

opposite side of the globe, and about 1000 miles east of Cape Horn, was covered with perennial snows and the harbours blocked up with everlasting glaciers, still Captain Cook found a scanty vegetation, consisting of "a coarse strong-bladed grass, growing in tufts, a wild burnet [most likely a species of *Acæna*], and a moss-like plant which springs from the rocks."¹

In the Kew Herbarium there are specimens of only seven species of flowering plants and one fern from Macquarie Island, which were sent by Mr Fraser of the Sydney Botanic Garden about fifty years ago. They are: *Acæna sanguisorbæ*, *Acæna adscendens*, *Azorella selago*, *Pleurophyllum criniferum*, *Cotula plumosa*, *Luzula crinita*, and *Aspidium aculeatum*, var. *vestitum*.

But now, thanks to the zeal with which botany is pursued at the antipodes, we have a general knowledge of the flora. Towards the end of 1880, Dr J. H. Scott of the Otago University availed himself of an opportunity to visit the island and investigate its natural history; and he published the results in the Transactions of the New Zealand Institute (xv. p. 484), from which we extract some passages of special interest, as well as the list of plants collected, merely adding the distribution of the species in full, as we were unaware of the existence of Dr Scott's paper before it was too late to give this information elsewhere.

Macquarie Island lies about 600 miles to the south-west of New Zealand, more than twice as far away as the Auckland group, and is separated from that group and from Campbell Island by very much deeper water than that which lies between them and New Zealand. There is a great valley 3000 fathoms deep between Macquarie Island and the Auckland and Campbell Islands, while the sea between them and New Zealand is not 1000 fathoms deep. It is situated between 54° 26' and 54° 44' S. lat., and 159° 5' 45" and 159° 1' 45" E. long., being about eighteen miles long and five miles broad. The surface is hilly, though the greatest height is probably not more than 600 or 700 feet. The interior of the island shows the rocky tops of the hills blown perfectly bare by the wind, and fissured by the frosts; and in the hollows of the uplands lie a number of little lakes, which empty themselves by streams. These either make valleys for themselves, or tumble down the steep hill-sides in miniature cascades. The general appearance of Macquarie Island is barren in the extreme; not a tree nor a shrub on the island, and what vegetation there is has a great deal of sameness; long stretches of yellowish tussock (*Poa foliosa*), with occasional large patches of *Stilbocarpa polaris*, or of the peculiar sage-green *Pleurophyllum*. These, with the rich brown mosses near the hill-top, are all that strike the eye in looking at the island from the sea. *Azorella selago* grows on the hill-sides, forming prominent globular masses often four feet across. These are green on the surface, where the living part of the plant lies as a crust to the great mass of *débris* of former years' growth, through which the roots descend. The whole is so solid that one can stand upon it, and the surface so

¹ See Hooker's *Flora Antarctica*, p. 216.