

this I was not mistaken; and it is now a pleasant duty to record my obligations and convey my thanks to those gentlemen to whom I am indebted for giving me the benefit of their experience, and thereby adding greatly to the value of my work. From long association with Sir Joseph Hooker in botanical work I had become, through his influence, particularly interested in the study of Insular Floras—an interest first awakened when I had the advantage of examining with him, now more than twenty years ago, a large number of New Zealand plants in connection with his Handbook of the Flora; but it was only as I advanced with my present work that I more fully realised the difficulties of the task before me, and the impossibility, notwithstanding that I was receiving so much help from others, of my being able to accomplish it in a manner wholly satisfactory to myself. As I proceeded, facts accumulated to an unexpected extent, and the number of questions and issues involved increased at every step. At first I was rather inclined to speculations; but I soon became aware that a careful collection of facts, and a conscientious examination of the evidence upon which certain theories and statements connected with Insular Floras had been founded, would be of more value than a speculative treatment of the subject. Imbued with this idea, I have to a great extent left the facts to speak for themselves; yet, without attempting a final solution of the many problems which I encountered, I have not altogether abstained from expressing my own opinions, nor from pointing out what appeared to me the correct deductions from the facts adduced. This change in the method of treatment will explain any little inequalities in the work, because the first part was printed before the writing of the second was finished, and the second was printed before the writing of the third was begun, while the Introduction was mainly written after the whole of the other was in type.

“Due acknowledgment has been made in the proper places of information extracted from published works and unpublished documents, as well as to contributors of dried plants from the various islands, so that it only remains for me to mention those who have afforded me active help—help which has saved me from many a pitfall, and largely compensated for my own inexperience in some branches of botany, and for which I am glad of this opportunity of expressing my sincere thanks.

“The work was intrusted to me under the superintendence of Sir Joseph Hooker, and I am under special obligations to him for his guidance, for placing at my disposition all his notes and references relating to Insular Floras, and also for reading the proofs as they issued from the press. I had hoped that he himself would write the Introduction, but his multifarious duties rendered it impracticable. Professor Oliver's aid I cannot overestimate, for he has throughout permitted me to consult him upon points of detail as they arose, and as we were usually working in the same room I have profited by it on numberless occasions. Mr W. T. Thiselton Dyer, who has taken the greatest interest in the work from the beginning, has also read the proofs and assisted me in many ways, more especially in searching out interesting facts bearing upon my subject from the voluminous official