

scraps in very bad condition. Unhappily my efforts to obtain good specimens were not fully rewarded, although a valued correspondent on the islands sent a strong root, which failed to grow. In January, however, the plant flowered in the nursery grounds of Messrs. Adams & Sons, Christchurch, and I am indebted to these gentlemen for kindly sending the flowering receptacle and ripe seeds. Unlike the forms previously mentioned, it is a strongly-marked species, as will be seen from the following description:—

Sonchus grandifolius, sp. n. A succulent herb 2–4 ft. high. Rhizome stout, creeping, fleshy, sometimes 2 in. diam. Radical leaves erect, $1\frac{1}{2}$ –2 ft. long, 4–7 in. broad; petiole 6–9 in. long, stout, dilated at base, not clasping; blade oblong or ovate-oblong, pinnate, pinnatifid or deeply lobed; segments 4–6 on each side, coarsely doubly serrate or dentate, almost coriaceous, scabrid above. Lower cauline petioled, upper broadly sessile, not auriculate. Anthodia corymbose, 1– $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. diam.; peduncles cottony. Involucral leaves in 3–4 series, broad, subacute, outer with a median line of spinous or rarely subfoliaceous processes. Achenes large, broad, with 1 or 2 stout median longitudinal ribs, and about 4 finer ones; margins broad.

Hab. Chatham Islands.

The ligulate florets appear to be yellow, tinged at the apices with faint salmon-colour or purple. It is a noble addition to the endemic plants of the Chatham Islands.

SHORT NOTES.

RANUNCULUS ACRIS AS AN IRRITANT (p. 155).—The following is an Italian receipt for an ointment made from buttercup blossoms,—which species I could not ascertain,—which I was told was highly efficacious in the cure of cancer. The wording of the receipt is in places rather obscure, but I copy it as I received it:—“Gather the blossoms of buttercups (1 peck). Take the 8th of a lb. of fresh butter from the churn, before either salt or water has been put, and pound it in a *marble* mortar, and *melt* it (not boil it), in an earthen pan over a stove; add the blossoms, and stir for 1 hour, very gently, with a *wooden* ladle. It will sink a good deal; then ladle it out and put on a strong cheese cloth, and under a press, till every drop is squeezed out, then put in dry jar. The proper time to gather the blossoms is in May, not before, nor after, and nothing but the blossoms. When the ointment is put on the stove to melt, the pan must be well greased on the *outside* to prevent it from cracking. The buttercups must be gathered as near as possible to where there is water, as they are much stronger. The ointment must be put on fresh twice a day, for one week. The first symptoms will be a deal of water, and then comes thicker matter. To put the ointment only on the affected part; it will draw everything into one place, and not cause a wound. It will be about a month that the ointment must be kept on. When all the