

PAGES FROM A BIOLOGIST'S NOTEBOOK.
18.3.43.

In his talk Dr Blair took us, through the medium of a fine set of lantern slides, through many Countries, emphasizing the botanical features of each. The voyage to England was in a merchant ship during wartime, by the Cape Horn route. There were calls at the tree-less Falkland Islands, at Montevideo, where the time ashore was tantalizingly short, and at arid Dakar.

In England we saw something of the problems of agricultural research institutions, wartime forestry, and examples of countryside of different types.

In Canada, erosion problems in prairie land were illustrated. The efforts to produce a perennial wheat were described, the object being to get a pasture plant with seeds sufficiently large to strike in soil subject to strong drying winds. A long trip in a birch-bark canoe, through lake and forest looked idyllic, but was said to be very hard work. Pictures of animals encountered were included. The conifers of the Rockies were shown against grand views of mountains and lakes.

The colours of Arizona, the irrigation schemes of California, the produce-utilization research stations of the South-east States, and the grasslands and crops of Texas were among the many American subjects illustrated.

A final series of pictures of the buildings of some of the larger institutions carrying out investigations in various branches of the plant sciences served to emphasize the importance and support accorded to these studies in other lands.

STARLINGS AND TAUPATA.

There is a female taupata (Coprosma repens) bush growing in a conspicuous place on an exposed bank in my garden. This year its branches were so thickly clustered with orange berries that everyone who saw it exclaimed in surprise. For weeks it stood a handsome ornament in the garden.

On March 26th I happened to look out the window in the middle of the morning to see a flock of starlings busy cleaning up the berries. Between twenty-five and thirty birds were there. Some sat on the clothes line nearby, waiting to take a turn. Birds fluttered back and forth, and climbed up and down the bush, as many as half a dozen of them at once weighing down a slender branch. In half an hour they left, and practically every single berry was gone.

G. Cone.

THE GARDENING CIRCLE.

The Gardening Circle has the following seeds for sale at 1/- per packet, proceeds go to a fund towards having the Bulletin printed.

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| <u>Pachystegia insignis</u> (Olearia insignis) | <u>Mixed Celmisias</u> |
| <u>Arthropodium cirrhatum</u> (Renga Lily) | <u>Libertia ixioidea</u> |
| <u>Corokia macrocarpa</u> | <u>Hibiscus diversifolius</u> |
| <u>C. cotoneaster</u> | <u>H. trionum</u> |
| <u>Gilanthus puniceus</u> (Kaka beak, red) | <u>Linum monocynum</u> |
| " " " " " var. <u>alba</u> (cream) | <u>Colensoa physaloides</u> |
| <u>Leptospermum scoparium</u> (manuka), red and double white. | |
| <u>L. nicholsii</u> | |

Pittosporum from East Cape District with many-flowered umbels, cream and scented.
Garmichaelia egmontiana.

The Gardening Circle will endeavour to procure seed or seedlings for any member who makes his or her wants known.

The Gardening Circle desires to buy -- privately or for the Bulletin fund -- any of the following seed:-
Pimelea longifolia (taranga) Stilbocarpa lyallii
Any native Myosotis (for-get-me-not), B room (except C. odorata), Celmisias or any rare seed or seedlings.

Address: Mrs W.W. Samson, 54 Dundas St., Wgtn.