



THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN



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**Plant Drugs That Changed the World.** Norman Taylor. 275 pp. illus. Dodd, Mead and Company, New York, 1965. \$5.00.

The title of this book might give the impression that here is just another volume on plant drugs. This is certainly not the case. Taylor, one of the best of our modern popular science writers, lives up to his reputation in this book. Furthermore, the topics covered are very often new or ones that are not worn out by over-coverage in the layman's literature. Coca and opium are discussed, but from a lively and novel point of view. *Rauwolfia*, *Strophanthus*, and *Dioscorea* are fully and interestingly portrayed. Numerous medicinal plants very poorly known outside of botanical and pharmaceutical circles are delightfully outlined in good detail: *Ephedra*, *Claviceps*, the solanaceous drugs, bitter aloes, *Colchicum*, chaulmoogra, and several others. The old remedies cinchona and digitalis are considered, but one has the feeling that much of the information has not been forced to the front in many popular books.

This is an excellent book. It will be found valuable for high schools and early college as well as for the general public. It is written with Taylor's usual accuracy and enthusiasm. In fact, my only adverse criticism would be the paucity of illustrative material, especially in a book striving to reach the public with so much technical information.

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**Balsam Fir, Abies Balsamea (Linnaeus) Miller—A Monographic Review.** E. V. Bakuzis and H. L. Hansen. 445 pp. illus. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1965. \$9.50.

It is not often that such a thorough work on one species is offered to the botanical public. As such, this book is in itself a library. For this treatise on our traditional Christmas tree—prepared by Professors Bakuzis and Hansen of the School of Forestry of the University of Minnesota with major assistance from seven other specialists—has neglected nothing. The nine chapters cover the following topics: (1) "Botanical Foundations" (with S. S. Pauley and R. E. Scho-

enike); (2) "Geography and Synecology" (with D. B. Lawrence and Schoenike); (3) "Ecological Factors" (with Lawrence, Schoenike, and L. W. Krefting); (4) "Microbiology" (with F. H. Kaufert); (5) "Entomology" (with Schoenike); (6) "Reproduction" (with D. P. Duncan); (7) "Stand Development" (with Duncan); (8) "Growth and Yield" (with R. M. Brown); and (9) "Utilization" (with Kaufert). Then follow Appendix I, "A Tentative List of Myxomycetes and Fungi Associated with Balsam Fir" (12 pages); Appendix II, "Insects Associated with Balsam Fir" (5 pages); Literature Cited (by chapters); and a General Index. The 47 pages of more than 2000 bibliographic sources, which range from the 17th Century to the present day, are a contribution of major proportions. Little more need be said in any review. The book is prepared by leaders in their fields; it is beautifully printed, stoutly bound, and priced very modestly. With appeal to an extremely wide and varied audience, it will long stand high among the best books in economic botany.

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**La Culture des Plantes Fouragères dans La Région Méditerranéenne Occidentale.**

E. J. Villax. 641 pp. illus. Edition Marocaines & Internationales, 11 Avenue de Rabat, Tanger, 1963. \$14.00. (Obtainable also from Hovione Lda., Travessa do Ferreiro 1, Lisbon 3, Portugal.)

The material presented in this book is the most comprehensive, exact, and scientific exposition of forage crops in general that it has been my pleasure to have. In our present-day world of food shortage, the cultivation of forage crops as the basic start of our protein needs has been little emphasized.

This book belies its title by being applicable to almost all the forage crop areas of the world. The author has specialized in the breeding and cultivation of forage crops for over 30 years, his experience starting in Hungary and finishing only in 1964, with his death in Morocco. Readers are fortunate that he completed his work before his death.

The book's five-page diagram of the