

## THE GEOGRAPHY OF CANADA.

By J. L. (and M. J.) ROBINSON. *Toronto: Longmans, Green, 1950. 7½ x 10 inches; xii + 205 pages; illustrations and sketch-maps. \$2.75.*

Until within the last decade the writing of school texts on the geography of Canada, for Canadian students, was largely in the hands of professionals in other fields. It is therefore most welcome that professional geographers are now contributing such important works. Although the present text is not the first of its kind, it is one of the best yet to appear.

Professor Robinson of the University of British Columbia, the senior and principal author, has studied the country from coast to coast at first hand, and has given particular attention to the vast, little known, federal territories of the northwest. In addition to regional chapters on "Newfoundland and Labrador" and "The Canadian Shield", separate treatment is given to "The Hudson Bay Lowland", "Yukon Territory", "The Mackenzie Valley", and "Arctic Islands". Indeed nearly one-fifth of the book is devoted to these six regions.

A frequent query directed toward those with professional interest in arctic lands is: "Where can I find a simple, straightforward, comprehensive description of these areas?" In this book we have an excellent "first reader" source for the Canadian Arctic, written simply and clearly so that high school students may use it readily, and yet with careful attention to the latest research so that the informed lay-reader may also profit.

It is difficult to find fault with a text so generally well designed for its purpose, but improvement in illustration would have enhanced greatly the value of the book. The photographs seem well chosen, but the reproduction is unsatisfactory, sometimes because of over-reduction. The maps are of very uneven quality in both drawing and significance.

In content the weakest part of the book is the treatment of population distribution. The population of Canada is so unevenly spread in each of the provinces and territories (with the exception of Prince Edward Island) that the

figures of population, and of population density, for such areas have little or no geographical significance. The dot-map of population distribution for 1941, for Canada as a whole, is virtually illegible. An attempt to map population, perhaps by dots, within each of the areas considered, would have helped the book far more than most of the succession of hard-to-read, too-small-scale, not-very significant maps which are liberally dotted through the text.

Perhaps we ought to re-interpret much of our school approach to geography in terms of exposition of population distribution. Such an approach might have made this very good book an excellent one.

ANDREW H. CLARK

## THE BARREN-GROUND CARIBOU.

By A. W. F. BANFIELD. *Ottawa: Department of Resources and Development, 1951. 10½ x 8½ inches; vi + 52 pages; illustrations, maps, and diagrams. Mimeographed.*

The barren ground caribou is the basis of existence for Indians and Eskimo in an immense area of Canada. The penetration of civilized commerce and transport throughout its range have not diminished its importance in the least. We cannot afford ignorance of such a resource. Here we have, in a concise and invaluable report, the results of an investigation involving thousands of miles of flying and the cooperative efforts of a large number of observers, including several trained assistants. The work was undertaken at the request of wildlife officials of the Dominion and all the provinces assembled in conference, and carried out by the Department of Resources and Development, over a period of three years.

The report is disquieting. Where once large areas were considered fully stocked and numbers estimated in millions, Banfield finds many empty spaces and estimates 670,000 animals. As a necessary background for dealing with the problem of numbers he gives the most complete account yet presented of the life history of the caribou. The movements of 19 herds, all to some degree separate