

as they stand for New Zealand; local conditions would almost certainly demand modifications. They do, however, indicate very clearly the lines along which investigation might profitably proceed. It is probable that many of the basic data are already in existence and only need to be collated and made available to enable an analysis of New Zealand conditions on lines similar to those employed in South Africa; is it too much to hope that will be undertaken in the very near future?

O.J.

Farm Trees and Hedges.

By J. S. Yeates, M.Sc., Ph.D. (N.Z.), Ph.D. (Cantab.). pp. 206, figs. 134, paper covers, 1942.

This book is No. 12 of the series of bulletins published by Massey Agricultural College in Palmerston North. The limits that the author sets for himself are well explained in the preface—particular mention is made of the reason for avoiding the much misused term “farm forestry”—and within these limits the book is a very useful one and will serve as a handy reference book for N.Z. farmers.

It is admitted to be a compilation from many sources both printed and oral. It is, therefore, inevitable that where the author has not had the opportunity for personal observation of a species the text is just as reliable as the source of information happened to be; and in this way, certain old errors are regrettably perpetuated by a fresh appearance in print. It is, for instance, impossible to agree that “redwood will grow in most parts of New Zealand up to 2,000 feet” (p. 105) (many hundreds of investors know only too well the error of this statement); or to accept the author’s contention that “larches in New Zealand have shown themselves very liable to disease.” (p. 106).

Forestry readers too, will do well to guard against the acceptance of the nomenclature used as being botanically authoritative, e.g. *Pinus insignis* is used throughout in preference to *P. radiata* and *Pinus maritima* for *P. pinaster*. Douglas Fir has the specific name of *taxifolia* in the text, but *Douglassii* (sic.) in the title to Fig. 55. Lombardy Poplar is *Populus fastigata* (sic.) instead of the more orthodox *P. nigra* var. *italica*. These and many other names used in the book would, if quoted on an order, undoubtedly secure supplies of the desired plants from any horticultural firm; and doubtless the author deemed that this feature would serve the purpose of the farmer reading public just as well as any more rigid botanical purism. It does, however, mar the book for its other apparent purpose as a reference text-book for University students.

The information throughout is quite correctly more applicable to farms and steadings than to forests; and if read with this always in mind, the book has much interesting information not usually found

in local utilitarian print, and faintly redolent of the herbals and compendia of an older age. One learns for example, that an *Eleagnus* hedge attracts bluebottle flies; that *Tecoma capensis* makes an admirable pleached hedge in Taranaki; that rain does not drip through the full crown of well-grown Monterey Cypress.

There is, to the eclectic reader, a delightful whimsicality in the thought of the application of the old world hedger's craft of pleaching to an African shrub grown along the fences of a New Zealand dairy farm: and the idea is sound and useful, despite the whimsy: but one avoids facing the realism of calculating costs of pleaching hedges whilst paying current award rates of wages. Read thus eclectically, the book will give much pleasure to those who are already familiar with all the plants described in it. Read practically by a farmer, it is a useful compendium which will serve as an excellent guide of the plants to order from his nurseryman (especially if the reader is a North Island farmer), and will be found especially informative on the technique of constructing all-purpose hedges on the farm. A welcome feature, usually neglected in all books on shelter trees, is the reproduction of the statutes relevant to fencing and noxious weeds, and the warning to intending planters of the need to avoid interference with electric power and telephone lines, which may at the time of planting, appear quite immune from interference by the hedge plants.

C.M.S.

The Flora of New Zealand.

By W. Martin, B.Sc., F.R.G.S. Whitcombe & Tombs, Ltd. 6/6.

This is a good little book with a misleading title. It is not a "Flora" in the accepted sense, but a popular account of the plants of New Zealand. Successive chapters introduce the beginning field botanist to the seaweeds, fungi, mosses, liverworts and lichens, ferns and club-mosses, the grasses, sedges and rushes, climbing plants, perchers and parasites, the trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants. As a general introduction to the plants he is likely to meet with it may be recommended to the young forester. If it leads him to a more serious study of forest associations it will have served a useful purpose. The illustrations are for the most part good, and the text within its limits reasonably accurate.

H.H.A.

The Menace of Soil Erosion in New Zealand.

Bulletin No. 1, Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Council. pp. 16, illus. Wellington, 1944.

This is the first of a series of bulletins to be issued by the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Council. It is popular in nature,