

at least. The order of the chapters is not logical in terms of the general subject of tree growth. It would appear also that there was minimal editing. Some chapters include keywords, others do not. Abbreviations used for references differ from chapter to chapter. Some chapters have an inexcusable number of spelling mixtapes, typographical errors, and inaccurate references. At least one diagram is reproduced without change from a coloured visual presentation and cannot be followed in black and white. A subject index is provided but is patchy and appears to depend on the whim of the author.

This book was published one year after the papers were presented at a workshop. If need be I would have preferred to have to wait several months more to have a higher standard of publication which does justice to the subject and the manuscripts prepared.

David A. Rook

### **FOREST POLICY IN NEW ZEALAND — AN HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY 1840–1919**

by M. M. Roche

Dunmore Press Ltd, P.O. Box 5115, Palmerston North, New Zealand. 1987.

ISBN 0-86469-067-3. \$24.95.

“Those who do not understand history are condemned to repeat it” – Santanna

Most New Zealanders, in this reviewer's experience, lack a sense of their own country's history and of the impact of the past on the present.

“Forest Policy in New Zealand” is a successful attempt to make the first 79 years of management of and policy towards New Zealand's forests more accessible to us all.

The material in this book is, as the author says in his preface, usually relatively inaccessible being “held as unpublished theses in university libraries” – and, one might add, in the unread archives of various bodies and organisations. The book is a distillation of Dr Roche's Ph.D. thesis and was written while he was a Post-Doctoral fellow at Massey University.

The period 1840 to 1919 is covered in some six short chapters, which can easily be read by someone with a couple of hours to spare.

In that time the readers will find that the current debates about forest management and the role of Government in forestry are not new. They will also find the beginnings of attitudes towards forestry that persisted at least until the early 1980s. As well, the book provides an insight into the notion of timber famine. This syndrome, which is certainly in vogue at present, has been around for a very long time – with disaster always just some 10 to 40 years ahead of us. Then too, this book offers a perspective on that bible of plantation forestry in New Zealand, the 1913 Royal Commission, somewhat different from that normally encountered. These days portrayed as far-sighted and comprehensive (*see* Sutton 1978 or 1987) for its recognition of the need for plan-

tations of fast-growing exotics, and particularly for applauding that "good second-class timber" *Pinus radiata*, we learn in this book that neither Sir William Schlich nor David Hutchins, two of the leading international (or perhaps more accurately British Empire) experts of the time, saw it as a brilliant piece of work as do writers with the luxury of hindsight. It is also interesting to speculate how much the Commission's recommendation for a plantation estate based upon imported exotics was a reflection of the displacement ideas (i.e., ideas that "weaker" native species would be displaced/replaced by stronger more aggressive imports) that had been around since the earliest days of European settlement. These ideas were to a degree based upon observed changes in the New Zealand environment and were lent the scientific support and credibility by Darwinism rather than soundly based scientific data.

A good measure of luck should also be seen as being part of the ex-post success of the 1913 Royal Commission – something that should be remembered when we are berating the efforts of present analysts and suggest they are not a patch on those of yesteryear.

I enjoyed reading this book, not only for the historical perspective it offered but also for the past discussions and debates that are obviously relevant to today. There was, for example, opposition in the 1870s to even quite mild State involvement in tree planting because of the belief that "market forces" would be sufficient to provide a solution to timber shortages. Another example is the importance placed on "climatic considerations" throughout the period as a reason for reserving forests – as in Nelson and Taranaki – or to justify State forestry. Today's parallel would be concerns about the "greenhouse effect" leading to the willingness of some to plant trees as a way of solving this problem – said trees being in many cases intended for burning as firewood (Pearce 1988)! In summary this book is an interesting and thought-provoking introduction to the early years of forest management in New Zealand and the policy and attitudes that arose, and still exist, because of the experiences of those early managers. Because of its relevance I would suggest that anyone with an interest in New Zealand forestry take the time to read this book.

#### REFERENCES

- PEARCE, F. 1988: Planting trees for a cooler world. **New Scientist** 120(1634): 21.
- SUTTON, W. R. J. 1978: Some marketing implications of New Zealand's current planting programme. **New Zealand Journal of Forestry** 23(1): 85-94.
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G. P. Horgan