one on the geographical distribution of the genus illustrated by five maps; one on the inter-relationships of the species; one on imperfectly known species; and, important for all horticulturists who grow these plants, a chapter reviewing the species which are in cultivation as well as the beautiful interspecific hybrids which have been raised during the last thirty years. In this last connection it is good to learn that doubt now has been removed over the parentage of *C.* "Salutation" and that the cytologist has confirmed the opinion long held by Mr. Sealy that *C. japonica* and not *C. reticulata* was crossed with *C. saluenensis* in the production of this beautiful hybrid.

This great work of Mr. Sealy's has been awaiting publication for several years. Let us hope that the Royal Horticultural Society's courageous gesture will meet with the success it merits.

H. R. FLETCHER.

The Arctic Flora (review)—Surely those who are interested in the whole circumpolar arctic flora are sufficiently advanced botanically to have no need of elementary family descriptions? This is the sort of question that Professor Polunin's book* brings quickly to mind, for it is both heavy and expensive. Yet the format dictates that nearly a whole page is needed to deal with *Polygala serpyllacea*, only once recorded from an arctic station.

This is, in intent, a simple flora based on a broad specific concept and without any categories below the species. The two qualifications *agg.* and *sens. lat.* are attached to many names, sometimes rather unexpectedly. For instance, *Oxycoccus palustris* Pers. agg., does not include *O. microcarpus* Rupr. The pattern of the flora is that where there are less than 9 species in the genus these are enumerated with descriptions and notes, where there are 9 or more species there is a descriptive key followed by an enumeration of the species with notes. Every species is illustrated and it is on the illustrations, or in the index, that one finds the authority quoted.

On its avowed level the work seems competent enough. The number of species upheld is 892 and of every one there is a line illustration, each properly scaled. This is admirable and there is no doubt that Professor Polunin's book will henceforth provide the simplest guide for the general determination of a collection of arctic plants. One would probably accord its contents a warmer welcome but for the unhappy feeling that the whole format is just a little pretentious.

B. L. BURTT.

* Circumpolar Arctic Flora, by Nicholas Polunin. Oxford, The Clarendon Press. 1959. Pp. xxviii+514, illustrated. Price six guineas.

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