

THE BOTANICAL BLOCK, PAPA KURA.

Progress Report

The weather gave a somewhat clammy welcome to the faithful fifteen who gathered at the Botanical Block for their working bee on Saturday, May 24th. But it failed to damp our enthusiasm which was just as well, as there was much clearing to be done. Our efforts made a great difference to the place, and in spite of some casualties, we are glad to report that many of our trees are well grown and sturdy. Our specimens are still unlabelled, as in the early days this was decided against, lest small well-labelled rarities might be a temptation to those with fingers not only green but light. But now many plants are so well established that we might pause to take stock.

We have a number of species of Pittosporum, the common P. tenuicaulis and P. crassifolium and as well, P. umbellatum, P. obtusatum, P. eugenioides and P. kirkii. We have rimu, totara, kahikatea, matai and kauri as well as some fine specimens of native cedar (Librocedrus doniana).

Corokia buddleoides X, Corokia buddleoides is flourishing, so is Corokia cotoneaster, though three specimens ably rescued by Mrs. Millener from beneath a layer of pumpkin vines from across the fence looked a little depressed. Our ribbonwood (Plagianthus betulinus) is well grown, and so is that odd little Myrtus, Myrtus obcordata. Small leaved coprosmas are flourishing, including the dainty leaved C. areolata, which grows naturally on the section.

The daisy family is well represented by two good specimens of native holly (Olearia ilicifolia) and the beautiful Chatham Island Senecio, S. huntii. This list, which is not complete, gives an indication that our little plantation is in good shape and we hope as time goes on to add further treasures to our collection.

Now, what of the casualties? Our worst losses are among plants growing in a damp hollow near the gate. The soil here becomes waterlogged in bad weather. It will be necessary to replace with plants which enjoy such conditions, such as pukatea (Laurelia novae-zelandiae) kahikatea, and similar trees and shrubs. These should be brought in and hardened off before the spring planting. Mr. Farnell has kindly said he would deal with any suitable plants members care to bring in for this purpose.

DIFFICULT TO KNOW

During the next few months the Society, weather permitting, will be making trips to places where divaricating shrubs are to be found. It occurs to the Editor that members might like a little preparatory ammunition.