REIEWS


The first and second editions of this book are reasonably well known to foresters in New Zealand. In the third edition the authors have again concentrated on how to use the tools of forest mensuration, particularly the use of statistical and mathematical techniques, but they have included two new chapters and re-written several others.

The first new chapter describes the use of aerial photographs in timber cruising. Most foresters will agree with the authors' presentation of this chapter, which is based on their opinion that photogrammetry is no more part of forest mensuration than ordinary ground surveying, but that the mensurationist should understand enough of the subject so that he may judge when to call on the photogrammetrist for help.

The other new chapter discusses growth prediction in even-aged stands, a matter of great interest to New Zealand foresters. The preparation and use of a new type of yield table is described. It is based on mean stand d.b.h. instead of age, the authors considering that stands of different ages but with the same d.b.h. will have much the same volume. This is a promising idea and merits detailed study in this country. However there is one apparent weakness that in using this table to predict future yields of stands which are understocked now a normality table is provided which assumes the same rate of increase towards normality for all ages. It seems probable that a young understocked stand would approach full stocking more rapidly than a similarly understocked older stand. With this reservation, many foresters here will agree with the authors' view that the conventional normal yield table based on age and site is not very satisfactory in practice. They state . . . "The fundamental trouble with normal yield tables is that, even after the adjustment for normality has been made, they may not well describe the stand under consideration as it is to-day; hence they can hardly be expected to predict its condition some years in the future. The difference between two erroneous descriptions can hardly give a reliable estimate of its growth. . . ."

A feature of the book is that in spite of the emphasis on mathematical and statistical techniques, the authors sensibly believe in many of the older methods. For example, freehand curves are still accepted as the best method of solving many problems, and they consider that permanent sample plots continue to provide the best data for growth and yield studies.

This book should prove invaluable both as a source of reference and an excellent text-book on the mastery of the techniques of forest mensuration.

G.D.