

RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

Part 3 of Volume 73 of the Transactions of the Royal Society of New Zealand, issued in December 1943, contains three botanical papers, all as it happens, by members of our Society.

Miss E. J. Batham describes the vascular anatomy of New Zealand species of Gunnera. She studied seven out of our eight species, and found the internal structure of the stems and stolons, though sufficiently complicated, still much simpler than that of the big Gunneras of South America and Hawaii. Some of these giant Gunneras we see in gardens, e.g. Gunnera chilensis, looking more like heavy overgrown rhubarb, than like our modest little soil-hugging species.

Mr. V. D. Moton's paper "Genetic Changes in the Homoploidature of N.Z. Species of Gramineae" is addressed especially to agronomologists, but the ordinary botanist who hopes to be able to grant a few common grasses by name, will note several changes with interest. A few are given here.

Arundo conspicua becomes A. kakahua, but we may still call it toetoe. Dicheleachne crinita and D. sciurea appear under Dasyxusia, as Dasyxusia crinita and Dasyxusia conspicua respectively. The two species of Hierochloa or holy grass both change their specific names, H. fraseri becoming H. alpina and H. recolens, H. antarctica. The tall dainty grass that was much admired and discussed at Mr. Duncan's, once known as Stipa arundinacea is now named Oxyopsis rigida. Two new genera are erected, Cockaynea, nearly related to Myrag and Petriella which has affinities with Microlaena.

Mr. G. Simpson of Dunedin is co-author with the late Mr. J. Scott Thomson of "Notes on Some N.Z. Plants and Descriptions of New Species".

Geranium microphyllum is given two new varieties, obtusatum with orbicular brownish, pubescent leaves, and discolor with yellowish brown leaves mottled with pale yellow. Cassipouliiflorum var. maculatum var. nov. is distinguished by its leaves, purple-spotted above, and its shortly-pedicelled pink flowers, while in the same species var. arenarium is similar to var. glabrum but everywhere soft and fleshy, with leaf-blades pale glaucous grey. Other species getting new varieties are Aristotelia frutescens, Rarsonia capsularia, Myrsotis pygmaea, M. macrantha, Habe lygocodioides, Asperoptera barka, Celmisia insularis, Cassipouliiflora, Abrotanella linariae and Senecio bellidiflorus. New species appear in Epilobium, Myrsotis, Habe (4 species), and Brachycome (2 species).

Full descriptions with details of distribution and habitats are provided. Without name changes, useful notes are given about distribution and occurrence of a number of other species. The fact that many of these plants have been grown in gardens, either by the authors, or by Mr. W. B. Brookie in Christchurch, adds great value to these revisions.

A LETTER FROM LEVIN.

We were away up the Waiopuha track on 25th March. The rains lately have greatly benefited the vegetation there, and mosses and other small things were looking quite revived and fresh again. We did not go all the way to the end of the track that has been roughly remade since the great storm of February, 1936, when windfall trees completely blocked the old one.

I found a lovely bronze-leaved hinau up high on the upturned roots of a large tree that had fallen. At Palmer's Camp there was Danthonia cunninghamii, only two clumps of it cut in the open amongst Blechnum discolor which practically covers the flat there. The flower heads that were so showy up the Wai-iti in late January were just about done.

There were plenty of miro berries here and there along the track, and the Dianella was a thing of great beauty with lovely long sprays of blue berries. I found one lonesome berry on a tall slender plant of Myrtus pedunculata, and all admired it as it was the first we had seen; but further on I spotted a more open plant with quite a number