

which runs along for about three miles rising imperceptibly to about fifteen hundred feet at the clearing ("third house") which was as far as I was able to penetrate. This beech forest lacks the tangled undergrowth so characteristic of the northern rain forest, and the soft covering of the fallen brown leaves, and the outcrops of greyish rock set off the varied ferns to admirable advantage. One was impressed, for instance, by the beauty of our common Blechnum discolor, or the charming, but more modest, Blechnum fluviatile adorning the track sides. Near the track entrance I was delighted by the very fine specimens of Blechnum minor growing, stiff but graceful, along with procerum. It would have been interesting to spend a little time searching for one or two queer forms whose presence was suspected, but time did not permit of undue lingering. I was delighted with Leptopteris hymenophylloides. In Auckland, where it tends to droop rather shabbily along banks, I had always regarded it as a distinctly poor relation of the magnificent Prince of Wales Feathers. But here it makes a beautiful symmetrical tuft, dark, delicate and lacy, and is a sheer delight.

Mecodium demissum adorned the ground in rich and beautiful patches and later I encountered similar patches of Meringium bivalve, which I had only met previously in the Mt. Egmont bush. With its very narrow toothed segments, this fern resembles our local M. multifidum but differs in its sori, which are small and terminal, very different from the tall erect stalked sori of the latter. M. snaguinolentum, scabrum and flabellatum seemed quite common as were doubtless a number of other "filmies" had one had time to browse.

Blechnum vulcanicum often covered banks by the side of the tracks while the fine fronds of Blechnum patersonii were noted, though these were seen at their best mantling the banks of the stream on the valley floor. Where fallen trees caused a temporary break in the forest roof, very fine forms of Histopteris incisa were to be seen, with Hypolepis rugosula establishing itself at the clearing's edge. Grammitis billardieri was growing freely on earth banks along the track as also was Asplenium flabellifolium which loops its way along quite freely and is not confined to rocky places as it seems to be round Auckland. When we reached the clearing I was delighted to find the little Blechnum penna-marina in one or two grassy places.

Down in the valley, a brief afternoon excursion brought to light more "filmies" - Sphaecocionium lyallii and ferrugineum and Hymenophyllum revolutum but the highlight of the day was the discovery of a bipinnatifid form of Microsorium diversifolium, of which more anon.

A COASTAL VALLEY

One afternoon I was fortunate in visiting a patch of coastal forest near Mackays Bluff. Here I was very lucky in having the guidance of Mrs. Wells who as a student had made a study of the valley for an honours thesis. I was interested to note great clumps of Hypolepis tenuifolium growing in the more open spaces, often tangled with