

GOLLAN'S VALLEY TRIP.

The first Saturday in the month seems destined to be a refresher day for the plants rather than for the searchers. The second of December, while disheartening for the would-be visitors was most heartening for the plants resident in Gollan's Valley and those en route; so the little party that set out the following day realized to their satisfaction.

All the manuka blooms, - clean and bright - matched the day. And almost every manuka bush had its quota. As we ascended the saddle from the sea we simply had to stop now and then and admire. That sparkling centres, dewed with nectar - russet-brown for the most part - contrasting with the snow-white petals! Occasionally we came upon a shrub with flowers green-centred, bright pastel green that, fringed with white, charms the eye. On one bush, with capsules reddish brown, the petals were just slightly tinged with pink. The manuka was a useful plant for the crews of early exploring vessels. The Forsters' "Myrtle tea" was regarded as a healthful drink, as well as "spruce beer" that was brewed from rimu and manuka twigs.

Other plants that day besides the *Leptospermum* were looking exceptionally bright - the *Craspedias*, sturdy specimens with compound heads a bright yellow. These quaint flowers belong to a small genus, found elsewhere only in Australia and Tasmania.

Over the saddle and into the valley the manuka still greeted us. What an array of *Cordyline australis* and *Phormium tenax* along the banks of the stream! Both have been chary of blossom this season; the *Phormium* especially - my garden bush has failed to put forth a single korari. The Maori prediction is correct all right - summer non-est.

At the crossing we found the bridge down and the stream high, so retraced our steps for some distance, then climbed up to a small forested gully on the left. The cleared slopes were dotted with blue *Wahlenbergia*, sheltering in many cases in low clumps of gorse. In the Botanical Gardens is a *Wahlenbergia* from Tasmania, a sturdier little plant than ours; it forms a mat, is straight stemmed and bears larger blooms, but ours hold the palm for the purest blue.

In the gully, amongst the trees were some fine *kaikomako* and *hinau* and one very handsome *nikau* - a tall specimen, not yet old enough to form a stem, but with large fronds spreading out most gracefully, so sheltered beneath a giant *hinau* that every frond was perfect. On the sloping bank close to it we found a colony of those enticing little plants of the lily family - *Arthropodium candidum*. Like the *Craspedia*, this genus too is found only across the Tasman, with one species in New Caledonia. Both our species of *Arthropodium* are endemic; it would be interesting to know what the outsiders are like. There was also quite an assembly of *Craspedia* in this gully, but all taller-stemmed and with heads of a paler yellow than those in view of the sea.

Kawa Glenn.

THE TEN SHILLING HOLE.

With reference to an article in *Forest and Bird* on native growth at Waitangi, I can fully endorse the claims made as to rate of growth. Having been there for two months last spring, I had opportunity of viewing these plantations and was truly amazed at the growth. The statement made that "the secret is in knowing how to lay out and protect a plantation" is, I suggest, somewhat misleading and inadequate. The saying that it is better to put a 1/- plant in a 10/- hole than to put a 10/- plant in a 1/- hole is, I think, strikingly vindicated here.

The whole area occupied by the plantations referred to as exhibiting such remarkable growth was deeply hand-trenched before planting operations commenced, I believe, and has since been kept free from weeds, and well cultivated. That this, in conjunction with shelter, is responsible is well demonstrated by the fact that adjacent areas, equally favoured as to soil and shelter have made only mediocre growth. A most striking and interesting demonstration afforded of the response of natives to the "ten shilling hole".

H. S. Maxwell 6.9.44.