

to the north of latitude 42 deg., and the Kamahi (*Weinmannia racemosa*) dominant southwards.

The vegetation of the high mountains is both of great scientific interest and full of rare beauty. It is composed of no less than 966 species, and it is certain that a good many more species will be discovered. How strongly of New Zealand origin is the flora is revealed by the fact that of the 514 purely high-mountain species all except 16 are endemic, and probably 5 of these are endemic also. The headquarters of the true high-mountain species is in the South Island, their total being 473, as compared with 105 for the North Island, a matter which should cause no surprise since the area for plants above the forest-line is far and away less than in the South Island, where also the average height of the mountains is much greater.

With but few exceptions the most beautiful flowers of New Zealand belong to the high-mountain flora, so that in due season many plant-communities are natural flower-gardens of extreme loveliness. There are the giant buttercups, white and yellow—but nearly all the flowers are of these colours—which may be seen by the acre; the lovely ourisias, with the flowers in whorls round the stem, tier above tier, as in some of the Asiatic primulas, or the glistening green leaves, as in *O. caespitosa*, may form mats on stony ground bearing multitudes of delicate blossoms; the eyebrights—true alpine gems—their flowers white with a yellow eye or purple throat, or yellow altogether; forget-me-nots, yellow, bronze, purplish, or white; the snow-groundsel, its large marguerite-like flowers produced in such profusion that the mountain-meadow glistens like a snowfield; the two kinds of edelweiss, far surpassing their Swiss elder sister in beauty, the flowers of the “everlasting” kind, their outer leaves flannelly and snow-white. But above all other plants of the mountains, not only for their beauty of flower, leaf and form, but for their abundance in all situations, come the various species of *Celmisia*. “Go where you will”—to quote from “The Vegetation of New Zealand” (ed. 2, p. 238)—“on sub-alpine and alpine herb-field and their silvery foliage strikes the eye, it may be in stately rosettes of dagger-like leaves, in circular mats trailing over the ground, or in dense cushions. Their aromatic fragrance fills the air; from early till late summer some of their white heads of blossom may be seen, while in due season, gregarious species clothe both wet herb-field and dry stony slopes with sheets of white.”