

FLOWER CULTURE IN BRITAIN.

The contribution of the British flower breeder to horticulture is the theme of a small exhibition which is to be held in the Cheeseman Hall of Natural History at the Auckland Museum from the 26th May to the 19th June, 1955. Ever since the Middle Ages flower culture in Britain has been both an industry and a passion. With species drawn from every part of the earth, the British flower breeder has produced blooms of ever-increasing variety and splendour.

The exhibition will form part of the Tours and Gardens section of the 1955 Auckland Festival. Placards and colour transparencies from the Festival of Britain will be exhibited, as well as flower prints and books from the library of the Auckland Museum.

I should appreciate it if members who have suitable coloured illustrations of old or new garden plants would communicate with me at the Museum (41-132) or at home (88-594).

ROBERT COOPER.

OBITUARY

It is with deep regret that we record the passing of Mrs. O.N. Tonkin a foundation member of our Society. Mrs. Tonkin had a deep love for native plants and devoted her artistic talents with great enthusiasm to painting them in water colours and occasionally oils. She did not confine her attention to the most spectacular of our native flowers, but endeavoured to make her paintings representative of as many types as possible. She paid great attention to accurate delineation, and tried where possible to study plants in their natural surroundings. Consequently, when she very generously presented about 250 of her pictures to the Botany Department of the Auckland University College, the Department acquired not only appropriate and charming decoration, but also something that was of very real value to students of botany.

Mrs. Tonkin was a very keen member of our Society and retained her interest in our activities right until her final illness. We shall miss her gentle and unassuming presence amongst us.

Mr. Robert David Scott died at the age of 77 years in January, 1955. His interest in native plants began nearly 40 years ago when he was living at Picton and met Mr. J.H. Macmahon, a keen amateur botanist. Macmahon's name is kept green by *Celmisia macmahoni* T. Kirk, a beautiful little daisy which he discovered on Mt. Stokes and Mt. Richmond. For the rest of his life Mr. Scott was keenly interested in native and introduced plants, and his accurate determinations were of great help to the writer and other members of the Society. Probably it was his quiet enthusiasm which led his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Mavis Scott, to photograph the flowers of Arthur's Pass National Park. Some of the best of her studies are included in Laing and Blackwell's "Plants of New Zealand" and E.C. Richards' "Our New

Zealand Trees and Flowers". Another of his "converts", Captain J.D. MacComish, made a most valuable contribution to the knowledge of the plants of Tahiti, Norfolk and Lord Howe Islands.

I have placed some of Mr. Scott's botany books in the library of the Auckland Museum so that works on his favourite botanists, Carl Linnaeus, Allan Cunningham, George Forrest, Reginald Farrer, Kingdon Ward, etc., may be appreciated by a wider circle of readers.

ROBERT COOPER.

Ferns Once More.

Members will be interested to know that two new fern records were established for the Waipoua forest during the Society's summer excursion there.

Craspedophyllum armstrongii. This minute fern was discovered by Mrs. Barr and Dr. Hastings.

Mecodium atrovirens. This little dark-coloured filmy fern was unearthed by the indefatigable Mrs. Hynes.

Congratulations.

Our congratulations to Mr. Carrick Chambers on gaining his Master of Science with First Class Honours in Botany. We would also like to congratulate him on his appointment as a Lecturer to the Botany Department of the Auckland University College. Mr. Chambers took for the subject of his thesis a study of the genus Blechnum, and he has pursued the various species of this large fern genus with relentless enthusiasm from one end of New Zealand to the other. He has also carried out genetic work and cultivated some hundreds of plants.

Mr. Chambers is well known to us as a member of our Committee. He has also played a very active part in the Auckland University Field Club. He is at present an editor of their Journal, Tané; a Journal which many of our members have found extremely useful as it publishes species lists, etc. of various localities, keys and studies of some troublesome plant and animal groups and altogether has added much to the knowledge of the natural history of our area. Probably its most important number is Vol.6 1953-1954 entitled "Studies of Three Offshore Islands", edited by T.C. Chambers and R.L. Bieleski. This deals with the Flora, Fauna and geologic character of Little Barrier Island and Hen and Mayor Islands. The number was well illustrated by line drawings.

In conclusion we congratulate Mr. Chambers on all his good works and trust he will long remain a member of our Society.
