

The small tree layer and undergrowth were fairly dense and ferns were plentiful. The little white crucifer, Cardamine heterophylla, was in flower and in the wetter places were many liverworts; Marchantia with antheridia and archeogoniophores, Anthoceros and Monoclea bearing sporangia. Some of the latter was collected and has since been sent to England for the use of students.

In the more open places Gaultheria antipoda was coming out and the dainty, waxy flowers of Libertia ixioides made a lovely show in the sun. We noticed the leaves of Libertia - flat and grass-like in comparison with the keeled ones of Dianella intermedia which was growing nearby. Lycopodium volubile was fertile but not in great quantity.

The high water mark and damage done by the heavy spring rains were evident, and a lacebark log, lacerated so that the innumerable layers of perforated inner bark were easily seen, interested many of the members.

In the rocks along the river Carmichaelia odorata was in bud. Hebe catarractae was there and Oxalis lactea and Pratia angulata were flowering on an old log. On the damp cliffs opposite the sunny shingly beach where we lunched Gnaphalium lyallii was flowering profusely.

In all, over 90 species were recorded and the members who were present had a profitable and very pleasant day.

Primrose Self.

A WEED EXTRAORDINARY.

To those interested in the alien plants that intrude into our flora there sometimes come thrills, as unexpected plants come under their notice. Not so long ago there came to me the pretty little spotted orchis, so dear to the wanderer in the English woods. This was gracing the lawn at the far-famed "Tutira". Still more recently that enthusiastic naturalist Mr. J.E. Attwood, found a delicate little English Euphrasia near the Chateau Tongariro. And now, again from Tutira, there is Lathraea clandestina, l'herbe cachée or amourette of the French. This is a parasite, related to the common toothwort of England, and grows on the roots of willows and poplars. The leaves are close-crowded waxy-white fleshy scales and the tight clusters

of showy purple flowers, standing up well on their long tubes, peep above the surface of the ground. The plant belongs to the broomrape family, rather closely related to the snapdragons, which in flower structure it resembles. How this newcomer from southern Europe reached its present home on the Tutira willows we do not yet know. Fortunately we need feel no alarm at its presence.

H. H. Allan.

A NEW ZEALANDER IN CAIRO

Notes from Sgt. K. Given, on active service in Egypt.

The land of the pyramids harbours much of interest for those who would investigate beyond these famous structures; nor is it necessary to seek very far.

I paid a visit to the Cairo Zoological Gardens, and found them to be situated in most picturesque environment. Trees and shrubs from all tropical countries were present, many of them bearing names.

New Zealand is represented by the Kauri, a small specimen of which was sent from Kew six years ago. It is now 10ft. high, and is thriving. Probably as the result of strange environment, the tree is not characteristic, being less symmetrical, and the leaves differing slightly in shape and size. Agathis robusta, an Australian, is also present. It has much longer leaves than our kauri, and its wood is used for decking in boat building.

Among other genera prominent in New Zealand, Pittosporum is present in P. tobira, which much resembles our P. umbellatum. A vitex is also present. It rather resembles our puriri, V. lucens, except that the wood is not knotted, and the leaves are lighter in colour and not so wrinkled. Eugenia montana, which rather resembles our E. maire is there. Leguminosae are abundant, and Sophora pendula is not far removed from the kowhai.

Conium maculatum has a 6ft. circle to itself - this circle not however to be regarded as a halo by those who know how apt this poisonous hemlock is to run riot in New Zealand.

Feijoa sellowiana, Ginkgo biloba, Lagunaria patersonii, Nerium oleander, Kennedyia ovata, and Tecoma capensis are all present and in good form.

These are but a few of the comprehensive collection to be found in the gardens; which goes to show that given a drink, the desert soil is most accommodating.