

with small oblong entire leaves. Though these trees do not, like most European trees, acquire their new vesture in a few weeks, they are, nevertheless, very beautiful trees. The young foliage of the red-beech is a beautiful light-green, and the autumn foliage and the foliage of the seedling trees is often a brilliant scarlet. This tree in localities high above the sea is one of the giants of the forest, and its flanged and buttressed trunk will sometimes measure as much as 30 ft. in circumference. The black-beech is less beautiful than the red-beech, but in a good flowering season it is a mass of small rich crimson flowers, and is then a charming sight.

At Day's Bay these two beeches are found in a situation practically at sea-level, and as this is the only place in the North Island where this occurs it is a feature of considerable botanical interest.

Practically the only trees forming the "top story" of this forest are the red-beech, the black-beech, the tawhero (*Weinmannia racemosa*), and rata (*Metrosideros robusta*), and of these the two beeches are dominant, the other two trees occurring occasionally mixed with the beeches or in small clumps on the breasts of the higher spurs. The presence of occasional miro and rimu seedlings proves that these conifers once existed in the gullies, but the timber-getter has long ago taken them from the forest.

The plants that most please the average visitor to our native woods are undoubtedly the ferns, and of these there is an abundance in Day's Bay Bush. Of this race of plants the mamaku (or black tree-fern) and the ponga (or silver tree-fern) are the chieftains—pre-eminent from their size and beauty combined; there are also the lesser tree-ferns—the wheki and the katote, the latter with tender fronds of richest green. On the forest-floor polypodies, spleenworts, filmy ferns, and kidney ferns are seen in great abundance, and on every tree-trunk and bough there are numerous climbing or perching ferns. Of these, one (not yet endowed with any familiar name) called *Blechnum filiforme* is of special interest from the great dissimilarity that there is between the young plant with its short fronds with small oval pinnæ and the adult plant with long fronds with long and narrow pinnæ.

The most beautiful of the ferns that here adorn the forest-floor is the single crape-fern, a member of the *Todea* genus. On the dry stony spurs, under the beech-trees, are seen dense colonies of the kidney-shaped *Trichomanes*, a fern of semi-transparent olivine hue that in times of drought folds up its fronds to lessen the surface exposed to the desiccating air. The rare and beautiful filmy fern with crisped fronds (*Hymenophyllum australe*) is also to be seen in this bush.

Of the many plants that make their home on the boughs of trees are the orchids *Dendrobium* and the two *Earinas*. The former has hard, narrow, glossy, jointed stems like a miniature bamboo, and has large white flowers with delicate mauve throats. The *Earinas* are rather grassy looking plants with creamy white flowers; one, called *Earina suaveolens*, emits a delicious perfume not unlike that of honey, and can often make known its presence by its fragrance alone. There are several ground-orchids, mostly bashful little plants that do not ask the eye to notice their presence; one, however, the long-leaved *Thelymitra*, presents a posy of delicate blue flowers.

In the autumn of this year the karamu and raurekau (members of the *Coprosma* genus, and relations to the coffee-plant and famed *Cinchona*) were thickly studded with bright-red berries that looked like ornaments of richest coral. The mahoe-tree, a giant relative of the humble violet, was crowded with berries of a bright cobalt blue.

Most native climbing-plants are to be found in this small bush. The native passion-flower, or kohia, climbs the small trees, and on their tops spreads its clusters of leaves of glistening green; its fruits, of bright orange, are very showy, and are much beloved by the parson-bird, or tui, and the kioere, or bush-rat. The kaiku (*Parsonsia heterophylla*) is another climber, which displays an abundance of small dull-white tubular flowers that emit a pleasing perfume. The excessive variability of the leaves of this plant are of more interest than its æsthetic qualities. The *Clematis* (most beautiful, perhaps, of all New Zealand flowers), though not plentiful, may yet occasionally be seen. A beautiful member of the families that prefer well-lighted openings or the exteriors of the forests is the tataramoa, a near relative of the blackberry: it has large panicles of greenish-white flowers, which afterwards give place to pretty amber-coloured berries; its large palmate leaves are beautiful, too; but, being armed with sharp recurved prickles, the plant frequently gets so fastened on the incautious passer-by that it is difficult to escape from its hold; from this habit it was called by the early settlers the bush-lawyer. In the late autumn and winter the bush is gaily decorated by the small climbing-rata (*Metrosideros florida*), which gives a profusion of orange-red blossoms as a reward to ornament the tree which has afforded it a support on which to climb to reach the light its nature craves for. There are two other small climbing-ratas here, but compared to *florida* they are modest members of the family.

Up to the present not much has been done in the way of track-forming to make it convenient for the visitor to get about the bush. Up the bottom of the gully south of the pavilion there is a well-formed path that follows up the course of the streamlet for about half a mile. About half-way along this track another track branches sharply to the left, and passes through a graceful beech grove to the open spur to the northward. Between these beeches, and framed with its beautiful foliage, most charming views of Wellington are seen. When the track gains the open spur it continues with tortuous course some 200 ft. up the spur, and then ends at the margin of the bush; onward from here a blazed trail continues up the wooded spur to the summit of the ridge—some 800 ft., perhaps, above the sea. The climb is easy, and the beautiful views that are obtained of the harbour will more than repay the small exertion of the ascent.

The only native birds that I found in the reserve were the fantail, the black-headed tomtit, the grey warbler, the tui, and the white-head (popokotea); doubtless the weka and morepork are there also.

Fires have destroyed most of the bush on the further side of the ridge, and most of that area is now occupied with scrubby manuka, which, from its liability to fire, will be a serious menace to the