The Orchids (review)*—The essays in this volume will give the interested orchid-grower much of the scientific background to horticultural and breeding practices and will also tell him something of the range and classification of the orchid family. This scope is, perhaps, a little less than the subtitle, "A Scientific Survey" might seem to imply, but within it (and within the limitations of a book with 14 authors) the job is quite well done. There are, however, a number of pitfalls for the unwary, or uninitiated, reader. Perhaps the most serious is that in the essay on variation in the orchid flower there is no clear statement of the importance of resupination in the floral morphology of orchids. Then the compilation of published data has not been corrected for variations in nomenclature, so that the reader may never realize that '*Bletia tankervilliae*' of Table 5–7 and '*Phaius grandifolius*' of Table 5–6 have anything to do with one another; nor is it helpful to have *Phajus* and *Phaius* indexed separately. The only explanation of plate 60 that I found (p. 150) merely indicates that it shows inheritance of sexual characters: the plate is reproduced from Fitch's illustration (Journ. Linn. Soc. Lond. xxiv, t. 4) to Rolfe's paper on × *Zygocolax veitchii*, which is shown in the middle. The male parent (upper figure) was *Colax jugosus* and the female parent (lower figure) *Zygopetalum crinitum*.

B. L. BURTT.

Drawings of British Plants (review)†—In the thirteenth part of this series Miss Ross-Craig completes the illustrations of the Polypetalae, with the second instalment of Umbelliferae and the two small families Araliaceae and Cornaceae. The total number of plates published now reaches 581 and the total cost is 113 shillings: less than 2½d. a plate. The artistic and scientific standards which Miss Ross-Craig maintains lift these illustrations far above any others available to the student of British plants and it is most unlikely that any of us now working will live to see them superseded. The artist and her publishers deserve our thanks for their great service in providing such fine drawings at so low a cost.

Many young students are frightened of the family Umbelliferae, but if they study the illustrations in Parts XII & XIII of this work they will realize that the genera and species are much easier to recognize than they may have thought and they will learn, too, that there is a most interesting range of morphological variation even amongst the relatively few British members of this large family.

B. L. BURTT.

* The Orchids, edited by Carl L. Withner. New York, Ronald Press Co. 1959. Pp. ix + 648, illustrations. Price: 14 dollars.

† Drawings of British Plants, Part XIII: Umbelliferae (2), Araliaceae, Cornaceae, by Stella Ross-Craig. London, G. Bell & Sons. 30 plates. Price: nine shillings and sixpence.