

Button-grass, a moorland type of vegetation on peaty soil, is characteristic of the poorly-drained glaciated valleys in the mountains. Where the rainfall is sufficiently high the button-grass even extends up the valley sides. The button-grass plant, really a sedge, forms large tussocks or mounds which can make progress through such areas slow and tedious. Where the button-grass plains are traversed by rivers or streams, drainage of the adjacent land takes place and strips of forest grow instead of sedge.

A number of different types of mountain vegetation were illustrated by photographs. In general there is a dense scrub of tough or spiky-leaved plants above the forest. The beautiful flowers of many of them contrast strongly with their rather harsh foliage, and plants with similar leaves often turn out to belong to widely separated families when seen in flower. The deciduous beech (*Nothofagus gunnii*) is a small mountain tree but does not form extensive forests as does the other Tasmanian species (*N. cunninghamii*) already mentioned. The eucalypts of the mountains are different from the lowland species, and range in size from small trees down to prostrate shrubs. Most of the scrub is fairly tall, and low scrub, such as is frequently found in New Zealand is not usual. Mats of *astelia* (*A. alpina*, the only species in Tasmania) are to be seen in the mountains, usually in flat boggy areas. Above the scrub there are the plants of rocks, cliffs and moors, among them the New Zealand plants *Donatia* and *Phyllacne*, the latter only recently discovered in Tasmania.

In many of the photographs shown one was impressed by the magnificent scenery: the mountains with their characteristic "columnar crags and precipices" are the "bold residuals" of an ancient plateau of dolerite overlying sandstone.

The plants of New Zealand are for the most part endemic; but of the botanically related countries Tasmania is probably the closest, so we were fortunate indeed in having Professor Gordon give us such a clear and interesting account of the vegetation. A.P.D.

Fungi

Dr. Cone has spent many of her spare hours studying and drawing the numerous fungi to be found in New Zealand. It was with great interest therefore that we listened to her talk on September 20. In her introduction Dr. Cone discussed the nature of fungi and the different groups to which they belong. For her main subject she chose the higher fungi, particularly the agarics, or mushrooms and toadstools, in which she is especially interested. By means of numerous drawings, some in colour, she gave us a very good idea of the diversity and beauty to be found in these fungi.

Following the lecture Dr. Cone kindly consented to write some notes on mushrooms and toadstools for the Bulletin. These, together with an identification key and some drawings of common species, appear on the following pages. A.P.D.