

Manakau Heads and the Tasman Sea.

After lunch we went further down the road to another patch of regenerating bush, now with sizeable kauri and taraire with their purple drupes. Most remarkable in this bush were the many large and handsome kohekohe, Discoxylum spectabile. Here there were also Hoheria populnea and Beilschmiedia tawa. We found Adiantum fulvum in the bush and again on the roadside, its form differing considerably with its location.

We returned home having had a most interesting and happy day, for which we have to thank Mr. MacDonald, our very able leader.

.....

POKENO

15th August.

L.W. Butler.

We arrived at Mr. Ross Mitchells farm in the Bombay hills at about 10.30 a.m., the day being fine and sunny but with rather a cold wind. Leaving the house we crossed several paddocks and came to a stream. Swollen by the previous days of rain a crossing was made with some difficulty, though we remained reasonably dry.

We went up a slope into a small patch of bush growing in a semi-swampy situation and found numbers of Sarcochilus adversus, several plants to a tree, Eugenia maire, Parsonsia heterophylla, Muehlenbeckia australis and a large Macropiper excelsum with a trunk about six inches through.

Coming out of this area we climbed a slope to a volcanic ridge with a flat grassy patch which was the site of an old Maori pah. There was a very interesting view across the valley towards the Meremere Power Station which we could see in the distance.

We then descended into a gully in which large king ferns, Marattia salicina, were numerous. Up a stream and then a ridge of mixed forest to a clear area where we stopped for lunch. After lunch we walked in a semi-circle, round a big gully, through several paddocks and a swamp, where the writer filled one boot with sloppy mud, to a patch of several chains of "Old Man Gorse".

Through the gorse we came to a slope of kauri forest, easy to move through and full of a variety of plants. There were some peculiar samples of Alseuosmia and numerous orchids, Sarcochilus adversus, Bulbophyllum pygmaeum, Earina mucronata, Corybas trilobus, Acianthus fornicatus var. sinclairii, A. reniformis var. oblongus, Pterostylis trullifolia, P. alobula, P. montana, P. graminea and big patches of rosette leaves. We hunted for P. brumalis but failed to find any. In this area there are some beeches, Nothofagus truncata.

The return to the bus was made by a different route which though muddier gave us an easier crossing of the stream. When we

gathered at the farmhouse we carried, by acclamation, a vote of thanks to Mr. Mitchell for his help in guiding us and his permission to wander over his farm.

At 3.50 p.m. we left for home after a most enjoyable day.

.....

MOUNT AUCKLAND.

19th September.

Miss. D.C. Bagmall.

About 25 of the party decided to do the longer walk over fields and through higher bush to the top of Mount Auckland, 994' above sea level. After leaving the rest of the party we continued through the bush for a short while until we reached the open fields. This part of the bush was similar to what we had already been through. It was all very beautiful, with an abundance of ferns of many types and a large number of Kowhai, all in full flower.

After a steady climb across the fields we came to a ridge, where all were very ready for the lunch stop. On arriving there, two things caught our attention: firstly a rewarewa with the flowers almost out and then a fat pigeon sitting on a branch just a few yards away from us. He seemed very tame and quite unconcerned at the sudden invasion of his privacy. We had the choice of a sheltered place in the sun, just below the path, or a shady place above with a breeze coming through the trees. We were now about 300' above sea level and from our lunch spot looked across a huge natural amphitheatre, dotted with several fine specimens of cabbage trees, to the large area of bushland, through part of which we had just come. It was more colourful than usual, with the large numbers of kowhais in flower and also an occasional bunch of clematis high up in the trees. Towering above the other trees were a number of large kauris.

Fortified by our meal, we set off on the remaining six or seven hundred foot climb, fortunately without our packs which we were able to leave at the lunch spot as we were to return by the same route. After a further climb of two or three hundred feet in the open, we reached another fence and again entered the reserve. Then followed a very interesting and quite energetic climb to the trig station.

The bush is very rich in flora, many varieties being noted beside the track. A very pleasing feature was the large amount of undergrowth, with a great number of seedlings, particularly kowhai, karaka and nikau. No grazing has been allowed since 1947, which has accounted for the noticeable increase in undergrowth. Several orchids were found, including some fine examples of Pterostylis banksii, Pterostylis montana var. rubricaulis, Corybas trilobus and Earina mucronata - there was one glorious Earina with flowers fully out, hanging from a nikau palm. There were koromiko and mingi-mingi in flower, also a number of Alseuosmia bushes, some beginning to flower. Some of us saw for the first time our native iris, Libertia, a pretty white three-petalled flower similar in shape to the larger blue Australian Iris.