RESOURCE CONSERVATION: ECONOMICS AND POLICIES
By S. V. Civiacy-Wantrap, Berkeley and Los Angeles, Calif. The University of California Press. 399 pages. 1952. $6.50.

Most conservationists are uncomfortably aware that it is one thing to develop effective conservation techniques and another thing to get those techniques adopted by land users. This book deals with the latter problem.

The author has carefully analyzed a series of economic and social factors that affect conservation—interest, taxation, prices, business cycles, tenancy, credit, types of markets, and property rights. His purpose is to describe how and why these factors affect individuals’ decisions to adopt conservation practices. In the process, he distinguishes between the viewpoints of individual resource-users and of society as a whole, thus indicating those areas where individuals have direct interests in conservation and those areas where society may have to take a hand if conservation goals are to be attained.

A most important part of the analysis deals with the ways in which economic factors can be manipulated so as to promote a conservation program. The author makes it clear that the economic forces he describes are largely the creatures of public policy, and he carefully demonstrates how these obstacles to conservation can be neutralized or reversed as part of a deliberate public policy to promote conservation.

The author’s attempt to make this book suitable for both economists and non-economists is only partially successful, as the necessary economic terminology and the nature of the problems discussed makes for difficult reading.

It is a very competent handling of subjects that are of the greatest practical significance, however, and it is one of the few books to deal with this neglected aspect of conservation policy.—C. W. LOOMER.

(EDITOR’S NOTE:—Conservationists might wish to read the abridged version published as Dollars and Sense in Conservation. Circular 402, California Experiment Station.)

LEGUMES IN AGRICULTURE

The authors, members of the plant production branch, agricultural division of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, review the present state of scientific and practical knowledge on experience in legumes. They have drawn on recent investigations throughout the world, and have, in effect, presented a history of legume culture. One hundred eleven workers contributed to the information presented. The authors state that the book is not intended to be a textbook on legumes. Its 13 chapters present the diverse problems which confront agronomists in many parts of the world in legume crop production. The authors state further that they hope the presentation will indicate where present knowledge is inadequate and thus encourage further investigation in legume culture.

ERNTERUECKSTAENDE UND WURZELBILD

DRS. Kühnlein and Vetter of the University of Kiel present the results of research conducted to determine the comparative amounts and composition of crop residue after harvest of the most important field crops. The study covers the long-term effects of residue on soil productivity. Previous comparative studies have perhaps not been so all-inclusive as this investigation which includes virtually all the major cereal, legume and vegetable crops. The work is not fragmentary since all of the crops studied were planted and harvested simultaneously at one location and on the same soil. A further objective of the study was to determine how much organic matter an individual plant can return directly to the soil. The text is abundantly supplemented with tables and graphs, and the excellent root photographs should be of particular interest to both crops and soils workers.

PLANNING FARM BUILDINGS

This is the third edition of the text by Prof. Woolery of the University of Missouri. The author uses a new approach to farm building problems with emphasis on functional integration of buildings, equipment, yards, field, etc., into one over-all efficient work unit. Recent advances in mechanized agriculture and changes in management practices resulting therefrom, and requirements arising from quality standards for marketing likewise account for the revision. Valuable additions are the schedules for rating a building efficiently, for sanitation and for making an appraisal of its value.

INTRODUCTION TO ECONOMICS FOR AGRICULTURE

A “working knowledge” of economics in general is fast becoming an indispensable tool for the well-informed intelligent citizen, irrespective of calling. For the agricultural worker, whether he is a practical farmer or a research scientist, such a knowledge of necessity encompasses the special aspect of economics which concerns agriculture as a basic industry. Dr. Black, Henry Lee professor of economics at Harvard University, presents a broad survey of agricultural economics and its relationship to general economics. It is designed as a text for agricultural colleges, but should serve a general audience as well. In defining the subject, Dr. Black stresses the need for understanding how the general principles of economics are applied or “worked out” in agriculture in a manner which is different from that in other economic sectors, and differently from one type of agriculture to another. In his presentation of the subject, Dr. Black starts with the farm as an individual firm and its production and income and then brings in the national income and interrelated factors.

HOLLIES

Mr. Hume’s book includes chapters on the botany of holly, American and foreign varieties of the plant, caffeine hollies, noteworthy, holly trees and shrubs, holly propagation, planting, pollination, and culture values and uses of the plant, holly orcharding, and holly pests. It is well written, well filled with information, and well illustrated. The book will be of value to persons interested in commercial growing of holly and to those who would like to use the plant for ornamental purposes.

THE FERNS AND FERN ALLIES OF WISCONSIN

The Ferns and Fern Allies of Wisconsin is an excellent guide in the identification of these plants throughout the North Central Region, since many of the plants covered range far beyond the borders of Wisconsin. The new edition has been brought into closer conformity with the new 8th edition of Gray’s Manual of Botany. The range maps in the guide have been brought up to date, with new localities, in which each species of fern is known to occur, added. Numerous and excellent photographs make it easy to identify many of the species listed.

MENTION
Bibliography of References to the Literature on the Minor Elements and Their Relation to Plant and Animal Nutrition, Vol. 3. Ed. 4. New York, Chelsea Nitrate Educational Bureau, Inc. The first three editions were published in 1935, 1936 and 1939 with seven subsequent supplements to the third edition. Vol. 3, containing all material in the third edition and supplements and con-