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A Guide to British Woody Plants (review).—Britain's native and naturalised trees and shrubs are dealt with in No. 2 of the Kew Series.* Although there already exist not a few books on similar lines, the latest addition covers the ground more comprehensively and in greater detail than most of its forerunners. Steering a middle course between the standard scholastic works on the British Flora and the more popular accounts of our vegetation, the author blends fact with anecdote in his descriptions of the 150 or so species of woody plant which one is likely to encounter in Britain. After an introduction to botanical terminology there is a simple and effective key to the genera. Within the genus, the absence of a specific key is largely balanced by the profusion of illustrations which are well interpolated throughout the text. The standard of Miss Webster's colour plates is very high and those of Mezereon and the Spindle tree are especially fine. The line drawings, however, fluctuate considerably in quality and in some cases, such as *Myrica gale*, *Arctostaphylos alpina*, *Sambucus nigra* and *Betula nana*, they are neither good nor adequate.

Whilst the account of some of the " difficult " genera such as *Sorbus* and *Rosa* is possibly over-simplified, the majority of the genera and species receive a full and interesting treatment, the willows being specially well done. Doubtless in a book of this nature it is difficult to draw the line between shrubs and herbs but surely *Dryas octopetala* is a perfectly good undershrub and should be included.

On the credit side, the book is lucidly presented, well printed and well illustrated. On the debit side, the need for another book on such well covered territory, especially when it is linked by name with a national botanical institution, can only be questioned; it is also an expensive little volume.

I. C. HEDGE.

* British Trees and Shrubs, by R. D. Meikle. London, Eyre & Spottiswoode (The Kew Series No. 2). 1958. Pp. 244, 84 figs, 8 coloured plates. Price 25 shillings.