

The Phytochemistry of the Flora of Qatar: by A. M. RIZK, Scientific and Applied Research Centre, University of Qatar, 1986. 582 pp. No price given.

Although there are only 301 plant species in the flora of Qatar much is known of their phytochemistry and over 4,000 references are included in the bibliography of this book. This is a very ample account, well-indexed and lavishly illustrated with some excellent colour plates,

many structural formulae and much tabulation. Excellently produced, this dictionary will be of interest to anyone concerned with the plants of the Middle East and their chemical constituents.

Plant Science Laboratories, JEFFREY B. HARBORNE
University of Reading.

Abstracts of Chinese Medicines: produced by Chinese Medicinal Material Research Centre, Chinese University of Hong Kong. Volume 1, No. 1, October 1986. \$120 for four issues.

This new quarterly publication provides in translation abstracts from more than 100 medical and scientific journals published in China and Taiwan. The abstracts are divided into sections covering pharmacognosy, chemistry, pharmacology, biopharmaceutics and clinical reports. There are also some general reviews and very full indexes of plant names and chemicals. Although much of the phytochemistry reported here presumably is picked up

by chemical abstracts, this does nevertheless provide a novel entry into a section of the literature that has previously been inaccessible. The use of English in these abstracts is not entirely idiomatic but the meaning is generally clear. In these days of increasing exchange between China and the west it is a pleasure to welcome this useful key to the medicinal plants of that vast subcontinent.

Plant Science Laboratories, JEFFREY B. HARBORNE
University of Reading.

The Wealth of India, Raw Materials, Volume 1a, revised edition: produced and published by the Publications and Information Directorate, CSIR, Hillside Road, New Delhi, 110012, 1985. 512 pp. \$47.

Although the first edition of this well known work comprising some 20 volumes has only recently been completed, here we have the first issue of a second edition which takes into account the large amount of new information that has recently accrued on Indian plants. This first volume covers 198 plant genera from *Abelia* to *Azolla*, but there are also several more general articles on

algae and minerals such as antimony. Besides botany and phytochemistry there is much useful information on agricultural practices, economic aspects and so on. There are over 50 pages on monkey nuts (*Arachis*) for example, and other crop plants similarly receive extended treatments. This excellent encyclopedia is very reasonably priced.

Plant Science Laboratories, JEFFREY B. HARBORNE
University of Reading.

The Useful Plants of India: produced and published by the Publications and Information Directorate, CSIR, Hillside Road, New Delhi, 110012, 1986. 916 pp. \$32.

This dictionary is a simple condensation from the much

larger 'Wealth of India' and provides information on the uses of about 5,000 plant species native to India.

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