

## GUEST EDITORIAL

Once a year the Society's Journal comes like a refreshing breeze from the south, wafting a subtle fragrance to this faraway outpost where we have no wide plains, no broad rivers, no high mountains, and no long-continued droughts!

Each monthly notice gives news of botanists and current botany and always generates nostalgia for field trips and friendly talk about plants. After more than three years away from Canterbury I am pleased to see the stalwarts of my time mostly still active, but ably supported by newcomers whose names are gradually becoming familiar.

The same trend is obvious in the Journal where a nice balance continues to be maintained between "professionals" and "amateurs". An interesting exercise might be to tot up the proportion of each category of writer in Numbers 14, 15 and 16, but difficulties soon emerge for me. My well-known colleagues at Botany Division and the University are easy to place and I know that some of my good friends in our Society would be embarrassed to be counted as experts, but then comes trouble. Where the author is unknown to me I might try to guess from the type and quality of the article but such internal evidence rarely gives a basis for a firm decision. Admitting these limitations I suspect that the proportion is about 50/50. Surely this is a creditable state of affairs and reflects the success of the Society in bringing common interests together. May the Journal long be a place to record facts, observations, and opinions that would otherwise be lost or known only to a privileged few. It would be good to see more new authors, even if their contributions are short. Why not adopt the slogan of our village newspaper? "If it's news to you tell us."

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