

the present remarkable upsurge of enthusiastic interest amongst young people in the Waikato. N. L. Elder, author of a recent series of papers on the vegetation of North Island mountains, treasures the first letter of encouragement he had from Cockayne. And so one could go on.

Cockayne was known and his work was admired far beyond his own adopted country. Carl Skottsberg, famous among a race of Swedish botanists, wrote (1938: 3): "I never met Dr Cockayne. . . . He did not need to travel about the world and speak for himself. He stayed where he was, true to his mission, his work spoke for him, and the world honoured him. He deserved it all. . . . He used to write long letters, and gradually I began to know him, not only as a great botanist, but as a remarkable personality. We became friends, and I could feel, across the seas, the firm pressure of his hand."

Dr Turrill, who also had not met Cockayne, wrote more stiffly, but still sincerely (1936: 466): "In his facts and in his presentation he gives the reader not only a desire for more, but a real incentive to observe and to experiment for himself. In this sense Cockayne became a true teacher of many who lived and studied far from him." This was from a place of which Cockayne himself once wrote, "Kew in general is not wont to lavish indiscriminate praise."

But Sir Arthur Hill, Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, could speak from his personal experience in 1928 (1934: 314): "Throughout our long and sometimes tiring journeys, Dr Cockayne was astonishingly active, though he was then an old man [73] and the hurried tours might have upset him. . . . He was at times, a trifle disturbed by a sudden change of plan, and had a facility for losing his cap or his bag, but his sense of humour always saved the situation, and we had a great time together. No matter whether we were in a crowded train or wedged in the back seat of a motor car, he would discuss abstruse botanical matters or bring forward knotty points as to hybrids, or what was meant by such and such a species. Then his son Alfred would join in with a totally opposite point of view and a fierce altercation, proving quite harmless, would ensue—an outsider might have thought blows would follow!—and all would end happily."

H. H. Allan, with more intimate knowledge and keener insight, gives the best picture of all (1935): "His overflowing enthusiasm sometimes led him into errors, and his love of argument for argument's sake often deceived his listeners as to his real views, but he was always ready to withdraw an opinion on sound cause shown. Easily roused to ire, he rapidly recovered from these "mutations", as he called them, and when working in the field was always ready to consider with care views expressed by his co-workers even if they conflicted with his dearest hypotheses. Not a good conversationalist, dogmatic in certain moods, he was a good talker on a wide range of subjects, full of anecdotes and reminiscences. He dominated any company he was in, whether in a railway carriage, the inn corner, or round the camp-fire. Always in his work a strenuous condemner of the faintest suspicion of the 'scientific lie', he allowed in general conversation his imagination to run rampant, would enhance the slightest incident to a great tragedy or a greater comedy. Rabelaisian in some moods, he was elfin as a Shelley in others—a side revealed only to his intimates. Often appearing arrogant, he was at heart the humblest of men in face of the mysterious ways of nature."

Cockayne's general outlook is reflected in a letter in which he pointed out that a naturalist who could become financially independent not only could enjoy himself in his chosen field, but might also, as he said "become a great instrument for good in the scientific world, and what more can the heart of a sane man desire?"

Throughout his botanical career he worked unremittingly for the conservation of nature, and the whole concept of National Parks in New Zealand owes perhaps more to him than to any other single person. He wrote at the end of his great