

CHOICE OF TREE SPECIES. By Sir H. Champion and N. V. Brasnett. F.A.O. Development Paper No. 13, Rome, 1958. 307 p. Price 17s. 6d. sterling.

This book is shown as published in 1958. It appears to have been issued by F.A.O. in 1959 but it has only recently arrived in New Zealand. The authors are Sir H. Champion and N. V. Brasnett. They set out to review the factors that should guide the forester in deciding what species to plant. The whole world is covered and so the canvas is a very large one on which we must not expect prolific and unexceptionable detail.

Part I deals with the general principles of planting – its objects, the question of equation of climates for exotic species, mixtures, plantation techniques affecting choice, the effect of established crops on the site, and experimental work. General discussion is interspersed with examples.

Part II is titled "Ecological Principles". It describes the classification of climates, vegetation and soil, and the concept of regional climates and vegetation. Treatment is necessarily brief and one cannot escape the impression of a reproduction of lecture notes on exotic silviculture. Part II concludes with the consideration of possible species from the major geographical regions covered by various climates classified according to length of the dry season, somewhat after Swain's method. Applying the reviewer's usual test of comparison with the species in areas he knows something about, the section appears to be concise and accurate as far as it goes, but here again only a very limited statement can be made for each region.

Part III assembles data on four commonly used species: *Picea abies*, *Pinus radiata*, *Eucalyptus globulus* and *Tectona grandis*, to illustrate the information that should be collected on possible species when planting is contemplated. Treatment is reasonably complete, but the book was written just too soon to include the valuable information on exotic species that was collected for the British Commonwealth Forestry Conference in 1957.

There are some printing mistakes and it is not difficult to find points on which information is out of date, inadequate or wrongly emphasized, e.g. sand dune practice in New Zealand (p. 21), the value of fast grown timber (p. 38) or the timber qualities of radiata pine (p. 258).

The great breadth of subject and field of this book makes it one for the student rather than for the practising forester. The latter will seek much more detailed information.

– H.V.H.