

with
On the road to Lake Ohau contrasting, the blue of the bugloss in one part I saw deep crimson sorrel (Rumex acetosella) backed with the rich green of the lucerne (Medicago sativa) and soft mauve of the thistle tops.

The Lindis Pass appeared to be huge humps covered with yellow ochre plush, then suddenly silver-grey mica schist with masses of creamy-coloured gooseberry bushes clinging to the hillside.

The barren sand of Bannockburn was enlivened by the heliotrope of the clumps of mallow (Malva sylvestris), again the blue of the bugloss, greenish-white of the Bokhara clover (Melilotus albus) and the orange of the eschscholtzias (E. californica). These brighter colours were toned down by the more neutral colour of the tussocks and the pinkish-mauve of the haresfoot trefoil (Trifolium arvense).

Leaving Manapouri the scheme was of two shades - yellow ochre and ruby red, produced by the sweet vernal grass (Anthoxanthum odoratum) and the bidi bids (Acaena microphylla). Through this ran the grey ribbon of the road.

The memory remains of colour harmonies, some rich, some soft, some brilliant, with a variety not seen in the North Island.

Ruth Coyle.

AUSTRALIAN ORCHIDS ON DISPLAY

Although some of the halls at the Auckland Museum have been closed during the building of the extension, the native plant table has been maintained, and this month Mr. E. D. Hatch supplied us with a pot of Australian orchids for display. Mr. Hatch revised the orchids of New Zealand in a series of papers which were published in the Transactions of the Royal Society of New Zealand and has studied the Australian relatives for some years. He has grown a number of the Australian species and the first exhibited in flower is Pterostylis coccinea. This plant is from open grassland on the Barrington Tops plateau in New South Wales, and has been in cultivation in Auckland since 1954. More or less allied to the New Zealand P. trullifolia, the flowering plants appear first and are followed by the rosette plants. The plant form is determined by the size of the tuber, the dividing line being round about 11mm. diameter. Anything below this will produce a rosette and above it a flower. This red-flowered colour-form is the normal type but a rare green-flowered form does also occur. Rosettes often arise from dormant buds at the base of the flowering plants, as many as 3 having been recorded. The plants appear in December, flower in January-February and the rosettes die back in September.

The next Pterostylis to be exhibited will probably come into flower in May.