
Coming at a time when the supply of traditional building timbers is waning, and when closer attention is being paid to the utilization of secondary species, this excellent publication will prove most valuable to timber users.

The two tables of mechanical properties include results of 40,000 tests on 26 indigenous timbers with data on 21 overseas species included for comparison.

Although as a reference book it is the tabulated information that will be most popular and useful, the surrounding text describing the method of conducting the tests, the formulae used, and variability in timber is written in an easily understood style which will serve as a useful text book to the uninitiated and as a clear statement of the modus operandi of the tests to the engineer or the architect.

Books of this nature generally end with the tabulated results, but the last three chapters of this publication devote sixteen pages with several tables, illustrations, and graphs to the practical interpretation of results for the timber user. In the absence of data on the consequence of defects in New Zealand woods, overseas information on strength ratios for knots, shakes, wave and sloping grain is provided, and an example of the application of this data is set out.

A short bibliography is appended to the text.

The strength tables have two omissions, in that strength data for Pinus radiata and rewarewa are not included. Although the book is a study of New Zealand woods, the inclusion of overseas timbers widens its scope and the reader is almost sure to pencil in the figures for P. radiata so that he has all his major information, for the first time, in one book.

F.J.M.


This book, which has only recently come to hand, is a product of 20 years study and a large quantity of published and unpublished information has been collected and sorted to form a valuable encyclopaedia of the seed of the trees and shrubs of the United States.

The first part deals in general terms with all aspects of seed handling and behaviour. In the second and larger part of the book a wealth of information is given on the seed of 444 woody species,