Annuals and Biennials (review)*—There are several books on this subject on the market and in libraries, but I doubt if any are quite so comprehensive and knowledgeable as Mr. Booth's Encyclopædia. Furthermore most of the knowledge imparted here has been gained by practical experience, for, of the 1400 species and varieties of annual and biennial plants mentioned in this work he has grown over 1200 himself. It covers every aspect of their cultivation in Britain.

At present-day prices, these plants are probably less expensive than any others and their popularity is increasing. Yet the number of species available in this country is pitifully small compared with their abundance in nature. It seems that, apart from one enterprising firm of seedsmen, there has been no attempt to remedy this and encourage the popular trend. With this object the author includes a list of sources abroad from which seeds of rarer species are procurable.

The volume is divided into two parts. The first, about 150 pages, consists of a general account of the cultivation of these plants. Not only does this cover how and where to grow them, but includes excellent lists of insects and other pests with which the gardener may be troubled, together with the latest chemicals to control their ravages. Pathogenic organisms and fungicides are dealt with in the same lucid fashion and the section ends with a discussion on nutritional disorders.

In the second part, under each genus the species in cultivation are described. Detailed horticultural requirements and particular diseases are also given for each genus. There are, however, a few conspicuous omissions from these lists, among them *Primula Viali*, *P. nutans*, *Campanula Sartori* and *Saussurea stella*. With the exception of the last named, they are not truly biennials but species which should be treated as such, and Mr. Booth rightly includes these in his definition of biennials. The text is illustrated with 88 good photographs all taken by the author, 8 of them in colour. Among the glossaries at the end, the list of chromosome numbers (from Darlington's "Chromosome Atlas of Cultivated Plants"), included here as a guide to breeders, is worthy of notice.

The nomenclature has been based on Bailey's "Hortus Second" as being an authoritative work which covers most of the plants. Criticism of this aspect is therefore invalid. As regards citation of authorities after Latin names, the absence of which is a defect so far as the botanist is concerned, Mr. Booth has laid himself open to a charge of inconsistency. The authorities of all insect and fungal names are given; yet they are completely omitted from those of flowering plants.

It only remains to add that this encyclopædia is liberally tabulated, well indexed and beautifully produced. Typographical errors are very few. The criticisms are trivial measured against the author's achievement and will not, I hope, damage the popularity his work deserves.

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* An Encyclopædia of Annual and Biennial Garden Plants, by C. O. Booth. London, Faber & Faber, 1957. Pp. 488, 44 plates (4 col.). Price 84 shillings.