

PERCY'S GARDENS AND NORMANDALE.

On Saturday, 1st May, nine members, led by Miss Hutson, visited Percy's Gardens and Council Bush, Normandale. The country covered was hilly, and the vegetation varied from bush and damaged bush to scrub and open grassland, with indigenous plants giving way to exotics in places.

In one place hangehange (Geniostoma ligustrifolium) and kawakawa (Macropiper excelsum) were plentiful, and further on in a shaded gully that ubiquitous introduced clubmoss, Selaginella kraussiana, was much in evidence, no doubt occupying a station that would normally be filled by ferns or other shade loving native plants. Among the more notable ferns seen was one tree fern thought to be Cyathea cunninghamii. Pteris macilentata was also noted, and the adult form of the climbing hard fern, Blechnum filiforme growing on a cliff face. On a bank near a creek a fine plant of Dryopteris velutina was seen, and a little below it a patch of Dryopteris decomposita, and some of the delicate Stellaria parviflora. Herb robert (Geranium robertianum) and nettle (Urtica incisa) grew among rocks in the creek bed. The forest floor at another point was strewn with ripe drupes of tawa (Beilschmiedia tawa). One tree of kohekohe (Dysoxylum spectabile) in full bloom was especially lovely. Other species noted included maire-tawake (Eugenia maire), hinau (Elaeocarpus dentatus) nikau (Rhopalostylis sapida), rewarewa (Knightia excelsa), kaikomake (Pennantia corymbosa), titoki (Alectryon excelsum), ramarama (Myrtus bullata). White rata or aka (Metrosideros perforata) was scattered about on the open hills, and lovely flowering specimens of the orange-red rata (M. scandens) attracted much attention. A number of trees of ngaio (Myoporum laetum) had heavy crops of reddish purple fruit. Some of the more notable exotics were Himalaya honey-suckle or whistle-wood (Leycesteria formosa), tutsan (Hypericum androsaemum) and honey-suckle (Lonicera japonica).

A fine collection of fungi was made by Dr. Cone. These included lovely salmon-pink cup-shaped fructifications of a Cantharellus, a brown Cantharellus, and an unusual fleshy type of bracket fungus about 3 inches in diameter. Many kinds were taken from a big recumbent rata log, which was nicely decayed and formed an ideal host for fungi. The party made the most of the mushrooms on the grassy hills.

F. E. Wilkin.

DR. NEWMAN'S TRAVELS.

At a special meeting on May 24th. Dr. Newman told us of his recent travels and showed us pictures of some of the places he visited. The air trip to England provided glimpses of Sydney, Gulf of Carpentaria, the Euphrates and Egypt. Prepared slides exposed through the astrohatch of the plane caught as many as 500 objects on an area of 7.5 sq. cm. and showed that there are pollen grains in the air even high over the central Tasman Sea.

An excursion to the fenlands near Cambridge was described and also the famous Botany School at Cambridge University where, for about the same number of students as at Victoria College, there is a teaching staff of 15 and about 20 attendants!

Many of the famous American Universities and Museums were visited. Along with pictures of Harvard came one of Mrs. Watson Smith, known to many of us as Miss Lucy Cranwell. The short grass prairie was illustrated, in similar latitudes as New Zealand but at altitudes of 5000-9000'. With a quick look at the Grand Canyon and California we returned via Honolulu to see the familiar Mt. Egmont from the air.

To take up the position of Professor of Botany in the University of Ceylon, Dr. Newman, together with Mrs. Newman and the family, left Wellington early in June. They carried with them our best wishes and we are sending, as a memento of their connection with the Society, a small gift of three mounted photographs, prints of botanical subjects from Mr. Druce's negatives.