Book Review

South Australian Botany. Australia, despite its great wealth of flora with around 15,000 species of flowering plants, was for long a country where taxonomists were thin on the ground and journals devoted to botanical subjects were even more so. Recent years have seen an improvement on both counts and most of the State herbaria now have their own periodicals.

Three recent, or fairly recent, new Australian journals to make an appearance are *Nuytsia* (from Perth, Western Australia), *Telopea* (Sydney, New South Wales) and *Contributions from the Queensland Herbarium* (Brisbane). A fourth makes its début with the appearance of the first issue of the *Journal of the Adelaide Botanic Gardens*.* The general aims of the periodical, as listed in the foreword, are to encourage work on the Australian flora, both monographic and otherwise, to provide a publication outlet for botanical artists, and to foster closer liaison between botanists and horticulturists. These aims seem to be fulfilled in the papers published in the first part. There is a revision of a member (*Spartothamnella*) of that curious group of genera which in *Genera Plantarum* were placed by Bentham & Hooker near the start of Verbenaceae but are now placed by many authors in the independent family Chloanthaceae; part I of Studies on Australian Lamiaceae; a detailed review of characters used in the taxonomy of a species of *Isoetes*; notes on a cultivar of *Fraxinus*; a summary of the Lythraceae of the Northern Territory; and 'Plant Portraits' which deals with three orchids from Papua New Guinea.

In the first issue of any new journal it is almost inevitable that inconsistencies occur and that there is nothing in the way of presentation that cannot be improved upon in subsequent parts. Some such points may be mentioned. In 'Instructions to authors' it is recommended that '10–30 specimens should be cited for each species' yet in the *Spartothamnella* paper more than 100 specimens are cited (from 2 States) for one species. In the Lythraceae paper, the title runs to 16 words yet could easily have been reduced to at least half that; it is also a pity that the author of this short synopsis parochially restricted his scope to species recorded from the Northern Territory only. In the 'Plant Portraits' section, it seems discourteous not to acknowledge the artist by name, particularly when its avowed aim is to give an 'opportunity to botanical artists to demonstrate a range of artistic techniques and styles'. However, despite these small criticisms, this is a clearly printed and well laid-out periodical; doubtless, in future parts, firmer editorial control on some aspects of presentation will improve the overall standard.

There is tremendous scope for original taxonomic work on Australian plants and any journal, such as this, which helps to encourage and promote taxonomy must be wholeheartedly welcomed and wished well for the future.

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* Journal of the Adelaide Botanic Gardens. Volume 1, part 1, 67 pages. $A 4.50. Date of publication: 12 October 1976.