come from a higher altitude than usual, have spreading branches and are clearly perennial.

One is very conscious in studying this account that it is really based on relatively little material. The very large Lace collections from Baluchistan, Aitchison and Griffith's plants from Afghanistan at Kew and all the rich collections from the border mountain regions in the herbaria at Rawalpindi, Dehra Dun and Calcutta have scarcely been touched. When the Flora has been tested out on these we shall know better how well it works; yet, whatever the result, it is nothing less than tragic that, at least in this account, so much fine material has been left unconsulted.

The writing of Floras proceeds, yet there is curiously little evidence that the results, produced with much devoted labour, are in fact used by the people for whom they are intended. If they are used there is then the risk that their very existence discourages further enquiry: they become the recognized authority. This is all the more likely when a project is a vast one like Flora Iranica, for the authors themselves must for ever be pressing ahead with new work: there is little time to discuss possible errors or possible improvements with the botanists on the spot and other users. It should be a definite policy of any large Flora project to indicate in the text the taxonomic difficulties encountered but incompletely solved; and it should be part of any such project to have an organization to encourage and collate comments and corrections from users of all kinds.

B. L. BURTT

FLORA OF PALESTINE***

This Flora covers Israel, Jordan and the Gaza strip and when completed will consist of four volumes each two-partite, one of text, the other of illustrations. With a well-known, much investigated and relatively small flora, the production of a standard Flora poses no great problems especially when edited and most of it written by the two leading taxonomists in Israel, Profs. M. Zohary and N. Feinbrun. The first volume by Zohary deals with the families Equisetaceae to Moringaceae in the sequence of the 1964 edition of the Pflanzenfamilien Syllabus. It covers such important families as Fagaceae, Caryophyllaceae, Chenopodiaceae, Ranunculaceae and Cruciferae. The format is conventional with family, generic and species keys, short descriptions and summarised distributions. References to the original descriptions of species are cited as are basionyms and synonyms but type information and herbarium specimens are not. Despite the fact that the better known a country's flora is, the greater the tendency of Flora writers to leave out basic taxonomic information—for instance, the standard British Flora cites neither original descriptions nor type material nor specimens—surely the omission of type information is undesirable with our present state of knowledge in south-west Asia. After the descriptions of the genera and

*** Flora Palaestina. Volume 1 (text and plates). Edited by M. Zohary. Jerusalem. The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities. 1966. xxviii, 364 pp. 2 maps; 495 plates. xxxvi pp. Price: £12.5.0.

species which are commendably clear and unambiguous, the problem of whether or how to cite their external distribution is overcome by giving it in terms, not of countries, but of broad phytogeographic regions. This appears to be a fairly satisfactory solution assuming, of course, that one accepts Zohary's terms and their circumscription; a map of these areas being given at the end of the volume. Information and comments on taxonomy, biology and biblical plants are given after the species and add to the value (and readability) of the work. In general, these remarks are sparser than one would expect and although it is debatable how much of this kind of information should be presented in a Flora, so much of it must be readily available to the authors that one would welcome more comments in the forthcoming volumes.

Although the taxonomic treatment at specific level is fairly conservative, a surprising number of varieties is given recognition. *Erucaria boveana* Coss., itself a rather doubtful species, has nine varieties; *Quercus* has three species in Palestine with a total of fourteen varieties. It is very doubtful in these cases if they merit formal description, especially if extra-Palestinian material is taken into consideration.

Prof. Zohary has continued to use the name *Quercus calliprinos* Webb for what he maintains is the east Mediterranean species of Hermes oak in contrast to the west Mediterranean *Q. coccifera* L. These two species are surely conspecific. One suspects that, in this case, Zohary's phytogeographical beliefs have, without sufficient morphological evidence to back the separation, influenced his taxonomy. Even if the east Mediterranean plant should be given taxonomic status the name "*calliprinos*" could scarcely be used since this species was originally described on material of Spanish origin.

Throughout the text, the terminology used is precise, most of the terms being clearly explained in the glossary. But to understand the definition of "Incumbent (cotyledons)" as "lying face to face and with the back of one against the axis" requires some imagination.

The black and white drawings are a useful adjunct to the text, most of them giving a good impression of the plant but in general they suffer from the two common defects of illustrations—lack of scale and wastage of space.

The presentation, typography and binding of this important Flora are all excellent.

I. C. HEDGE

FLORA OF LEBANON AND SYRIA****

Most Floras currently being written are an amalgam, with varying degrees of success, of the work of several taxonomists. Father Mouterde's work is an exception to this in that not only has he prepared all the accounts himself but also drawn all the illustrations. So at least in this respect, there is more uniformity of treatment than in many other recent Floras. But for one man, even though he has been living and working in the area for almost forty

**** Nouvelle Flore du Liban et de la Syrie. Volume 1 (text and plates) by P. Mouterde, S.J., Beyrouth, Editions de l'Imprimerie Catholique. 1966. lxxix, 563 pp. 186 plates. Price: £20.2.6.