

and treatments suggested for common purposes. To cover such a field in the short space of fifty pages obviously calls for a great deal of compression, and the main aim of the bulletin is not to serve as a manual of preservation practice but to interest the timber user, and broaden his horizon as to the general scope, aims and fields of timber preservation—an essential development in connection with the wider use of exotic timbers in New Zealand.

A great deal of interesting information is presented, based on American practices developed and proved over the past twenty years, together with suggestions as to fields of application which may prove economically sound in New Zealand.

It is felt that readability has suffered through excessive compression, but the writers obviously know their field, and it may be hoped that they will follow up their initial effort with a fuller treatment of the local position, which may serve as a manual of New Zealand practice in timber preservation, for which a need is already becoming evident.

F.E.H.

New Zealand Ferns—By H. B. Dobbie. Fourth edition, revised and edited with additional matter by Marguerite Crookes, M.A. pp. 406. Whitcombe & Tombs Ltd., 1951. Price 40/-.

The appearance of this revised edition of "New Zealand Ferns" should be very welcome both to laymen and botanists throughout the country. The lack of such a publication in such a popular field of botany has been felt for many years.

This book is presented in a very similar style to previous editions. Each species described is illustrated with a photograph of living material—usually of the whole plant, with additional detailed views of small portions of fertile fronds. This mode of presentation should recommend the book to the layman for whom illustrations have more meaning than technically worded botanical descriptions. Almost all the plates are those used in the previous edition; reproduction of these plates unfortunately is not as good as in the earlier editions, and is certainly not up to the standard that one usually expects to find in modern publications. Dobbie's very human anecdotes still enliven the book and one can recapture his wonder when he first viewed a kidney fern, or his anxiety as he waited for the arrival by train of a specimen of the fragile Prince of Wales feather which he hoped to photograph.

Miss Crookes' reorganisation of Dobbie's material and numerous additions have done much to render the book of greater value to the student of botany. More up-to-date views of botanical classification and more accurate botanical language has been employed. The original descriptions have been unobtrusively amended and extended

and now employ such words as sori, indusium and sporangia. Additional plates of line drawings illustrate these and other features which cannot easily be shown by photography. Keys to both genera and species have also been added; they are easily used and employ the minimum of botanical terms.

One feature which may not meet with the approval of all, especially the lay botanist, is the adoption of Copeland's revised nomenclature. The splitting of such genera as *Hymenophyllum*, *Polystichum*, *Polypodium*, *Gleichenia* and others will inevitably rouse hostility among the more conservative. Dr. H. H. Allan in the preface to this edition hails it as a wise and courageous step, but many will be glad that the more familiar synonym is given a fairly conspicuous place in the caption of each plate.

K.M.B.