

BOTANICAL PUBLICATIONS.I. THE LIVING PLANT

By

I. V. NEWMAN.

Students attending the University courses in Botany will welcome the publication of a handy book to laboratory practice with the information succinctly and, one might say, meticulously arranged under tabulated headings. As the sub-title states, the book is a laboratory study. In almost every paragraph directions are given as to how to proceed with the practical examination of the subject in hand. The subject matter is most clearly set out in the table of contents, where the main branches of the plant kingdom are given, followed by the essential morphological advances made in the evolutionary progress of plants from algae to angiosperms. In the headings throughout the book this order is reversed, with loss of the advantage of having short titles covering both the systematic groups and the morphological changes. The final part of the book is concerned mainly with information on the families of plants quoted in the University syllabus as types to study.

The title of the book - "The Living Plant", seems not well chosen, as the subject treated is almost entirely anatomical and morphological; while such living functions of plants as respiration, photosynthesis, nutrition, growth, ecology, and distribution, are not touched upon at all. Plant physiology and ecology require practical work in laboratory and field, so that another book more comprehensive than Dr. Newman's is required. The present book may suit the course of botany laid down by the University; but it will hardly encourage the study of botany by other than the student wishing to complete his degree. The spacing of the subject matter, with its somewhat obscure headings and its restriction to the practical work required by the University, makes it unsuitable for those who wish merely to study the New Zealand flora. It is fair to note, however, that Dr. Newman did not claim that the book was intended to be read like an ordinary book. The book is not to be taken as a fair representation of the botany taught by the University, which includes in its syllabus a much wider field covering ecology, genetics, and the other subjects mentioned above.

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II. DICTIONARY OF NEW ZEALAND BOTANICAL NAMES.

In our Bulletin No. 10 (August 1944) Dr. Allan reviewed appreciatively Prof. Arnold Wall's cyclostyled pamphlet "Those Troublesome Names" (Bull. No. 1, Auck. Bot. Soc.) Now these two botanists have collaborated to produce a clearly printed pocket-size booklet on "The Botanical Names of the Flora of New Zealand Their Origin, History and Meaning, with Hints on Pronunciation" (Whitcombe and Tombs Ltd., 4/6, 88 pages.).

Whereas the earlier work did not deal with specific names, the present one is intended "to include all the Family, Generic, Specific and Varietal names" current at the date of the second edition of Cheeseman's Manual of the New Zealand Flora (1925).

The first nine pages are occupied by a general discussion of the kinds, forms and origins of our plant names, with a little more than one page setting out general rules for pronunciation, at least as far as the position of the principal stressed syllable is concerned. Some of us will be pleased to see *Pittosporum* recommended against *Pittospórum* but the same rule makes *Nothópanax* more correct than the familiar *Nothopanax*. With this reliable and easily accessible authority as a guide, there should develop a reasonable uniformity in the pronunciation of botanical names, which heretofore have sometimes shown four variants, one for each University College.

The remainder of the book is in dictionary form, with Family, Generic and Specific names in distinctive types, and admirably suited for quick reference. The principal stressed syllable is indicated in each word, and the origin and the meaning of each name are clearly stated.