Undoubtedly some errors will have crept into the text, but these are very few indeed, for example *Lepidozia ceratophylla* is mis-spelled '*certophylla*', the name *Martinellia gracilis* is treated as a new species but in fact is a new combination based on *Scapania gracilis* published the year previously, and the type locality of *Martinellia microdonta,* Plover Bay, is in E Siberia not in Canada as stated.

The only major criticism which could be levelled at the work is the lack of indication of the correct taxonomic placement of a name. Unfortunately this must be left for the future, when generic limits are more precisely defined and the many obscure binomials transferred to their correct genera or reduced to synonymy. However a useful first step in this direction would be to indicate the different genera into which an epithet has been combined, in chronological order. For the example *Jungermannia setacea* G. Web. 1778 the list would be (*Blepharostoma* 1835, *Lepidozia* 1860, *Microlepidozia* 1934, *Telaranea* 1957, *Kurzia* 1963). This would direct the user to *Kurzia* for the most up-to-date placement without giving any definitive taxonomic opinion.

The many contributors, the editors and the International Association of Bryologists are to be congratulated on undertaking this challenging task and producing such a fine work; hepaticologists can only look forward to completion of the series.

D. G. LONG

Alive at Kew. This paperback* lists, in alphabetical order, the species of flowerless plants currently in cultivation at Kew. The greater part of the book is occupied by the ferns and fern-allies (47 pages) and the plants better known to most as the conifers (38 pages). For these groups in particular, the book looks potentially useful.

Entries are given, in alphabetical order of families, genera and species, in four columns: the genus and species name, the country of origin of specimens when from 'natural sources', the donor/collector (with collector's number where available), and a column cryptically headed 'CR', which is mostly blank. This latter refers to a 'conservation rating', although fairly constant reference to the introductory text is necessary to find what the far-from-obvious letters mean, and spelling them out in full would seem to have occupied little additional space and been much clearer.

Whilst first impressions are that it is useful to have such a list of pteridophytes and conifers in particular, a little use shows certain shortcomings, which might perhaps be rectified in future editions. Firstly I found it difficult to start with, to know if the plants listed were those grown strictly at Kew, or if in the case of conifers, the species at Wakehurst and possibly any of the National Trust conifers that have been surveyed, or the Westonburt and Bedgebury ones might be included. Having browsed through it, I am still not sure which are and which are not. Secondly, and largely stemming from this, is what I find to be an infuriating omission of any reference against each entry of where it is being grown, or the date on which that plant was introduced. The former (by garden location) would give some idea of where the plant might be seen, and the latter (by accession year) whether to expect to see a seedling or a mature tree there.

I fear that without such information, the book is bound to remain somewhat academic for most potential users, and that the compilers should now be encouraged to further clarify and develop it.

C. N. PAGE

British Smuts. The Smut Fungi (Ustilaginales) are a well-defined group of parasites of angiosperms, although their precise position within the fungal kingdom is still a matter of conjecture. Several smut fungi are economically important pathogens of crop plants (e.g. *Ustilago segetum* on cereals) and others can be troublesome in horticulture (e.g. *Urocystis gladiolicola* on *Gladiolus*). However, most of them occur on native plants, usually having little, overall deleterious effect on the host's populations. A familiar example is *Ustilago violacea* whose spores develop in the anthers of many species in the Caryophyllaceae, but

*Catalogue of Living Plant Collections. Part I. Charophyta. Bryophyta. Pteridophyta. Pinophyta. 94 pp. Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.