

## BOOK REVIEWS

**The Flowering Process:** F. B. SALISBURY. Pergamon Press, Oxford. 50s.

THIS is a stimulating book which I have enjoyed reading. It is addressed to graduate students but should also be very useful to anybody engaged in research on the reproductive physiology in plants. The book, which is written in a somewhat racy and highly individual style, falls into two parts. The first four chapters comprise a generally descriptive account of the environmental control of flowering, while the remaining six chapters are largely concerned with studies of a single species, the Cocklebur. Since this species has been used more than any other in the detailed investigation of the mechanisms controlling flower initiation, this division is perhaps less arbitrary than would appear at first sight. Nevertheless, the treatment of the various aspects of this subject is somewhat uneven and for a novice to the problems of flowering in plants this may be a disadvantage. The particular areas in the field to which the author himself has made distinguished contributions receive considerably greater emphasis in the second half of the book, as he disarmingly admits in the preface. On the other hand, this personal involvement makes the account of a rather complex subject much more readable.

In Chapter II and the ten-page-long appendix the author attempts to classify a considerable number of species and varieties according to their specific environmental requirements, but here he does not fully achieve his purpose, nor does the great variety of symbols employed in this classification help to clarify the situation. Unfortunately, the detailed responses of many plant species vary to some extent, not only genetically, but also in different combinations and sequences of environmental conditions. Hence, the citation of a smaller number of characteristic types, or alternatively, an attempt at completeness with full author references, to allow the reader to check the original experimental conditions, would have been more useful. The book is well produced and there are few misprints; one worth correcting appears in the footnote on page 35 where "solstices" should be replaced by "equinoxes". In general this book provides an excellent introduction to a complicated field of research and can be fully recommended to anyone interested in the physiology of flowering.

W. W. SCHWABE

**Methods in Polyphenol Chemistry:** Edited by J. B. PRIDHAM. Pergamon Press, Oxford, 1964. 146 pp. 50s.

THE Proceedings of the Plant Phenolics Group meeting which was held in Oxford in April 1963 were concerned with the application of physical methods to the structural investigations of phenolic compounds. The lectures given at this Symposium form the subject of the publication, *Methods in Polyphenol Chemistry*.

Although the information included in this slim volume is available elsewhere in much more detailed compendia concerning physical methods and their applications to organic chemistry, this publication fulfils a useful purpose. The contributions succinctly report the application of the various physical techniques to the specialized field of phenolic compounds. They enable the practitioner in this area who is not immediately familiar with these physical techniques to obtain relevant literature references, together with appropriate elementary background