Proteaceae.* Since the last comprehensive survey of the Proteaceae in 1889 by A. Engler, much has been published on this family which figures so largely in writings on the flora and plant geography of the southern hemisphere. Professor Venkata Rao, who died suddenly in New Delhi on 26 November 1971, had the opportunity to become intimately acquainted with the Proteaceae when he worked in the laboratory of Professor H. N. Barber at the University of Tasmania during the years 1955-1957. He continued his research and studied examples from all areas where the family occurs—Australia, Africa, America and Asia. A number of articles appeared since 1957 embodying his results. The book of Venkata Rao satisfies a very urgent need for a comprehensive summary and review of the present knowledge of the family. The author integrates the existing knowledge on the geographical distribution, general morphology, anatomy, embryology, pollen morphology, seed anatomy and chromosome studies and gives a dynamic, phylogenetic and unifying account of the group. The facts are clearly stated and well presented and the conclusions well substantiated. The main conclusion is that the Proteaceae originated under rain-forest conditions in what is today eastern Australia. Several small errors and misrepresentations—mostly careless mistakes—occur.

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* Proteaceae by C. Venkata Rao, with pp. 208, 75 figures (each with several illustrations) and 9 plates. Botanical Monograph No. 6. New Delhi: Council of Scientific and Industrial Research. 1971. £3.40.