenhead Borough Council to secure the permanent preservation of Le Roy's Bush. This consists of a very beautiful area of about twelve acres only half a mile from the Birkenhead Wharf. It is a remnant of the original coastal forest that covered that area. It contains well over sixty species of native plants, including some sizable kauri, totara, very large taraire, kowhai, tawhiri etc. It is a particularly lovely spot and a little stream meanders through the bottom of the valley. This has been dammed in places by the late Mr. LeRoy to form attractive pools. If the valley is not

preserved, its destruction seems certain as the valley walls are very steep, and thus erosion would be inevitable once the natural covering suffered serious interference. The area has been visited by the President of the Botanical Society, Mr. Cooper, the Museum Botanist, and Mr. Jollie representing the Institute of Horticulture. All have written in to the Birkenhead Borough Council urging the importance of preserving this very beautiful remnant, which is, incidentally, not only a lovely area of bush, but a bird sanctuary as well.

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PROPAGATING OUR NATIVE PLANTS FROM SEED

by F. Jollie.

Most of our native seeds may be collected from January to April, and such a natural means of propagation is dependent upon the provision of the most suitable and natural seed bed that we are able to provide for any plant requiring specific treatment. If we always keep this before us, then raising our natives from seed is not really difficult. Artificial means of propagation can never totally exclude the means that nature has devised to reproduce her kind. We may hurry these requirements, or even change the kind of medium etc., but always we come back to realise the value of reproducing natural conditions to gain the best results. The importance of this consideration cannot be stressed too highly because there is bound up in such a theory, the elements of success as set over against poor results or perhaps failure.

It is possible to provide these natural conditions even under refined conditions, i.e., by sowing in pots or seed boxes, under glass, and in sheltered positions, and it is here that we triumph over nature, in that we obtain a higher germinating percentage than the chance conditions of nature.

At this stage of our talk then, let us consider the kinds of seeds we will have to deal with.

Types of seeds.

Large seeds like the Karaka (*Corynocarpus lavigata*) tend to lose their viability rather quickly, hence they should be sown soon after harvesting. The fleshy covering of the seed helps to insulate the seed against excessive drying out until the rains come, for you