Flora of Karachi: After languishing in typescript for several years, Dr. S. M. H. Jafri's Flora of Karachi and its neighbourhood* has at last been published. Lack of a simple account of the local plants has long been a great handicap to botanical teaching. Jafri's book should give a great fillip to field studies and these in turn will no doubt yield many additions to the Flora. There is little doubt that in the 900 square miles covered by this work, much progress remains to be won, both in discovery and in understanding.

It is often the case that in arid regions the discrimination of annual and perennial plants is not easy. Jafri refers to annual and perennial forms of some species (e.g. *Lindenbergia indica, Arnebia hispidissima*) and he designates *Heliotropium strigosum* 'perennial' where I should have expected 'annual'. Here is a ready made subject for study in the field and in the experimental ground under the same climatic conditions: it cannot be done elsewhere. The appearance and intelligent use of the new flora will surely open up other problems of similar nature requiring careful studies on the living plants.

At the end of Jafri's book there is a formidable list of errata. Karachi has no body of experience in the printing of scientific books of this nature and a glut of misprints must not be condemned too harshly. A beginning has to be made and to make it is wholly commendable. This Flora should sufficiently stimulate botanical work in the area to justify a second edition before too long and then one will hope to see that lessons have been learnt from this pioneer effort.

The illustrations are small, cramped and scratchy. They may be a brave effort to help the student's identifications, but the text deserves something better. It is not too soon to start training a botanical artist for the next edition.

B. L. BURTT.

*The Flora of Karachi (Coastal West Pakistan). S. M. H. Jafri. Pp. viii + 375; 345 figs. $8\frac{1}{2} \times 6$ in. The Book Corporation: Karachi. 1966. Price £4.