Revised Supplement to R.H.S. Dictionary.* The publication of the second edition of the Supplement to the Royal Horticultural Society's Dictionary of Gardening is to be warmly welcomed. Not only will it be found of immense value in itself, it is an encouraging sign of the Society's intention to keep its Dictionary up-to-date. The four original volumes and this new Supplement are in effect a revised Dictionary.

This second edition retains the format of the first: Part I consists of recommended lists of cultivars of flowers, fruit and vegetables, and has been wholly rewritten. It now occupies some 150 instead of about 80 pages. Part II consists of additions and corrections to the main Dictionary. Here too there has been an enormous amount of revision and expansion, and the original 200 pages have been doubled.

By far the most important revisionary work from the botanical angle is Dr. C. E. Hubbard's complete revision of all the grasses. There is, in fact, scattered through this volume an account of the grasses cultivated in gardens. Why so many people never get any further than a tattered unhappy bamboo or a formal clump of pampas in their gardens is one of the mysteries of modern horticulture. At least there will no longer be the excuse that it is difficult to find out anything about them.

There are many new keys and old ones brought up to date and there are many corrections to nomenclature. Of course, there are entries with which some will disagree and a work of this size will not be wholly free from error: yet a quick impression is that the standard of work is excellent and that there are very few misprints. Nevertheless, there is a major criticism of this volume and it is a sad one to have to make. In comparison to the previous edition the italic type in which all the keys are set is both smaller and lighter. This is more than a slight nuisance. Without first-class eyesight and impeccable illumination the keys are almost unreadable. It is not as though the keys are an unimportant part of the book: to publish them in this way is a discourtesy both to reader and contributor. This apart, P. M. Synge, the editor, and his team of helpers have done a very valuable job of work and all those who have to deal with cultivated plants are greatly in their debt.

B. L. BURTT.

* The Royal Horticultural Society. Supplement to the Dictionary of Gardening, second edition. Pp viii + 555. Oxford, The Clarendon Press. 1969. 10¾ inches. Five pounds ten shillings.