

AUCKLAND BOTANICAL SOCIETY

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The Annual Meeting of the Auckland Botanical Society took place in the Botany Lecture Theatre at the Auckland University on Monday, 22nd April, at eight o'clock. The meeting was well attended (46 - a good muster for a business meeting). After hearing and approving the Report and Balance Sheet the Society turned its attention to the business of the election of officers. Mr. Butler retired from the position of President to that of Vice-President, and Mr. Farnell becomes our new President for the ensuing year. Mr. Farnell is so well known to our members that he needs no introduction. Mr. Farnell is known in Botanical and Horticultural circles in Auckland as "the man who grows things". I think it would be fair to say that Middlemore is about the nearest approach Auckland has to a Botanic Garden. Many rare and interesting native plants flourish there, some brought in from the wilds, some raised from cuttings and many grown from seed, with for good measure, hybrids both natural and artificial. Striking foreigners are also to be found in his care, for Mr. Farnell is a gardener of the most hospitable type.

The office of secretary is always a problem and we are glad indeed that Mrs. A. Coyle is to continue in this exacting role. Having acquired a fully qualified accountant for its treasurer, the Society was naturally not willing to allow him to escape, so Mr. V.E.D. Thomson was again elected to that office.

We are again fortunate in having Mrs. P. Hynes with us as one of our Vice-Presidents - her long and faithful services to the Society are too well known to require emphasis. Along with Mr. Butler, we are happy that Dr. Rattenbury will serve as Vice-President.

The committee includes Mr. Holt and Mr. A.H. Coyle, whom we are very glad to know are willing to serve again, and also two new members, Mr. A. Buckeler, a horticulturist, and Mr. E.W. Pook, a student at the University. We hope these two will be happy serving on our committee, and we welcome the special contributions which each will be able to make.

Following the conclusion of the business, we enjoyed an informative

and diverting show of coloured slides dealing with the Society's Chakune trip. These were contributed by various members, some were scientific, illustrating plant associations or botanical "finds", others purely social like the delightful study of Mr. Jessop ----- . Afterwards we repaired to the supper room to meet our friends and exchange gossip concerning the summer's trips.

Our hearty thanks to Mrs. Wood for directing our attention to an interesting locality.

MOSQUITO MOUNTAIN

Manganamu or Mosquito Mountain is a conical-shaped wooded hill rising rather conspicuously beside the road between Turangi and Tokaanu Its height is 1613 ft. above sea level, but as its base is near Lake Taupo (1172 ft.), the climb to the summit is something in the vicinity of 441 ft.

We had passed this hill several times and were rather intrigued by its shape and by the uniform height of its bush covering. This consisted of second growth dominated by Manukas, Leptospermum scoparium and included Kamahi (Weinmannia racemosa), Rewa rewa (Knightia excelsa), Rangiora (Brachyglottis rapanda) and Nothopanax Spp. Closer inspection disclosed a track which we followed to the summit. There we found large blocks of pumice, in fact the whole hill seemed to be composed of pumiceous breccia. From the trig we obtained an extensive view towards Turangi, and in the opposite direction, a small cutting through the trees revealed some buildings in the pretty little native village of Waihi.

To my mind the most interesting feature of this hill is its fern population and we found the ground beside the track heavily carpeted with the filmy ferns Meringium multifidum and Mecodium scabrum (more often found on trees), Kidney ferns (Cardiomanes reniforme), and Microsorium diversifolium.

Most intriguing however, are the greatly diversified forms of Asplenium to be found there. These range from Asplenium hookerianum, A. colensoi to A. bulbiferum and a strange form of A. flaccidum was also found.

The road passes beside this hill and the track is easy to find. Fern lovers visiting that area would find it a very fruitful collecting ground and for those particularly interested in the genus Asplenium it would prove very rewarding indeed.

K. Wood.
