in local utilitarian print, and faintly redolent of the herbals and compendia of an older age. One learns for example, that an *Elaeagnus* 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.**


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,
being intended for general propaganda and as an introduction to the subject. Normal and accelerated erosion are explained and the magnitude and significance of the latter emphasised with examples within New Zealand and abroad. The principal types of soil erosion, earth movement and deposition are outlined and a plea made for better land use. The value of the bulletin is greatly enhanced by the excellent selection of photographs exemplifying the erosion problem in New Zealand.

G.H.H.

CORRESPONDENCE.

The Editor,
N.Z. Journal of Forestry.

Cattle in the Indigenous Forest.

Dear Sir,

A frequently expressed opinion is that cattle are detrimental to regeneration of the indigenous forest or bush as we know it. For a long time the writer shared this view. The first doubts of its validity came during an argument with an old bushman of the bullock team days. He asserted that stock do not harm the bush if present in reasonable numbers. He was quite firm in his opinion that cattle, even bullocks, do not eat any of the young timber trees, but confine their attention to the secondary species, mainly Nothopanax, Coprosma, certain ferns and other succulent plants.

Since then the writer has observed what appears to be a confirmation of the bushman’s opinion. In a small patch of bush near Kaitaia (North Auckland) most prolific regeneration of rimu was noticed. The bush was not fenced and appeared to be frequently entered by cattle. The timber had been worked off 20 years before, but two or three large rimu remained and probably functioned as seed trees. But there were also young kauri, miro and totara in quite large numbers. The usual ground cover of ferns, Coprosma and the like was entirely lacking. In this case the soil was of the heavy clay base type common to North Auckland.

Later, while cruising a small area about five miles away, the same conditions were noticed. The particular area had been thrown open for settlement and though taken up for a while the bush had never been felled. Cattle had had access to it for many years. Excellent regeneration of rimu and more particularly kahikatea was noticed. The soil here was similar to the former case and the topography also was hilly.