
This admirable book presents the cold facts of forestry in a concise yet readable form. Hardly a page is read without coming across factual information of interest to the experienced forester, but the author states that he has written for the layman who wants to know more about it. Professor Champion has made a wide sweep of forestry subjects which affect conditions in most countries of the world. The book has the easy flowing style of a scientist who is also capable of descending to language understandable by the intelligent layman without the least trace of condescension and for this reason alone is to be recommended not only for the layman but as an object lesson to the practising forester whose English is apt to become distorted with unnecessary technicalities and a phraseology which clouds the issue.

Remarks on education are mostly concerned with the general public and the importance of their recognition of a well-based forest policy with the part they themselves should play in carrying it out. Of Arbor Day he says: “At present the greater part of such work produces little direct result since it is much more difficult to get the public to care for trees than to take a passing interest in planting them. All too frequently the planting has been done on unsuitable sites or with unsuitable kinds of trees, and more often than not the planting has amounted to putting an odd tree here and a group of trees there, rather than a planned and concerted effort to create a wood where one was needed.”

The book serves its purpose by giving the orthodox approach to forest conditions as intended. In this sense, it may be pleaded that Professor Champion is misleading the layman or student by neglecting to focus more attention on the actual work performed by the practising forester. His observations are from without, not from within. Too often the university and school-trained forester is totally unaware of the immediate problems which present themselves when he tackles his first job. These problems are not of the academic order but usually amount to human relationships, the art of getting jobs carried out, roading, fencing and mundane matters such as rabbiting and drainage. It is usually several years before the threads of higher forestry sort themselves out and begin to make some sense. Constant dealing with unorthodox problems in actual practice may cause the beginner to pause and wonder what has happened to those ideals once set before him and which sounded so attractive in the lecture room. These things are only learnt from experience, but have their place in the wide setting of forestry.

J.A.B.