Book Review

A New Edition of a Botanical Text-Book*—To keep abreast of changes and advances in botany more than half the original chapters of previous editions have been rewritten, others substantially changed and sections on plant ecology and taxonomy added. This expansion has been gained by eliminating the entire chapter devoted to the families of flowering plants but as it was only possible to study a few of these, this loss is considered of no great importance and probably in these days of specialisation it is not. The wind of change has extended to the illustrations as well and these now consist of black and white photographs, photomicrographs and drawings, all of a very high standard.

The first twelve chapters deal alternately with structure and function of higher plants in a thoroughly systematic fashion so that the student is kept aware of the physiological importance of each and every organ. The book as a whole is written with a view to stimulating interest in the subject and in this it succeeds even with involved physiological matters e.g. Krebs Cycle, the text never seems to become a dry-as-dust recital of fact and formula.

The thirteenth chapter deals with heredity and covers the outline of genetics in a competent fashion while the remaining seven cover the divisions of the plant kingdom giving the life histories of the more important members of each.

Although this is a simplified college manual the multiplicity of botanical terms has not been avoided, rather they have been judiciously encouraged and the volume includes a comprehensive glossary of terms.

This text book is a serious attempt to escape from the humdrum style of its old-fashioned counterpart and make it a thing of interest. Americans seem to have a facility for doing this, sometimes at the risk of over-simplification, but this fault is not present here and this volume deserves to become popular and widely used.

A. J. C. Grierson.

* Botany, a text-book for colleges by J. B. Hill, L. O. Overholts, H. W. Popp and A. R. Grove. Third edition. New York. McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc. 1960. Pp. ix+571: 21 Plates 423 figs. Price 69/6d.