

BOOK REVIEW

by Brian H. Wilson

"RICCARTON BUSH AND RICCARTON HOUSE RESERVE" I am indebted to the Editor for asking me to review this booklet for, notwithstanding its attractive cover and my interest in Native Plants I could have so easily overlooked it.

The historical section holds interest for all of us imparting a variety of snippets of information. The Avon it seems was named after a Scottish stream not as you and I had supposed.

Dr. Cockayne's chapter on the Botanical History and importance of "The Bush" is followed by a reasonably detailed descriptive list of the plants by Flora B. Murray, M.A. and a comprehensive list from which it is heartening to see that only four plants included in Dr. Cockayne's list of 1906 failed to catch Prof. Wall's eye in 1923. This list is marred by a number of spelling and other errors.

"A walk through the grounds of Riccarton House" does that for the reader in a pleasant way without loss of energy and the more serious reader is given a list of publications for research.

The illustrations are good and the end is reserved for the By-Laws which don't have much appeal although odd inconsistencies do appear; "6 No person shall shoot any animal. 7 any dog may be destroyed!" Members must leave their catapults at home.

A satisfying booklet.

Printed by Wyatt and Wilson Ltd for the Riccarton Bush Trustees
39 pages.

BOTANICAL RECORDS

by Colin Burrows

Botanical exploration and recording in New Zealand has reached an interesting stage (as witnessed by parts to the Biological Flora of N.Z. published recently in the N.Z.J. of Botany and various other recent publications on plant distributions). We require precise data about distributions of species because not only can useful circumstantial evidence about the history and ecology of those species be deduced from full distributional information, but because we are witnessing devastating changes to our environment, some of which will completely eliminate some species from many places. This will apply not only to prominent plants such as trees and shrubs, but to humbler species of swamps, riverbeds, tussock grasslands etc. We know that this has already happened in some cases and sometimes the changes were caused by our forbears. One would dearly like to know, for example, the species which were present in the now extinct patches of bush at Papanui, Rangiora and Woodend, or in the Christchurch swamps.

The C.B.S. is one of the groups which can best undertake such recording because it has a following of informed botanists who know the significance of their finds. May I make a plea for the keeping of