

## NATIVE PLANTS.

### THE WORK OF COLLECTION AND ESTABLISHMENT.

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A HAPHAZARD way of collecting plants from the bush or other habitats seldom meets with success. If collecting in a large way be intended, proper methods should be adopted in securing the plants, and means provided at home for their treatment when they arrive. Even if only a few plants be gathered on occasions when collecting plants is not the object, they still require the same care. One occasionally sees people returning from a picnic carrying young nikaus or cabbage-trees with the roots exposed to the air; consequently the plants are practically dead before they reach home. Plants growing in the bush are in a cool conservatory, where drying winds or the glare of the sun never reach them. Sudden exposure to either means death to the plants.

The handiest way to collect is to carry a kit—a sugar-bag with the mouth sewn up, one side ripped open, and a rope handle put on each side, makes an excellent kit for the purpose. Plants chosen should be small, for, as they are all seedlings and have never been disturbed, they will either have a taproot or their roots will ramify considerably. If they have gained some size, there will necessarily be so much mutilation of roots that there will be little chance of getting them to grow. There are exceptions in which these remarks do not apply, but they apply generally. It should be noted that bush seedlings are usually started in leaf-mould lying beneath the trees. The roots, of course, get through the leaf-mould and into more solid ground after a time. If the plants be secured before they are firmly attached to the solid ground they may be taken with very little injury to the roots. These are the best plants to take. My own plan is to reject any plant that does not come away with a slight pull. However much I may want a plant, I do not take it if I have to mutilate the roots to get it. I never dig a plant in the bush. It is, indeed, very difficult to do so, on account of the network of tree-roots.

As soon as collecting begins put a little damp bush moss in the bottom of the kit, and lay the plants on it. If many of a kind are gathered in one spot it is best to tie them in bundles with