

be purely a New Zealand one were it not that one species, a leafy plant, by the bye, occurs on Lord Howe Island. Should a plant of *Carmichaelia subulata* be found growing in the shade, note whether it has developed leaves. In some places burning the tussock has encouraged the growth of the Tutu (*Coriaria ruseifolia*) which now forms broad patches. This plant, on the borderland between herbs and shrubs, has a long, stout branching underground stem. The above-ground stem is four angled; the leaves are more or less egg-shaped and one to three inches long. In autumn the plant bears masses of small, globose purplish-black berries. All parts, the juice of the fruits excepted, are highly poisonous.

At many points it is easy to reach the rocks on the southern side of the road. They will amply repay a visit, since on them grow two especially remarkable plants, one shrubby, the other herbaceous.

The shrub, named by Raoul (*Veronica Lavaudiana*), is almost the most beautiful of its numerous kindred. It grows in inhospitable rock-crevices. The leaves are one-third to one inch in length, very thick, dark-green, and margined with red. The flowers, pink in the bud, but finally white, occur in considerable numbers on branched flower-stems. Lavaud's *Veronica* is found only on Banks Peninsula, thus affording a truly remarkable example of restricted distribution. The herbaceous plant which may be named the Port Hills' Groundsel (*Senecio saxifragoides*) grows best on more shaded rocks where soil has accumulated. It can be instantly recognised by its great rosettes of broad, oblong leaves, three to six inches long, clothed beneath with a mat of white woolly hairs. The flower heads, raised on stout, erect, branching stems, are one inch or more in diameter and bright yellow. The distribution of this plant is also most noteworthy. At Akaroa, and possibly over much of Banks Peninsula, it is absent, but in its stead is its very counterfeit (*Senecio lagopus*), the only distinction between the two species being the abundant bristly hairs of the latter. And yet, this bristly-haired plant is wanting, so far as I know, on the Port Hills, though it is not confined to Banks Peninsula, but is even found in the North Island, near Wellington! Another common plant of these Port Hills' rocks is the Black Shield Fern (*Polystichum Richardi*) easily recognised by its hard, dark-coloured leaves. A true Flax (*Linum monogynum*) will be seen here and there. It can be identified by its delicate large, pure white flowers in bunches, each with five sepals, petals and stamens, and its numerous, sharp-pointed leaves, a quarter to an inch in length. The shrub in the rock-clefts with very stiff leaves, two inches long, with wavy margins

covered beneath with a mat of white hairs, and bearing an abundance of daisy-like flower-heads, is the Akiraho (*Olearia Forsteri*). The Broadleaf (*Griselinia littoralis*) occurs in similar situations. It has glossy, green, thick, egg-shaped leaves, round at the tip, and unequal-sided at the base. Both this and the *Olearia* grow also in the forest, and then are usually much larger. A close, bushy shrub, two to five feet tall, with short, narrow, bright-green leaves and small white flowers in dense clusters, grows both on rocks and on the outskirts of the patches of forest. It is called the smooth-leaved *Veronica* (*Veronica leiophylla*). All the species of *Veronica* possess only two stamens, and the corolla is tubular below, but above spreads out into four lobes. Another *Veronica*, fairly common on the Port Hills, is the Koromiko or Willow-leaved *Veronica* (*Veronica salicifolia*), which differs from the

last-named shrub in its more open habit, greater stature, much longer and broader willow-like leaves, and clusters of flowers four to ten inches in length. Nearly all the species of *Veronica*, of which there are



Webb]

[Photo.

Sugar Loaf Spur, Dyer's Pass Road below.

more than one hundred in New Zealand, are easy to cultivate and grow readily from cuttings.

Let us leave the rocks and investigate one or other of the small patches of forest in the gullies, remnants of a once extensive tree-community. A new chum to the "bush" would grasp with confidence any neighbouring shrub should he stumble on the steep forest-floor. If the plant be the Shrubby Nettle (*Urtica ferox*), its stinging hairs will, once and for all, impress the species and its apt name, "ferox," on his memory. Shrubs with wiry, interlacing, slender branches are a feature of the undergrowth. Many of these belong to the genus *Coprosma*. The so-called "berries," each containing two small stones, flat on one surface and convex on the other, at once proclaim any shrub a *Coprosma*. But it is not easy for a novice to separate them into their species. Perhaps for the beginner the colour of the fruits is the best mark, but it