

uncultivated parts were the Cicada family, the larger members of which must have been nearly three inches long. One species has the abdomen ringed with alternate yellow and black bands, the legs, thorax and head are red, and the wings are tortoise-shell. May-flies and dragon-flies were seen on the wing but there was a noticeable and most agreeable absence of such pests as flies, gnats and mosquitoes.

Beyond the lawn with its lily pond are huge beds of bulbs, including gladioli, agapanthus, ornithogalum, nerines, ixias, crinum, lachenalias, babianas, and others well known in horticulture. The belladonna lily (Amaryllis belladonna) and several species of "Red Hot Poker" (Kniphofia) are natives.

It was interesting to notice the presence of the bracken fern which is of world-wide distribution but is here more dwarfed in stature than in moister climates.

The South African flora has made numerous and important contributions to our gardens. Besides those already mentioned, some familiar garden types noted were species of Pelargonium, the well-known red Crassula (called in Auckland the Christmas plant), Strelitzia, Anchusa, Arctotis, Gerbera, Aster, Verbena, and the blue Plumbago.

Few countries in the world could offer such a wealth of plant life and the Gardens must be a veritable wonderland when the spring flowers are in bloom.

W.F.Harris.

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#### OTARI OPEN AIR NATIVE PLANT MUSEUM.

The dozen members who braved the bleak afternoon of September 6th were well rewarded for their trip to Otari. We were met at the top entrance by Mr. Brockie who is now in charge of the Reserve. Immediately we found ourselves among the treasures of Campbell Is. looking quite at home in the remodelled rockery just inside the gate. Here are displayed also some of the aristocrats of the South Is. mountains from the Garvies to the Spencers.

The pockets had been filled with a mixture of one part leaf-mould, one part peat and one part compost, mixed with the clay and all the plants looked very happy. They are clearly labelled and anyone who missed the arranged trip would do well to spend an hour there to be prepared to make the most of Mr. Brockie's talk on the Campbell Is. on November 19th. Among the exciting things from there that many of us saw growing for the first time were:- the daisies Pleurophyllum speciosum and P. hookeri; Chrysobactron (Bulbinella) rossii pushing up its fat shoots from the thready remnants of last year's leaves; Phyllachne clavigera, a dark green cushion starred with white flowers; Celmisia vernicosa in a variety of sizes; Hebe benthami, sturdy little bushes that should later develop their porcelain-blue flowers, the finest in the genus, Cotula plumosa from sea-elephants' wallows and the sturdy little C. lanata, Stilbocarpa polaris, Anisotome latifolia and A. antipoda; and the stout fleshy Plantago aucklandicus from the Auckland Is. The collection includes a number of the grasses from the island, including a proliferous form of Hierochloa in which the spikelets grow vegetatively instead of setting seed. Some of these spikelets set out in a box of sphagnum moss showed roots developing quite strongly from the rhachis.

Other plants specially noted in this top rockery were Dacrydium laxifolium (the pigmy pine), Pygmaea pulvinaris in flower, and the famous Ranunculus pauciflorus.

Before we passed on Mrs. Brockie invited us all in for a most welcome cup of tea, a warmly appreciated interlude!

Recent thinning has brought to light, near Dr. Cockayne's grave, two fine little specimens of Dacrydium kirki, still with all juvenile foliage, and one showing a twig with fasciated growth. Dracophyllum strictum had some flower spikes, the prettiest in the genus. The leafless Hymenanthera angustifolia again excited amazement that any plant so dead-looking could be alive and well.