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Handbook of Textile Fibres. J. Gordon Cook. 2nd ed. 428 pp. illus. Merrow Publishing Co., Watford, Herts., England, 1960. \$4.50.

The science of fibres has become so extremely complex and extensive that one is pleased to see such a manageable handbook as this appear. It will be of inestimable value to the researcher and teacher in search of general knowledge concerning fibres—vegetable, animal, and synthetic—but I should presume that even fibre technologists themselves would find this authentic little volume very helpful for quick reference.

The author was, for many years, a fibre research chemist with Imperial Chemicals Industries Ltd. Much of his own research has been with nylon and other polyamide fibres and polyester fibres. He formed part of the team of chemists who developed terylene.

The index is highly useful and unlocks the bewildering wealth of data in the body of the work, which includes approximately 325 different fibres, 40 of which are of vegetal origin. The book is organized as follows: Part I, Natural Fibres. (A) Vegetal, (B) Animal, (C) Mineral; Part II, Man-made Fibres. (A) Regenerated, (B) Synthetic. The information is given, for all fibres, in a simple pattern which helps in rapid research. The introductory section describes the sources, historical background, and economic importance of the fibres. A section on structure and properties is extremely detailed for a "handbook." The final part of the book, "The Fibre in Use," will be of special interest in commercial circles, as will be the remarks on dyeing techniques.

I know of no other book which combines completeness, brevity, and up-to-dateness so well as Cook's *Handbook of Textile Fibres*. As a teacher of economic botany, I do not hesitate to recommend it as a reference and text in college courses in economic botany. I fully believe that it would be of equal value to all who may be, in one way or another, interested in fibres.

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Plants, Viruses, and Insects. Katherine Esau. 110 pp. illus. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1961. \$3.75.

Among the most successful of the annual John M. Prather Lectures of Harvard University were those given in 1960 by Katherine Esau. It is gratifying to one who had the opportunity of hearing these lectures to see them now so beautifully published and available to a world-wide audience.

Professor of Botany and Botanist in the Experiment Station at the University of California, in Davis, and an outstanding morphologist, Esau has a broad outlook in her specialization. "Specialization," she writes in the preface to this book, "limits one's outlook and sooner or later an investigator, in his effort to obtain a complete picture of the object of his study, finds it necessary to turn for assistance to branches of science other than that of his specialty." In her Prather Lectures, Esau, while reviewing the whole study of translocation of organic materials in plants, treats the dissemination of viruses, the way they enter plant tissues, their effects upon the plant body, their movement within the plant, the role of insects in spreading plant viruses, and other aspects, including a succinct historical review of early studies in translocation.

The book is concise and authoritative and covers a fascinating field in which it is still not easy to find reliable information. The microphotographs are especially worthy of admiration for their clarity. The bibliography of 127 titles will be helpful to those who wish to pursue more fully the subjects treated. While it contains both modern and historical titles, the great majority of the citations are dated from 1950 or later. The interest to many economic botanists of the topics discussed by Esau is at once obvious, and the various workers in this broad field will find the book basically and increasingly useful as time goes on and as the plant viruses become more and more clearly understood.

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