

be made to save them from extermination. The Summit Road Reserves provide the necessary haven for refuge and this is by no means the least worthy of the aims for which such have been established. So much by way of introduction.

Let us now stroll leisurely along the road itself, deviating at times to right or left, and examining what plants may strike the eye so as to get a bowing acquaintance, no mean privilege, with some few species of perhaps the most remarkable flora of the temperate zone.

The first view of the landscape gives the impression of a brownish grass-covering merely. But let us look more closely, and in the open spaces between the prevailing tussocks various herbs will be noticed, while here and there shrubs rise above the mass of vegetation.

First, as to the herbs. Here is the Lowland Bluebell (*Wahlenbergia gracilis*) a foot or more tall, its stems slender and angled, the leaves narrow and the flowers small, bell-shaped and blue or white. In many places, creeping close to the ground, the Yellow Wood-sorrel (*Oxalis corniculata*) may be easily recognised by its small leaf of three leaflets, sour to the taste, its small bright yellow flowers and the stout seed-pod, which, on bursting, scatters the seeds on all sides. Next, a little turf-making plant may meet the eye, having deeply-cut, hairy, aromatic leaves and small button-like pale-yellow flower-heads on slender stalks. This is Haast's *Cotula* (*Cotula Haastii*), a very rare plant except on the Port Hills. Rather more conspicuous is the Ground Convolvulus (*Convolvulus erubescens*) winding round the grasses and bearing white bell-shaped flowers one-third to three-quarters of an inch across, and heart- or spear-shaped leaves half an inch in length. Another plant of the same family that we shall certainly find is the Creeping *Dichondra* (*Dichondra repens*). You will know it by the broad patches of creeping and rooting stems bearing kidney-shaped leaves a quarter to one inch across, and silky back and front, and the widely-open greenish-yellow flowers one sixth of an inch in diameter. Let us keep a look out for a strange looking plant with stiff leaves with sharp, needle-like points in an erect rosette and the massive flower-stalk two or three feet tall. Who can guess that it belongs to the Carrot family? But plant relationships depend on floral structure, not on general habit or even form of leaf. It is the Spear-grass (*Aciphylla squarrosa*), the name "grass" being misleading, as it has nothing in common with real grasses. This yellow flower that we next examine, its petals not joined together and its stamens numerous, is the common New Zealand Buttercup (*Ranunculus hirtus*).

Note the erect stem and the long-stalked hairy leaves divided into three leaflets, which are, again, cut into segments. If we examine the tussock closely we shall see that there are two species, one the Common or Silver Tussock-grass (*Poa caespitosa*) with smooth stems and outer floral leaf without a bristle, and the other the Hard Tussock-grass (*Festuca novae-zealandiae*) with slightly rough stems and outer floral leaves with bristles. The turf-making grass, which is everywhere and year by year becoming more abundant, is the Common Oat-grass (*Danthonia semiannularis*). If the flower be examined with a pocket lens, two transverse rings of silky hairs can be seen. If, however, there are only two tufts of



Beken, Photo.] Governor's Bay and Mount Herbert, from the Road.

hair, not rings, the plant will be *Danthonia pilosa*. By farmers both species are called "Danthonia," notwithstanding in most places the latter is far the more valuable fodder plant. By this time, if it be mid-summer, or later, the garments of the plant-hunting pedestrian will be covered below with the brown, clinging burrs of the Red-flowered Piripiri (*Acaena novae-zealandiae*), a species that needs no further description. Earlier on, its red flower-heads are distinctly pleasing.

And now to the shrubs of the open. This one with dark, inter-lacing stems amply furnished with stout, woody spines, is the Wild Irishman (*Discaria toumatou*), while this, without leaves, but with erect, green stems, which, in due season, bear rather pretty purple, pea-like flowers, is the Common New Zealand Broom (*Carmichaelia subulata*). The genus would