

Guest Editorial

This year, as we celebrate our Jubilee, we will meet old friends and exchange yarns about the good old days, with some hopes of a future which will rank with the past 50 years. The emphasis will probably be on the fun and adventures we have had, and the friendly ties created by shared experience.

That shared experience covers a wide field. Much of it relates to hardships and accidents overcome or endured – hard trips, shared rations, bad weather, blown down tents, vehicle breakdowns, and such like. Part of our enjoyment, I suppose, comes from tackling difficulties and inconveniences without the resources of civilisation and returning, as it were, much closer to a state of nature where it is a triumph to procure adequate water for a dry camp.

We ought to remember, too, that we are, in however minor a way, a learned society, and members have played a part from time to time in notable discoveries and new information. The Bulletin itself is not unknown in the annals of botanical research, and its plant lists and description of specific areas are capable of yielding data to academic workers. The late Professor Gordon, who was our good friend and companion for many years, once urged very strongly when we were discussing the application of the Society's funds that, whatever decision should be taken, nothing should on any account be done to jeopardise continued publication of the Bulletin. This is a principle we should always keep in view, and I take this opportunity of pleading for the continuation in our pages of at least some informal and narrative writing, complete with personal and humorous touches, rather than fill them completely with the formal and arid format so frequent these days in scientific periodicals. Let a thousand flowers flourish!

We should be contemplating, therefore, the continuation of the Society on more than one basis. All of us would want to see it continue its role in helping and encouraging the keen amateur of botany with lectures and working trips. In the same way we look forward to a continuation of adventurous expeditions into unfamiliar areas which provide such social enjoyment and personal satisfaction. As well, we should foster, in a minor way perhaps, original and interesting work of importance on some scale, to New Zealand botany.

To do this the Society must keep up its membership and seek the entry of people who have something to contribute to knowledge and who will play a part in organising and carrying out the wholesale activities in the field we have all so enjoyed. But I still say it should all be fun.

E (Ted) W Williams