

we had attained an elevation of over 3000 feet, where the road-makers had formerly camped, at what is known as the five-mile, forty-chain peg. It was only needful to sling our tent and fly over the poles conveniently left standing, make fast the guy-ropes, cut firewood, and fresh birch tops for our bunks, and give it a good sweep out with a bush broom, to render it fit for occupation. It proved to be an excellent camp in every respect, and we made it our home for ten days.

At the back of the tent a spring of ice-cold water welled out of the bank, and we scooped out a shallow pool below, which did duty for a bath. Our fire-fly was made of oiled calico, and proved of great service during the next few days, as a nor'-easter set in, and tested its qualities thoroughly. Great raking birch-trees towered over us, providing some shelter from the storm, but as the gale increased they bent before the blast, and swayed to and fro, scattering showers of twigs and leaves around, and causing us no small feeling of insecurity in our little calico house at their base. However, on a mountain side the old patriarchs of the forest become inured to that sort of assault, and take a firmer grip of the ground after each trial of strength with the elements, and we soon gained full confidence in their winning the day, and became indifferent to the battle raging above. The drain cut around the camp was running a banker, and the rain squalls threshed the undergrowth, whilst great masses of vapour swept over us, and we had to pile the birch logs on the fire to keep up an appearance of cheerfulness as we dodged the clouds of pungent smoke.

Fortunately for us the storm abated on the third day, and we set out for a tramp over some of the peaks which constitute the Brunner Range. The track led us through the bush for half a mile, and then brought us out to the clear country,

where finger-posts, planted five chains apart, indicate the line to take to strike the next section of the track.

We reached the summit of Boundary Peak at an elevation of 4500 feet, and found there a square mile or more of open country surrounding the mountain top, covered with stunted shrubs and native grasses, to which the County Engineer has given the name of "Flora-dale." An old billy inverted upon a finger-post marked the highest point.

Flora-dale proved subsequently to be rich ground for the plant collector, and I secured many specimens which were new to me. Numerous little rills intersect the bare spurs, those on the north-east face ultimately run into tributaries of the Little Deep-dale creek. At the source of each rill there is a mountain bog, ankle-deep in sodden moss, amongst which many varieties of delicate Alpine flowers bloom. Descending 300 feet we reached the continuation of the track leading further down-hill to a saddle, where in places the birch-trees stood in such close rank that daylight could barely struggle through.

Nature is prodigal in situations where shelter and moisture encourage the growth of the more delicate forms of plant-life, and the whole hill-side was thickly carpeted with many varieties of delicate ferns and great cushions of emerald-green mosses, while the birch trunks were festooned with lichens and parasitic plants, and mosses of many hues hung pendent from their branches.

Bush wrens and creepers were busily prying amongst the lichens, and into the crevices of the bark in search of material for their morning meal; native canaries fluttered in the tree-tops, their clear call relieving the stillness of the forest; yellow-crowned paroquets were calling to us to "give them a bit of bread"; a pair of tomtits, clinging to a supplejack, seemed to enquire into the reason for our intrusion;