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The accompanying photographs, micrographs, and diagrams greatly enhance the presentation.

This book's realistic, down-to-earth approach is a refreshing change from the views of those who believe that protoplast fusion is a panacea of change for the future of plant genetic engineering. This is not to say that the authors do not believe that anything useful will come from such research. They rightly point out that the basic methodologies must first be perfected before we can expect to generate new 'super plants.' They also recognize the fact that this technique, in and of itself, could be used to obtain much information on the workings of the basic machinery of plant cells—and this is one area of fusion research which has gone largely unexplored.

Although rapid advances in this area are continually being reported, the value of this book will not be greatly diminished. Not only does it stand out as an excellent review of the subject, it will also alert investigators who are entering the field of parasexual hybridization to the most common pitfalls they are likely to encounter.

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In the Rainforest. Catherine Caufield. Alfred A. Knopf, 400 Hahn Rd., Westminster, MD 21157. 1984. 306 pp. \$16.96.

Oftentimes, it is the more or less amateur (in the proper sense of that term) writer or traveller who can, better than the technical or scientific observer, see and evaluate dangers to the environment. This is most certainly true of Catherine Caufield, a journalist, who has given us an extraordinarily poignant account of one of the most devastating attacks on nature—the huge Tucuruí Dam in the Brazilian Amazonia. The volume has been called “a book of wonders and a stunning account of a world heading for extinction.” Every individual interested in true conservation must read this book; it will do more for the spirit of conservation than a thousand lectures or advertisements, for the author has literally lived through the pain of the devastation and the “doom that hangs over the forests.” She spares no criticism but puts it exactly where she believes that it belongs—“the near-criminal carelessness of government and business . . . the conflicting and unworkable laws . . . the corrupt and inefficient agencies delegated to look out for the native inhabitants . . . the development and resettlement schemes unlikely to do more than line the pockets of their promoters.”

Caufield goes beyond Brazil, where the Tucuruí Dam—the basic problem discussed in her book—is located. She considers problems of the same or similar kinds in Africa, India, Indonesia, the Philippines and in other parts of tropical America.

Highly readable in style, packed with facts, breathing authenticity, and accurate in historical and contemporary outlook, this book must be hailed as a milestone in the growing pleas for conservation and thoughtful development of our tropical forests. “As we destroy the forests,” she writes in one of the most striking chapters of the book, “millions of species of plants and animals, the vast majority of which are completely unknown to science, lose their habitats.” This chapter, entitled “Fruits of the Earth,” sets forth convincingly the argument that will be the most powerfully effective in popularizing the need for conservation: the loss of potentially valuable germ plasm for the future of human life on earth.

It is unfortunate that a book like *In the Rainforest* did not appear ten or fifteen years ago, but it still can and will be a force for good in the growing fight to stem man's destruction of the heritage that he has received as a guardian from nature.

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