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BOOK REVIEW

Hegi re-vitalised. The continuing progress of new editions of Hegi's *Illustrierte Flora von Mitteleuropa* is shown by the recent appearance of two substantial volumes. The first* deals with the catkin-bearing 'Amentiferae', the Ulmaceae, Moraceae, Cannabaceae, Urticaceae, Loranthaceae, Santalaceae, Aristolochiaceae and Polygonaceae. The second** is devoted to Gymnosperms and the aquatic Helobiae of the monocotyledons. The fact that Gustav Hegi started his 13-volume work in 1906 and now its third edition is well under way gives some idea of how valued and respected a reference work it is on the Continent of Europe. For many botanists not 'brought up' on Hegi it must seem a rather curious work in that it contains so much more than one expects to find in an 'illustrated Flora'—and in fact there is scarcely a comparable Flora anywhere in the world. For instance, there is an entry of almost eight pages for *Betula pendula* which gives details of important literature, European and overall distribution (in detail and with a map), ecology, past vegetational history, anatomy, floral biology, seedlings, phenology, diseases and uses, together with a detailed description, keys and illustrations. In some other species, there are paragraphs on chemistry, mythology and local names.

The second edition of vol. 3, pt. 1 (Amentiferae et al.) prepared in the late 1950s by Prof. K. H. Rechinger was virtually a completely new account of the first edition and must have involved a tremendous amount of original work on his part. It was the first of the second editions and set the high standard for subsequent ones, which have been coming out fairly regularly since then, edited by several of the most eminent German and Swiss botanists. Many of the later second editions appeared in small paper-backed fascicles. Although the publication in 1981 of a hard-backed third edition of vol. 3, pt. 1 might suggest that it would show major changes from the second edition, this in fact is not so and only the extra pages 453–504 are 'new', the earlier section being merely a reprinting of the second edition, though produced in a much clearer way. Those who already have the second edition are therefore getting very little extra for their c. £50. In the 'addendum' is new relevant literature, nomenclatural change, amendments to keys, etc; there is also a completely new section by Prof. Kiel on the palynology of the families, and brief descriptions of pollen types, with illustrations, are given for all the genera and some species. It is very useful to have this information brought together concisely. The overall look and feel of this edition is very much that of the original ones, and by using the same colour-plates and many of the line drawings that first appeared in 1909–10 there is a slightly old-fashioned air to the illustrations, even though there is nothing old-fashioned about the text.

In contrast to the similarities between the new edition of vol. 3 pt. 1 and its predecessor, there are striking differences between the third and second editions of vol. 1, pt. 2. The most obvious are those of format with a change-over to double-column pages, more illustrations, a bolder typeface for headings and clear spacing between sections. The general index has also been successfully re-designed. How often indexes are too cramped in style and not presented as an important part, as they are, of reference works! It is also good to have a map on the end-papers which indicates the boundary of 'Mitteleuropa'; many of us have had a rather hazy idea of its limits in the past. Not only has the presentation been radically improved but the text has been entirely re-written. The taxonomy is in general agreement with *Flora Europaea* with, in many instances, the European taxa set within the wider framework of the world situation. In the account of Coniferae, in addition to the native species, there is excellent coverage of the commonly cultivated species of economic or amenity importance with easy-to-use keys and concise comparative descriptions. Fossil taxa known from European strata are also described and illustrated. The numerous photographs, text-figures and distribution maps (mostly from Meusel et al., *Vergleichende Chorologie*—but reproduced so much more clearly than in it) complement the written word excellently. The same very high standard of scientific accuracy and clear presentation continues throughout the Helobiae. Professors Markgraf and Zoller

*Hegi, Gustav. *Illustrierte Flora von Mitteleuropa.* Vol. 3, pt 1. *Angiospermae, Dicotyledones.* 3rd extended edition by G. Wagenitz with Supplement by V. Melzheimer. 1981. 512 pp., 194 ill. & 17 colour plates. Paul Parey, Hamburg/Berlin. DM 188.

**Hegi, Gustav. *Illustrierte Flora von Mitteleuropa.* Vol. 1, pt 2. *Gymnospermae, Angiospermae, Monocotyledoneae 1.* 3rd completely revised edition by F. Markgraf & H. Zoller. 1981. 269 pp., 288 ill. & 8 colour plates. Paul Parey, Hamburg/Berlin. DM 168.

and their many co-workers must be warmly congratulated on the fine job they have done. Likewise, Verlag Paul Parey, who since 1975 have been publishing the Flora, deserve much praise for the format and typography of an altogether excellent production.

The first editions of Hegi all bore on their title-pages 'For use in schools and self-instruction'. The new editions are not likely to find a place on many school library shelves, nor are many private individuals likely to subscribe to all parts, but no European botanical institute worthy of the name would be properly equipped without them. Outwith continental Europe Hegi has certainly been under-used by botanists, even though it is a major information source for numerous widespread north temperate species. One of the reasons is of course the language difficulty for many potential users, but the redesigned and revivified Hegi should encourage its use by a much wider botanical community.

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