

## BOOK REVIEWS

FOREST PLANNING, by D. R. Johnston, A. J. Grayson and R. T. Bradley. 1967, Faber & Faber, London. 542 pp. U.K. price 6 guineas.

The British have a thing known as the National Plan — at least, this is what I have construed from my reading of current political and sociological literature. It appears to be treated rather as the British treat their constitution, particularly by politicians; and yet many public servants find full-time employment in revising, collating, manipulating and all the other things you can find to do in and around a National Plan. I would suspect that D. R. Johnston, A. J. Grayson and R. T. Bradley (respectively, planner, economist and mensurationist with the British Forestry Commission) have had more than their fair share of this sort of work and thus have been required to take a lively interest in the deficiencies of British forestry and the techniques to plan adequately and manage their expanding forests. Their joint book *Forest Planning* contains considerable evidence of the wide range of techniques they have considered, and the immense volume of data which has been collected by the British Forestry Commission, towards the ends we are now beginning to comprehend as we undertake indicative planning on a national scale under the aegis of the National Development Conference.

The very large gaps in our knowledge of planning techniques, which have been hitherto obscured by our tendency to defer to the dogma of classical European forestry, have lately become painfully apparent as many of us have contributed to the activities of the Forestry Development Conference. And for the reviewer this is what has made reading *Forest Planning* quite a pleasure. The authors are obviously well endowed with the physical capacity for efficient planning. The literature in a wide range of disciplines is well covered, mathematical techniques (plus apparently excellent computer facilities for their efficient use) analysed in bewildering variety, and a dispassionate economically biased analysis made of all elements in forest management decision-making. It is an excellent tool for use by a forest economist or planner. It is also excellent reading for Managing Directors or Directors-General who may be wondering which way the ship of forestry should be going. And each forester would gain immensely by going over particularly the analyses of silvicultural treatment, yield prediction and manipulation and marketing.

The deficiencies of the authors' presentation are not too glaring. They admit to an uneven presentation which results from emphasis on econometric analyses; there is a forgivable volume of jargon, most of which can be comprehended at first reading if use is made of the short glossary; there are gaps in their coverage of the literature and I particularly missed any reference to my favourite forest economist, Fenton; logging planning is sound but sparse, particularly on physical factors.

I took considerable pleasure in this book, but also found considerable pain in the obvious message that this is where we, the New Zealand forest industry, should be, and could have been had we been more rational in our research and management emphases. Because, with our growth capacity and investment emphasis on silviculture, the sane and dispassionate use of techniques and data demonstrated to be available and, in most cases, easily translatable to New Zealand conditions, would pay off quickly. It is to be hoped the exercise of the Forestry Development Conference, which has triggered off wider interest in these fields, will provide the continuing impetus required to man and service adequately a planning unit to examine the complex questions given some airing by the authors of *Forest Planning*. To sum up, I think Shakespeare (1599) summarizes my thoughts on this book succinctly in the following quotation:

*Benedict*: You take pleasure then in the message?

*Beatrice*: Yea, just so much as you may take upon a knife's point and choke a daw withal.

The quotation is, paradoxically enough, from *Much Ado About Nothing*.

P. F. OLSEN

FIELD GUIDE TO THE ALPINE PLANTS OF NEW ZEALAND, by J. T. Salmon. 1968. A. H. & A. W. Reed, Wellington. 327 pp. Price \$5.60.

"Trust not authority; pay no heed to the books, but go to the plants themselves." With the development of colour photography, this gap between the books and the living plants, though it still exists and always will, is narrowing. The quotation above comes from Dr Cockayne forty years ago, as advice given him still earlier in his botanical career. From his day onward the study of plants in their natural situation, "ecology", has become a peculiarly New Zealand interest and distinction. Appropriately, Dr Salmon adopted an ecological framework for his earlier publication, *New Zealand Plants and Flowers in Colour*, and this has proved an admirable form for casual reference, although the sheer size of that volume has limited its use, at best, to the roadhead. The book now under consideration, with its handy format for use in the field, is essentially a more detailed development of the alpine portion of that book.

The species are assembled according to the main half-dozen situations in which they grow. Where a number of species are closely related (as for instance koromikos, spaniards and vegetable sheep), comparison of similar forms is made easier by bringing them together within the appropriate sections in subdivisions, of which there are eight in all.

Some 400 species are illustrated in colour, representing a selection of perhaps three-quarters of the total alpine flora. People with special interests may note omissions, but on a general survey the completeness of the coverage is a noteworthy achievement, especially in view of the distances in-