Book Review

A New Approach to Botany.*—This new College Botany book sets out to encourage students to ask the question, "What makes plant be alive" instead of "What are plants"? In this sense it must be regarded as a successful change from the traditional approach to the teaching of Botany. It would be difficult to attempt to find an answer to the second question by using this book as a guide to the plant kingdom without becoming aware of the problems of molecular biology posed in all living plants. The text is easy to read, containing relatively few errors and the book is lavishly illustrated, although the reproduction of some of the low power anatomical photomicrographs is of poor quality. The diagrams in certain chapters are rather over-abundant and over-simplified, almost to the point of confusion in the section on metabolism. It is in this section that omissions and errors in the treatment of the energetic aspects of respiration is apparent. A certain imbalance is almost inevitable in a book which draws so heavily on current research, as a comparison of the general treatment of control mechanisms and the specific aspects of gene control will show. The book is to be recommended to all students of Botany—they cannot fail to see how dependent the study of living things is on a knowledge of the biochemical and biophysical reactions and mechanisms which support their growth.

J. K. Heyes.

*The Science of Botany by Paul B. Weisz and Melvin S. Fuller. New York, London McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc. 1962 pp. xiv+562, plates diagrams. Price 69/6d.

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