



THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN



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Book Reviews

The Green World: An Introduction to Plants and People. Richard M. Klein. 437 pp. illus. Harper and Row, New York, 1979. \$14.95.

The only way to describe Klein's text adequately in a few words is to call it "a breath of fresh air in economic botany." More information and facts culled from many fields of botany are packed into this volume than I have seen between two covers in a long time. The book should be the source of a new impetus in the teaching of economic botany.

In the preface, Klein states that "Botany, like any other subject, can be studied from many different points of view." The organization of the text follows closely this concept. It is divided into nine chapters: "How People See Plants," "Filling Empty Bellies," "Plants in Religion," "The Drug Scene," "Medicinal Plants," "Economics and Politics of Food," "Booze," "Plants that changed History," and "Plants in the Environment." Each of these chapters is broken down into subsections. The book is, consequently, a very easy one to use, both for the teacher and the student.

The illustrations, new and pertinent, are designed to interest the student in further reading. Each chapter has a brief but carefully selected list of references for additional consultation. The index is full.

At today's prices, this book—from its content and style and the excellence of its publication—is indeed a bargain.

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Mycology for the Clinical Laboratory. Gary S. Moore and Douglas M. Jaciow. 323 pp. illus. Reston Publishing Company, Reston, Virginia, 1979. \$19.95.

The purpose of this book, according to the author's preface, is for use at the bench. Included in the book are 14 chapters, which could have been incorporated into four sections. The first section, two chapters, presents fundamental mycology including morphology, classification, and general laboratory technique. The second section contains 11 chapters, each surrounding a mycotic syndrome, e.g., Chapter 6, "Superficial Mycoses," and Chapter 7, "Dermatophytes." The third section contains only Chapter 14 and presents relevant and basic information concerning bioassay and susceptibility testing of antifungal agents. The fourth section includes a glossary and appendices on media preparation and staining components.

Several concepts important for the clinical laboratory are treated lightly. In the section on yeasts, commercial kits for identification are mentioned but no concrete information is given regarding proper kit selection. Such criteria as cost and simplicity are not so important as accuracy, reproducibility, and time required for obtaining results. Serological kits too are available. Often these materials used in conjunction with cultures aid in both interpretation and evaluation. In the section on systemic diseases the authors imply that such procedures should be done at the Center for Disease Control or at large commercial laboratories. With currently available materials this testing is quite feasible in most laboratories.

The photo-micrographs vary widely in quality and many obviously have been retouched. However this has provided a greater degree of clarity, thus increasing the value of such material at the bench.

This book represents a collection of many available procedures. Each section reads like a review paper with several (often more than 50) references. In general the authors' pur-