

author, but rather of our own local customary misuse of our own vehicle of expression. The author's rapid mastery of this tongue with its complex idiom, to the stage when he can produce a flowing, easy, coherent and pleasantly-reading text-book marks him as no unworthy compatriot of the multilingual Joseph Conrad in this respect, without of course fulsomely comparing them on a literary basis. It does, however, indicate a painstaking care for and appreciation of literary expression that matches his care, pains and regard for his own special field of natural science. It was a leader of natural science who two hundred years ago enunciated the now accepted literary axiom that "the style is the man himself"—an intrusion of natural science authority into the field of literary authority that has often been justified since, but the dictum has never been more convincingly proven than here and now.

C.M.S.

The Invasion of New Zealand by People, Plants and Animals.—By Andrew Hill Clark. Published by Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, U.S.A. 1949. 465 pp. 81 figs. and plates. Local price 50/-.

This book written by an American geographer after two years residence in Christchurch cannot, wholeheartedly, be recommended as a worthwhile addition to foresters' libraries.

The most obvious criticism to make is that it does not deal with New Zealand but only with the South Island, a fact but sketchily indicated in the sub-title. The material might be described as a re-distillation of generally well-known facts from the viewpoint of an American interested in all phases of land settlement. Inevitably in such a précis there creep in errors of fact and errors in emphasis, while the treatment of certain aspects of the subject is so tenuous as to be of little if any value. So comprehensive a subject could probably only be dealt with fully and authoritatively by a New Zealander, qualified as an historian, ecologist, agriculturalist and sociologist, after a lifetime study. The book might be described as exemplifying one of the fundamental shortcomings of geography as a reputed science *per se*.

It is a readable, interesting account of the settlement of New Zealand—South Island, that is to say—with the facts related to the basic features of the environment, an account which would prove of considerable value to an overseas reader seeking but a superficial understanding of subject. But its failings are those of so many "geographical" texts. The approach is, by intention, a "scientific" approach, but geography is an omnibus subject and no geographer is omniscient. The best work by geographers, as scientists, is done when they cease to be geographers and become meteorologists, climatologists, geomorphologists, cartographers and what have you. The

straight geographical text as exemplified by the volume under review has its value in the field of general education, it has its value in forcing the scientific specialist to look at the other side of the picture for a change, and it has its value as "literature"; but it contributes nothing fundamentally new to our knowledge of the facts.

There is the danger, also, that such works, being easily read and understood by the general public, tend to be accepted as authoritative and error of fact occasioned by lack of omniscience on the part of the geographer are perpetuated. Thus Clark on page 14 describes the land forms of Banks Peninsula as a consequence of erosional enlargement "of the central craters", a statement contrary to the findings of Speight and of Cotton. Again, highly fallacious figures are quoted in Table LXXVII for the areas in standing native bush in 1940, figures quoted from Agricultural and Pastoral Statistics and quite obviously having reference to some particular class of native bush only, or perhaps to native bush held in but one land ownership category. Errors of this kind must serve to cast doubts upon the accuracy of quotation of other statistical data; and such errors tend to be self-perpetuating.

All told the section on Exotic Trees and Shrubs is tenuous in the extreme. All foresters will find many points to criticise. The same applies to Clark's description of "The Animal Pests." Nebulous writing quoting unreliable authorities, criticising the more reliable (e.g. Perham's 1922 Report), and hypothesizing *ad. lib.*; this kind of half-right half-wrong summary does more harm than good.

The volume is admirably produced and the illustrations and maps are generally excellent. There are a few typographical errors. Thus on page 29, *Belschmiedia* for *Beilschmiedia*, (in any case scarcely a characteristic South Island hardwood). It is a pity the material in the book is not as free from errors as the print. It will be a greater pity if Clark's account comes to be regarded as an authoritative exposition of the subject.

J.T.H.

New Zealand Weather and Climate.—Edited by B. J. Garnier. A Special Publication of the New Zealand Geographical Society. Miscellaneous Series No. 1. 1950. 139pp. Printed by Whitcombe & Tombs Ltd.

In this volume Editor Garnier has amassed a wealth of information, statistical and otherwise, concerning the universally interesting topics of the weather and the climate. All foresters, from the timber cruiser to the fire control officer, from the man who wishes to know why it always rains to the man who sleeps uneasily after two fine days in succession, should find something of interest between its covers.